

**Project Update: December 2017**

**Community Conservation Empowerment - Awareness rising on biodiversity conservation through tree planting.**

Using funds I received as a small grant from Rufford Foundation, in this second activity, I have trained local people adjacent the Nilo Forest Nature Reserve (NFNR) in Korogwe, Tanzania to conserve the forest reserve. This training aimed at enhancing the habitats of a critically endangered Long-billed tailorbird (*Artisornis moreau*) and raising awareness among local communities and other stakeholders.

Training covered ten villages namely, Kilangangua, Kizara, Kiziga, Kuze, Kwemkole, Kweng'wiza, Kwetonge, Maramba, Mashewa and Nkombola. A total of 201 people including students were trained between November 2017 and January 2018. The training curriculum covered environmental conservation awareness, importance of conserving the NFNR, beekeeping, raising awareness and promoting conservation of



Some local people and students attended training sessions.

*Artisornis moreaui*, the importance of conserving *Artisornis moreaui*, and initiation of ten sustainable income generating groups within the villages.



Training sessions.

The training was conducted both in classes and in the field. We visited several areas in the villages adjacent to the NFNR; and identified suitable sites/areas for beekeeping and those needing restoration/reforestation. People were trained further on how to prepare tree nurseries, plant trees and how to monitor their growth. Tree nurseries of about one thousand trees to be planted in degraded areas within their villages and adjacent the NFNR were prepared. Most species were native and few exotic. Selected exotic plant species were those preferred or recommended by the villagers to plant in their farms or home gardens for fuelwood and fruits. Few examples of plant species recommended by the project are *Leucaena leucocephala* (this is Fast-growing, nitrogen-fixing tree native highly nutritious fodder. Its new shoots are eaten as a fresh vegetable, desired as pulpwood, building materials and fuel), *Ocotea Usambarensis* (It is fast growth (up to 2 m per year) when young, and great for afforestation as well as reforestation), *Tamarindus indica* (Adaptable species occurring throughout Tanzania in woodland and bushland. Fast growing species with high growth rate. It is used as a fruit, or as a drink and is a good source of vitamin B. As a medicinal plant, it is used as a laxative, the bark is used to cure sore throats, the leaves are used for stomach problems, and the roots are used to treat heart pains. Used as a purpose and their flowers are good source of honey), *Podocarpus usambarensis* (Endangered tree species, native to the Usambara Mountain, has good growth performance hence recommended afforestation as well as reforestation), *Albizia schimperiana* (Native species in East Usambara, performs well both in nature reserves and in farming areas. It's great at fixing soil nutrients), and *Moringa oleifera* (a fast-growing, drought-resistant, non-invasive exotic species. It has medicinal uses and is best planted in farming areas).

Several experts collaborated to train local people and students in the project area. These are Miss Neema Kilimba (beekeeping expert from Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute), Mr Benjamin A. Hango (Forester and environmental conservation expert from NFNR), Mr Beatus Mwendwa (forester, livelihood, biodiversity and ecosystem services expert from Nelson Mandela African Institute of Science and Technology), Mr John Lyakurwa (birds conservation expert from University of Dar es salaam) and Mr Christopher Ngimba (environmental conservation and livelihoods expert from Mbeya University of Science and Technology).

Furthermore, four primary school teachers were also participated in the activities and so used to train local people including primary and secondary students. The four primary school will be visited regularly for conservation education. It was also agreed that, the day to day monitoring and technical assistance will be done by the foresters from NFNR, especially Mr Benjamin A Hango.





Tree nurseries.