

## Project Update: June 2010

With the assistance of a grant from the Rufford Small Grants Foundation, the Kereita Forest and Wildlife Association (KFWCA), a community forest association based in Kereita Forest, Kenya, commenced a series of educational workshops in the five communities that surround the forest to educate local communities on the importance of conservation and sustainable forestry. Since November 2009, the committee members of the KFWCA have held monthly awareness workshops in each of the five surrounding communities.

Over a 12-month period each community will have hosted two workshops, with two of the largest communities hosting three workshops apiece. The first series of workshops, which has just been completed, focused on educating the community on participatory forest management practices, in other words how to use the forest without destroying it. Topics included: Kenya Forest Act 2005 ss. 35 & 36, (the sections that refer to community forest management plans), best grazing practices, beekeeping, herbal medicine, replanting, protection of wildlife, problem animal management, alternative fuel sources, on-farm planting, soil protection, water conservation, area zoning and ecotourism.

At each work shop there was a facilitator and various experts on the relevant fields. The average attendance at each workshop was approximately 100 people. This is a significant number as it is hoped that each of those attendees will in turn educate others and so on. In addition to the monthly workshops the KFWCA have funded tree planting exercises, a tree nursery and a beekeeping project. They have also used some of the fund money to renovate an old shed at the Kenya Forest Service Headquarters in Kereita to use as an office complete with new computer and internet connection.

The next six months will see the monthly workshops returning to the 5 villages and the main thrust of these workshops will be to draft rules and regulations to be followed within the five respective zones pertaining to forest management relevant to each zone. For example, some zones are adjacent to plantation forests, others to grazing lands and others to indigenous forest. Each of these zones requires a different set of rules governing its management. The resultant rules will in turn be incorporated into the Participatory Forest Management Plan for Kereita Forest as provided for by the Kenya Forest Act 2005. Please see attached photographs.



