

PROJECT UPDATE: JANUARY 2026

Expanding the geographical coverage of the phased-out poultry farming projects as alternative sources of animal protein and income for conservation of the endangered Manyara Tilapia (*Oreochromis amphimelas*) in Lake Manyara - Tanzania

Rufford grant number: 46504-2

Name of leader: Gordian Rocky Mataba

3. POULTRY FARMING FOR ALTERNATIVE INCOME GENERATION

Small poultry farming projects were designed to reduce overdependence of communities on fishing in Lake Manyara as their main source of income and protein. But we also wanted to ensure that local communities benefit from conservation projects. The projects serve as alternative sources of income to curb overfishing in Lake Manyara. In this phase two of the project, we aimed to expand the model poultry farming projects we started in phase one to villages that were not reached during that phase. These pilot projects are used as demonstration and field classes for other villagers not involved in these projects to emulate and start their own projects. The added advantage of these projects is that they make villagers offer their voluntary support because they feel they are part of conservation efforts through their direct involvement. This way, the project idea spreads and becomes fulfilled all around Lake Manyara.

In the previous three local poultry farming projects we initiated in the phased-out project, one project replicated the donated 10 chickens to about 90 chickens, each of the other two projects replicated their 10 chickens to about 40 chickens, and two new projects were born. However, these projects were established in only two (Mdori, and Ngolei) out of 14 villages surrounding Lake Manyara. In this phase two, we have added a total of six new strong (of brick) chicken houses. We build strong houses so as to protect chickens from rain and carnivorous animals that can dig holes through walls and reach chickens. To be specific, in August 2025, we constructed five chicken houses in new villages which were not reached by phase one, i.e., Magara village one project, Magugu village two projects, and Mbuyu wa Mjerumani village two projects. We also replaced one project which burned down accidentally during the first phase at Mdori village. When poultry houses were ready each project was given 10 local hen and two cocks as startups. We also provided poultry vaccines and medicines.

Members of each poultry farming group were selected via public meetings during dissemination of conservation education. The same meetings were used to provide poultry farming education to all villagers for the benefit of all and not only to those who received the projects. Each project comprised of 10 members, and the poultry farming education was delivered by Mr. Alfian Rashid, the livestock officer from Babati rural district.

We expect that, after one year, the established projects will have multiplied in terms of number of chickens, number of newborn projects, and amount of money they generate. Each local hen can produce a minimum of six chicks after every four months. Local chickens are affordable to villagers, because they are tolerant of disease and changes in weather, and they feed themselves outdoors thus greatly reducing feeding cost to the farmers. Also, local chicken and their products fetch high price in Tanzania. Thus, villagers can sell them, their eggs, etc. and improve their income.

Topics offered during the poultry farming education were:

- Importance of poultry farming for family income
- Poultry varieties and poultry houses
- Poultry diseases, vaccination, and treatment
- Poultry feeds and feeding

- Poultry products (eggs, feathers, chicks, chicken, meat, manure)
- Market for poultry and its products.
- Challenges that faced poultry farming in the first phase of the project

Challenges

Actual costs for construction of chicken houses were higher than what we budgeted due to inflation rate. We also incurred an overhead cost of 7%. These factors reduced the initial planned number of chicken houses to construct from 10 to six.

Remaining work

Constriction of other chicken houses in other villages and provision of chickens and other startup inputs. This will be for the third phase of the project.

Field team

1. Dr. Gordian Mataba (Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology).
2. Mr. Joseph Kigoda (Fisheries officer – Monduli district).
3. Mr. Haji Deus (Fisheries officer – Babati rural district).
4. Mr. Alfian Rashid (Livestock officer - Babati rural district)

Below are some photographic records during implementation of the poultry farming project

Constructed poultry house at Magara village	
	
Constructed poultry house at Magugu village	



Constructed poultry house at Mbuyu wa Mjerumani village



Constructed poultry house at Mdori village (Replacement)



This project of the first phase replicated its 10 chickens to 90 chickens as shown here



Newborn projects at Ngolei village

Villagers built chicken houses and started farming at their own costs

Project 1



Project 2

