

## Project Update: November 2009

Thanks to the grant from the Rufford Maurice Laing Foundation the Kereita Forest Wildlife and Conservation Association (KFWCA), Kenya, was able to begin its long awaited series of community awareness workshops, together with furthering its tree planting and beekeeping programs. The first workshop was held in the Nyanduma area, one of five areas surrounding the Forest.

The first event on the programme was a tree planting exercise held on the morning of 12th November 2009 in a deforested area of Kereita Forest. Many dignitaries were present for the exercise, including the District Commissioner (DC), religious leaders, forest officers and youth leaders. The DC gave a speech in which he cautioned the community forest users to take care of the seedlings and to educate their children in the protection of the forest.

The tree planting was followed by a lunch after which the DC addressed attendees, including the local Member of Parliament and other community leaders. In his speech the DC talked about the relationship between the Forest and the local adjacent community.

Next on the agenda was the awareness workshop, facilitated by the Forest Station Manager and attended by approximately 50 leaders from the local community. The workshop centred on the Forest Act 2005 (Kenya) and its relationship to the forest communities. The attendees will now impart the knowledge they learned at the workshop throughout their village. The effect will be to educate the forest communities on what is and isn't allowed under the Forest Act and how they can best benefit from the forest without destroying it.

Other events that took place through the month included the renovation of a room at the Forest Station for the purposes of an office for the KFWCA from which they can professionally conduct their activities and the purchase of more beehives.

A portion of the funds was also used to purchase a computer, internet connection and digital camera to enable the KFWCA to communicate with the community and others and record their progress and significant events during the coming 12 months.

