

## **Project Update: February 2008**

The environmental education programme in Mpimbwe Division provided school visits to Katavi National Park and hands-on learning at school through chicken farming and tree planting. The programme has been enjoyed by many students and teachers alike and has revealed many informative lessons for future programme development.

In partnership with Mpimbwe's NGO for environmental protection, MIMAMPI – Misitu na Mazingira Mpimbwe, and government offices I coordinated this project and have reflected on its successes and lessons. I have reached the end of my short stay in Mpimbwe as a facilitator and researcher from the University of California-Davis and believe that should further funds become available from Rufford or elsewhere, my partner organization MIMAMPI, and its General Secretary, Michael Sungula in particular, have the skills, social capital and commitment to continue this project.

Here I summarize each programme element (park visits, tree planting and chicken farming):

### **Park Adventures**

We made a total of ten trips with school children and teachers into Katavi National Park. A total of 606 students and 65 teachers participated. Trips were coordinated by MIMAMPI and partners included the Mpanda Municipality and Tanzania National Parks. Students filled out before and after surveys as part of a study on environmental attitudes by the University of California-Davis and the Community Conservation Services of KNP, which is in the process of data analysis. Project continuation should entail another round of trips for the next year's Standard VII pupils, attitude surveys, and follow up visits to facilitate discussion on natural resource management.

### **Chicken Farming**

Funding was used to build 13 (rather than 10, as proposed) modern chicken coops at schools and supply high egg-producing breeding stock. Students and teachers received training in breeding, disease prevention and nutrition. Partners include the District poultry specialist and local livestock extension officers. Regular follow up visits are being made by the extension officers, and MIMAMPI is compiling monthly production and health records from all schools. The project is self-sustaining through the sale of eggs and chickens for meat. Future support should cover expenses for regular visits by livestock extension officers and reporting. The project may be broadened into a district level poultry-keeping initiative, for which funds are already available from the Ministry of Regional Administration and Local Government and dispatched to Mpanda. This will ensure both the sustainability and the scaling up of poultry keeping, just as initially envisaged.

### **Tree Planting**

We aimed to plant 4,000 seedlings and planted 11,000. Also, we decided to locate tree nurseries at two primary schools, thus allowing teachers to formulate a lesson for their students in nursery production. The nurseries hosted a variety of native species, including popular hardwoods, wild fruits types known to protect underground water sources. Students participated by collecting seeds, preparing soil, fencing the nursery area, building sun and wind barriers, fetching water, preventing termites, digging holes. In sum, students

witnessed the entire process of tree cultivation and now have a perspective on the possibility of re-forestation. An extension of this project would continue and expand school-based nurseries, and provide more intensive training for teachers and students on fundamental nursery and planting techniques.

