

## **Project Update: October 2021**

During the period under review, I and the research team managed to organize and conduct a meeting with village leaders of Bugamba village to inform them about the project and discuss the benefits and challenges of the village land forest reserves. We also managed to perform the vegetation plot surveys in the Bugamba and Mwamgongo village land forest reserves.

In this survey, I used high-resolution satellite images to randomly select the locations for setting out the vegetation plots. I obtained high-resolution satellite imagery from the Jane-Goodall Institute (JGI). I then used the randomly selected locations to guide the research team on where to set the vegetation plots.

During the survey and with the permission of the village government authorities, I placed the tree tags for each of the plots established. The plan here is to generate the permanent vegetation plots for monitoring purposes. The location and tree tag numbers will be shared with each village as soon as I finish the data collection. In the meetings, I requested village leaders to educate and sensitize the villagers not to remove the tree tags because they are very important for accurate identification of the same vegetation plots in the future. This is critical for monitoring purposes.

To enhance the collaboration and participation of the vegetation survey activity, I requested each village government to appoint three villagers who will join the research team to perform vegetation plot surveys in their respective villages. In each village, I was given two members from the village land use plan committee, and a Forest Monitor who is a village member volunteered to perform patrols and monitoring activities in the reserves.

We also managed to conduct questionnaire survey to 4 villages namely Mtanga, Mgaraganza, Chankele, and Bubango. The survey intended to collect information from the villagers about general knowledge of the area, general understanding of the village natural resources regulation, their opinions on common conservation challenges in their area, opinion on the performance of village land forest reserves, any benefits accrued from the forest, and boundary issues. About 1600 respondents were involved in this survey. The plans are under way to continue with the remained 3 villages i.e., Mkongoro, Mwamgongo, and Bugamba.



Research assistant with one of the respondents during questionnaire survey in the project area.



Research assistant with one of the respondents during questionnaire survey in the project area.