

## **Project Update: September 2022**

During this period, the team carried out field visits to farmers neighbouring the small wetlands that feed into the main Magombe wetland, carried out a stakeholder and awareness meeting sessions and a Radio talk show on wetland conservation.

### **Field visits**

Prior to the start of the project, the project coordinator through telephone reached out to key policy makers and stakeholders on wetland conservation thanking them for the support given during the phase one of the project and informing them about the second phase of the project.

The local leaders recommended that the project team first conduct field visits in the targeted areas to get updated information on the status of the small wetlands and streams and get better ideas on how to go about the project.

During the visit, the project team together with the District Environment Officer visited the small wetlands that connect to the bigger Bigodi Wetland. The team talked to 72 landowners and gave on spot advice to most of the people that were found encroaching on the wetlands. The District Environment officer advised most of these to vacate, the team also advised these on how they can sustainably use these wetlands. There is one case where the team discovered massive destruction and the District Environment Officer recommended an arrest because the landowner had been warned but did not heed

### **Stakeholder and awareness meetings**

Two stakeholder meetings were held. The meetings attracted representatives from households neighbouring small wetlands, district and local government officials.

The first meeting attracted 61 household representatives while the second meeting attracted 91. During the meetings, the District Environmental Officer informed the household representatives that the "small wetlands" are supposed to be protected as much as the big ones. He encouraged them to only use them for sustainable projects such as goat rearing, and beekeeping. He urged those who had encroached to vacate before the law caught up with them. This message was emphasised by other district officials.

The Local Chairperson of the district encouraged the wetland neighbours to embrace the project as it was going to help restore the small wetlands through supporting tree planting and other ways of sustainable livelihoods



*Bruce, the project coordinator talking to one of the local communities who had degraded the wetland*



*The Town Clerk talking to some of the household representatives during one of the meetings*



### **Radio talk show**

In one of the meetings, one of the participants asked what was going to happen to other small wetlands that were not feeding into Magombe Wetland, which is targeted by the project. The District Environment officer informed participants that there was need to have more sensitisation, because countrywide all wetlands whether small or big or small should be conserved. The project team took this chance to invite him to one of the radio programmes so as to talk to the bigger community on wetland conservation. During the talk show, the project team and a representative from the district talked about wetland conservation issues. During the one hour talk show, 10 people called in with questions and comments on conservation of both small and big wetlands



*Peter, one of the project staff and a representative from the district during the talk show*