

Project Update: July 2021

- i. Enhance awareness among local schools as community educators on ecological roles of bats and their contribution to ecosystems, thus helping to demystify long standing harmful local myths and traditions regarding the bats.

Progress- my team and I are doing these for posterity purposes with students being our main target, we've already set up school bat clubs in four schools near the *Eidolon helvum* roost sites where we've piloted our project, we've organised workshops in schools whereby we've disseminated information about bats to the students and we've also trained them on how to collect data, analyse and report the findings regarding bats.

- ii. Improve capacity of local schools to monitor *E. helvum* and their habitat to pilot establishment of a long-term community-based monitoring protocol to enhance local understanding on ecosystem use/changes vis-a-vis species distribution.

Progress- having set up school clubs to help us monitor our species of interest we've set up a community-based straw-coloured fruit bats platform whereby we monitor the dynamics of bats over time. We've already identified and trained 40 community scientists who are helping us in generating monthly basic data.

- iii. Increase local schools' virtual interaction and sharing of important information/data from periodic monitoring activities to prompt local and support global action for the *E. helvum* conservation.

Progress-. We've set up a digital communication hub that connects and promotes networking in schools hence information exchange about bats amongst students.

- iv. Publish findings in international peer-reviewed journals to make the findings of this research known to others.

Progress- I intent to publish the findings of these project at the final stages of this project.



Left: A picture of me collecting data in (Ilwanda) one of the bats roost sites. Right: Maseno boys students and I monitoring straw colored fruit bats in Maseno.



Left: One of the events organized by my team and I to generate a straw-coloured fruit bats action plan through participatory approach (involving the community /homeowners living within straw coloured fruit bats roost sites-Mbale Site). Right: Evarastus (One of my team members) interacting with Maseno boys students regarding bats (Experiential learning).