

Project Update: October 2020

Project background

In this project, we planned to build capacity in the remaining four communities out of eight villages under the project. The aim was to empower village conservation leaders on the basic skills of natural forest management, law enforcement at local level and basic forest legislation. In the absence of sufficient forestry officers, local leaders play a significant role. Further, we will be replanting harvested native species in order to re-create ecological habitat, ecosystem processes, services and functioning for the threatened species. At this stage we plan to plant 5000 native and preexisted species including the *Brachystegia* species, *Grewia*, *Salacia*, and *Hymenocrdia*. These are native species known to provide the habitat for the endangered *Anthus sokokensis*.

Capacity Building for Village Leaders

We conducted capacity-building programme to village natural resources committee members from the remaining four villages, Chakenge, Kibaoni, Msufini and Kifuru. The training programme was designed for 12 Village Natural Resources Committee members from each village. In total, 34 members (21 males and 13 females) were able to participate. Facilitators were amongst project team members (including forest officers) and the project lead. The training involved providing clarity and emphasis on their duties and responsibilities in participatory forest management and conservation, forest legislation, law enforcement and their role in local community training.





Primary schools' conservation practical lessons

We have successfully conducted practical lessons to teachers and pupils in two primary schools adjacent Ruvu-south forest reserve. The training provided basic knowledge of the ecological and economic importance of the reserve, promote attitudes of concern for the conservation of the area and impart basic conservation skills, such as plant recognition, seed growing, tree planting and weed removal. Furthermore, we introduced to teachers and pupils a participatory approach to learning, engaging them in sustainability issues relating to the forest reserve both practically and academically.

In this programme, 15 teachers were empowered and motivated on participatory teaching and learning approaches addressing sustainability issues relating to the forest reserve both practically and academically. 179 pupils from two primary schools have been trained on appropriate conservation skills, such as plant recognition, seed growing, tree planting and weed removal. School community has become integral part of the forest conservation benefiting about 12,000 ha of the forest reserve particularly in the forest edge and buffer zones.



Community based reforestation programme

In this programme, we will carry out participatory active forest restoration through community-based revegetation in highly degraded sites. At this stage we have successfully raised 1700 native species seedling (*Grewia*, *Salacia* and *Hymenocrdia*) in village tree nurseries. The seedlings are continuing well, and we hope that they will be ready for out-planting in December 2020. We have conducted a survey and we will procure other tree seedlings from villagers and also from Tanzania Tree seeds agency.

Way forward

Based on our schedule, we are in the preparation to recruit out planting team amongst community members who will be trained on the basic skills on seedlings transportation, planting and post planting maintenance. The activity will be followed by actual out planting during rainfall in December and January. We are also continuing to collect previous project activities impacts as part of our comprehensive monitoring strategy.

