

Project Update: August 2010

TRAINING, EDUCATION AND AWARENESS CREATION

This programme primarily started with a training of trainers' activities which involved the training of stakeholders. The stakeholders were made up of opinion leaders, resource users and women groups. The expected numbers of stakeholders to be trained were about 100. One hundred and twenty were present for the training. The stakeholders were trained on conservation and wise use of natural resources. They were trained to impart the knowledge acquired to the people they lead. A study prior to the commencement of the project revealed that most of the schools and communities surrounding the Owabi Wildlife sanctuary knew nothing about conservation of our natural resources. This situation made it inevitable but to start educating them on the need to conserve our natural resources for future wise use. The education started with the coming in of the project. Ten basic and first cycle schools were educated on conservation with the aid of film shows during the day in May and up to the early parts of June 2010. Eight communities surrounding the Okapi Wildlife Sanctuary were also educated through film shows mostly in the evenings on wise use of fuel wood and controlled hunting practices.

HABITAT IMPROVEMENT

The education and public awareness conducted in the schools and communities opened a lot of channels for easy communication. All the schools and communities that benefited in the education programme were encouraged the more to participate in the activities of the Okapi Wildlife Sanctuary. They went ahead to offer further support any time we called on them.

One school in Esaase, the Christian School and Orphanage, agreed to help plant the 10,000 teak seedlings bought to be planted. School children numbering about 200 came and helped in planting 8,000 teak seedlings. This activity was done from the first week of June to the last week of August 2010.

The Esaase community after their education showed a lot of interest in helping conservation gain roots and grow. The chief and opinion leaders of Esaase, assemblyman and convener of the Atwima electoral area and the Atwima district assembly helped in the surveying and zoning of areas to be planted before the planting of oranges and mangoes were done. Tools for the field work were purchased and communal working days were agreed upon in conducting the activities. Ten thousand orange seedlings and 300 grafted mangoes were secured and planted in Esaase by the community members as agreed.