

## Rufford Report for June to October 2024

During this period, we provided funds to the wetland neighbours to support the revolving fund, continued with primate monitoring and general monitoring of the wetland, held a primate co-existence meeting with 30 household members, and the project coordinator attended the African Primatological Society Conference in South Africa

### a) **Human-primate co-existence meeting and revolving fund disbursement**

We held a human primate co-existence with over 30 households neighbouring the wetland who are mainly affected by human primate conflicts. In the meeting, some members admitted to have led to the increase in conflicts by growing very sweet crops such as sugar cane and maize next to the wetland. Particularly, members admitted that growing sugar cane led to increase in chimpanzee related conflicts in the recent years.

Wetland neighbours discussed remedies for the conflicts, and highlighted the support they needed from the project to address these conflicts. Some of the remedies suggested include growing non-palatable crops like coffee, guarding and using the affected land for alternative sources of livelihood such as livestock rearing particularly goats.

Each of the wetland neighbour identified what the action they are going to take to help mitigate the conflicts and it is these actions that the project team is supporting in implementing household by household.



*Wetland neighbours during group discussions on mitigation measures for human primate conflicts*

The project coordinator together with KAFRED administration disbursed the revolving fund to the revolving fund committee members, and informed them to use it as a start-up for co-existence measures. Members were encouraged to borrow the money, use it for co-existence related livelihoods and return the

borrowed money to the committee on time to allow more members access the funds.

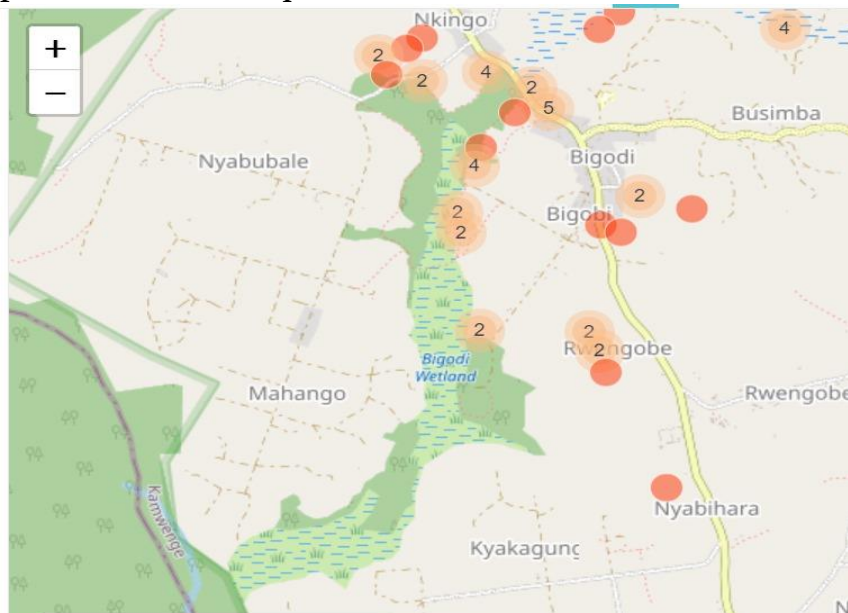
The meeting was also attended by the local councillor in charge of Natural Resource Management who argued members to use wisely the revolving funds.



*Local councillor responsible for Natural Resource Management giving closing remarks*

b) **Primate monitoring**

During this period, the project team embarked on the second phase of primate monitoring. By end of October, one side of the wetland and its patches were monitored and the team will embark on the other side of the wetland and its patches in the next quarter.



*Map of Magombe wetland showing the areas covered under the second phase of primate monitoring. Source: KOBO tool*



During this activity, it was noted that there was rampant charcoal burning taking place in and around some wetland patches, which directly affects the primate habitat and their survival. Though this was not planned for in the project, because of how serious it was and the impact it can have on the survival of primates, the project team organized a meeting for all known charcoal burners around the wetland, and with support from Kibale Association for Rural and Environmental Development (KAFRED), we agreed that they stop burning indigenous trees but rather focus on quick maturing trees from woodlots such as eucalyptus. Through working closely with KAFRED, they also agreed to form an association.



*Charcoal burning going on near Magombe Wetland*



*The project coordinator with KAFRED team in a meeting with charcoal burners*

The charcoal burners openly shared that they engage in this activity well knowing that it is illegal and that it has negative impacts on the wetland, but they are pushed because of lacking alternatives.



With support from KAFRED, those who have land were promised quick growing trees. KAFRED assistant programs Manager also informed them that they have a machine for making briquettes, and if they organized themselves better, they can be trained on how to make briquettes from waste as an alternative to charcoal. He informed them that once they get involved in making briquettes, they can easily be linked to markets.

It was also learned that most of these are wetland neighbours, and were therefore encouraged to approach the revolving fund committee for support

**c) African Primatological society Conference in Potchefstroom South Africa.**

The project coordinator got full support from African Primatological Society(APS) to attend the APS conference in South Africa from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> September.

During the meeting, the East African Cohort organized a side meeting to discuss challenges facing primates in the region. Each of the participants including the project coordinator shared details of their project including key challenges they are facing in their work and primate conservation issues in their areas. The key challenges highlighted by the members were primate habitat loss due to increased human population and related activities and human primate conflicts. Lack of coordination amongst people who are working towards primate conservation was identified as a gap, as the whole group seemed to be having the same challenges but were not sharing ideas and solutions



*The project coordinator(third left) with a group of East Africans during the African Primatological Conference in Potchefstroom South Africa*