

## **Project Update: February 2021**

The project implementation began in December 2020 and during this period we conducted three main activities. These were tree nursery establishment, conducting three awareness meetings, and meeting 80 households for the pre-test evaluation.

### **Awareness meetings**

We conducted three meetings for 60 local community members and leaders from five villages neighbouring the wetland. The three meetings were conducted on 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and 9<sup>th</sup> January 2021.



*The local council chairperson making closing remarks after one of the meetings*



*Some of the local community leaders in a group discussion during an awareness meeting*

In each meeting we invited 20 local community members/leaders, two officials from District Natural Resources Office, and the Officer in charge, Bigodi Police station.

Several sessions such as land ownership, importance of wetlands, how to sustainably use the wetland and how to work with community leaders in managing the wetland were discussed. Most of the sessions were group discussions and presentations facilitated by the District Environment Officer, KAFRED staff and the project coordinator.

### **Tree nursery establishment and management**

We established a tree nursery for over 2000 indigenous tree species working with one of the local experts who mainly collected wildlings from Magomber wetland and neighbouring areas. He has been caring for these trees since December 2020 as we await the rainy season to set in, come March 2021. The plan is to have these planted between the pillars that will be used for demarcation which will commence in March/April 2021 when the rainy season sets in.



*A local tree nursery expert caring for the Tree Nursery Bed*

**Pre-test evaluation and meeting individual households.**

We visited 80 households that neighbour the wetland. During these meetings we interviewed a household head, on what benefits they were getting from the wetland,

what challenges they got as a result of being wetland neighbours and what sustainable livelihood they were interested in. Some of the key challenges that arise from being a wetland neighbour that different households raised include crop raiding mainly by baboons, vervet monkeys and occasionally chimpanzees, boundary issues (some boundaries are not clear enough) and lack of incentives for wetland neighbours yet they face many challenges.

Regarding the livelihood project, they can be part of, they suggested tree nursery establishment, craft making, poultry, goat rearing, vegetable growing, piggery, trade (crop focussed/dry rations), coffee growing among others. Unlike the earlier planning, households preferred to conduct these sustainable activities as individuals than organised groups, which rendered fish farming difficult since it was earlier planned to be a group sustainable activity. Most people had interest in beekeeping but due to occasional visits of chimpanzees in the area, which vandalised the apiaries, the number of people interested in beekeeping reduced.



*The project coordinator in a meeting with one of the wetland neighbours*