

Project Update: May, 2019

We have successfully carried out the following activities:

a) Orchid Inventory and Diversity:

Local community representatives, Kenya Forestry Service officers and the research team conducted a forest survey to determine the orchid diversity, distribution and assess their conservation needs. The team also monitored the progress of the orchids that had previously been repatriated back to the forest and anchored on the back of indigenous host plants. The repatriated orchids had germinated well and most of them had started flowering or fruiting. During the field survey, orchids on fallen, dead and cut trees, or those damaged during quarrying, road construction and clearing of forests for agriculture including tubers that remain in the ground after forest fires were rescued.

b) Home Gardens and Seed Banks

The fallen and rescued wild orchids from the forest were used to set up nature trails, gardens, nurseries and seed banks in homes. The local community group representatives were trained on establishing *ex-situ* nature trails, gardens and seed banks in their homes. In addition, orchid demonstration plots were set up in selected community homes and Kenya Forestry Service stations. These *ex situ* conservation strategies are meant to reduce over exploitation of orchids in the wild and support *in situ* orchid and forest biodiversity conservation.



Left: Rescued *Polystachya cultriformis*. Right: Displaying the beautiful flowers of *Eulophia streptopetala* var. *streptopetala*.



Left: Setting up an Orchid Nursery. Right: Watering an Orchid Nursery at the Kenya Forestry Station, Kericho.



Research team assisting the local community to set up an orchid garden.