

Project Update: June 2021

Project background

In this project, we planned to build capacity in the four communities out of eight villages in the project area. The aim was to empower village conservation leaders with the basic skills of natural forest management, law enforcement at a 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. We plan to plant native and pre-existing species including the *Brachystegia* species, *Grewia*, *Salacia*, and *Hymenocrdia*. These are native species known to provide the habitat for the endangered *Anthus sokokensis*.

Site preparation and tree planting activities

After conducting training for community members on tree nursery management, seedling handling, appropriate tree planting procedures and post planting maintenance, we successfully conducted a tree planting exercise in two different phases. Based on advice from local authorities, we focused tree planting on degraded buffer zone areas and along the boundaries in the southeast region where deforestation was highest. As indicated in the photographs below, the planting team, that was trained during December 2020 and January 2021, were recruited from amongst community members and nearby primary school pupils. Both groups participated actively during seedling transportation and distribution, digging the holes and planting tree seedlings.

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