

## Project Update: May 2014

### Summary of activities carried out and progress of the project:

From the onset of rains in late March the community members have embarked on the tree planting. At the time of reporting approximately 600 ficus trees and 300 *meopsis eminii* trees have so far been planted by the community. A total of 2100 trees (mainly *Ficus spp* and *Meopsis eminii*) have been planted from the beginning of the year and 5400 from the start of the project. The community members who were trained in planting the trees have create awareness about the planting trees in people's gardens, their importance to conservation of culture and environment. From the time of reporting one sensitisation meeting has been held in Kanabulemu Sub County. . Monitoring of tree has been done by barkcloth enterprise Uganda on the progress of tree growth and advising farmers on different management techniques.

The communities were formally trained in bird identification techniques and the importance of research. During the training refresher training was also given in relation to culture and conservation. This was done to bring the new members in the contact community based organisation, MIKESATAK, to speed especially the youths. This also covered the application of the concepts in relation to on-farm biodiversity conservation. Also birding equipment was handed over to the intervention communities.

Contact is still maintained with the business prospects out of barkcloth with African forest and faculty of fine Art and design, Makerere University on future development of product lines from barkcloth.

Project publicity has been made to different organisations which have different stakes in it. Updates have been forwarded to different organisations and government agencies. This will go a long way in ensuring project interventions sustainability as well as the replication of the project model. Due to such relations, Fauna and Flora International sponsored one of the target community members for a tour guiding training at Musambwa islands.

<b>Planned Results (Outputs)</b> List the planned Results in proposal	<b>Progress and notes</b> Progress towards that Result has been achieved (activities carried out; any notable achievements)
1. Cultural values Conservation and awareness creation	<p><b>Planting of trees by the community</b></p> <p>From the onset of rains in late March the community members have embarked on the tree planting. At the time of reporting approximately 600 ficus trees and 300 meopsis eminii trees have so far been planted by the community. A total of 2100 trees have been planted from the beginning of the year and 5400 from the start of the project. These included <i>Ficus spp</i> and <i>Maesopsis eminii</i> trees. The community members who were trained in planting the trees have create awareness about the planting trees in people's gardens and their importance to conservation of culture and environment.</p> <p>Monitoring of tree has been done by barkcloth enterprise Uganda on the progress of tree growth. This was aimed at ensuring that quality of the bark matches the standard they require and the best way to ensure this is managing the trees right from the time they are planted.</p>

	<p>According to the project-community liaison personnel, Lusembo John, 10 more members from the community have joined the community based organisation (Mitubena Kyebe Sangobay Tourism and Conservation Organisation, MIKESATAC) while 5 community member joined Kagera Tourism and Conservation Organisation (KATOCO) and they are actively planting trees. He attributes this to the continued awareness creation among the communities.</p> <p>Also one awareness meeting was conducted in Kanabulemu sub county to encourage people plant more trees, the relevance of nature to culture and the importance of biodiversity conservation. According the community focal person, the training was attended by 37 people (31 men and 6 women). Among these was the area counsellor whom the people think will focal as an advocacy link in the sub county council.</p>
<p>2. Biodiversity Monitoring</p>	<p><b><u>Training in bird monitoring</u></b></p> <p>The community members were formally trained in birding and techniques involved. The training mainly training target youths and women from the project operational area who had passion for birding, biodiversity monitoring, knew some English and could be easily transformed into tour guides. Although the training had targeted 20 members, only 11 (7 females and 4 males) members attended the training and this was attributed the day's long rains which hindered members from the distant community (Kanabulemu) from accessing the training venue. The biased selection sought to cover the gender gaps identified in the project as well as involving the youth from onset of the project. Refresher training was also given on culture and conservation. This also covered the application of the concepts in relation to on-farm biodiversity conservation.</p> <p>The birding training was done by the project team member, Dianah Nalwanga who doubles as the research coordinator for NatureUganda, The birdlife partner in Uganda.</p> <p>The training covered different topics which included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Bird watching tips:</i></b> They were encouraged to be alert and use all their senses when doing the birding. They were encouraged to always look out for the possible clues for easy identification of the birds. Also the code of conduct during birding was emphasised to the participants. Some of these included; putting first the welfare of the bird and ensuring that its habitat integrity is not disturbed, respect of the birds and land owners on which birding is done, wearing appropriate clothing, maintain minimum noise level among others.</li> <li>• <b><i>Bird identification:</i></b> The participants were taken through identification of the different body parts of the bird because they are the basis of their naming. Other tips which were provided included; size of the bird, bill (Shape size and colour), and posture, colours of the feathers, activity and habitat. All these are critical in identifying different birds.</li> </ul>

- **Record keeping:** they were encouraged always to move with a note book and pencil to record every species they can identify as well as sketching those that they don't for later recognition. Also the relevance of their role in collecting data and analysis for conservation interpretation was emphasised.
- **Use of field equipment's (Binoculars and field guide):** The participants were introduced to the use of binoculars and telescopes. Three binoculars were handed over to the community and 2 bird guides. They were inducted into how to use the book especially the index and interpretation of the information there in as demonstrated and emphasised with the Do's and don'ts clearly outlined.

Field exercise- How to identify birds, how to use binoculars and field guide books: This was kept very short because of the rain which fell the whole day. However the team encouraged the participants to practice with the knowledge and their experiences acquired during the field mockery exercise by the bird expert as indicated in the previous reports.

The team handed over birding equipment to the community. These included 2 binoculars (received from IDEA WILD), 2 bird guide books. It was agreed that one binocular be given to the mentor group at Musambwa islands in close proximity to the project area.

#### **Restoration of sacred sites**

This has not taken off yet but the preparations for restoration of one site is in high gear with one of the land owners. It has been noted that more engagement needs to be done with the land owners and that it's suitable to do this activity in the next phase of the project.

#### **Undertake research and surveys to generate information for monitoring:**

Although the team had planned to conduct another study at the project sites this was not possible because of the rains. However preparations are under way to conduct the studies during the geo-referencing exercise of the planted trees.

<p>3. Improved livelihoods of the community members</p>	<p><b><u>Backcloth synergies</u></b></p> <p>The barkcloth samples sent to African Forest were received and analysis is underway to see which products can be made out of it. The Director promised to get back to the project team for any feedback on process.</p> <p>The project team is initiating contact with the fine art and design department at Makerere university for possible synergies on barkcloth product. The project envisages engaging different design students to work with the communities on innovative designs from barkcloth.</p>
<p>4. Information sharing, partnerships and Institutional formation</p>	<p>Project publicity has been made to different organisations which have different stakes in it. Updates have been forwarded to different organisations and government agencies. This will go a long way in ensuring project interventions sustainability as well as the replication of the project model. Due to such relations, Fauna and Flora International sponsored one of the target community members for a tour guiding training at Musambwa islands.</p>

*Changed circumstances and Challenges so far encountered:*

From the design of the project, no major changes have been noticed but some challenges have been encountered. The main challenge met from the previous time of reporting is;

*Weather:*

The heavy and prolonged rains had a hiccup of the bird training as well as some other planned activities. These were not implemented though plans are underway to implement them. This has a big hiccup of the project budget. The team has prioritised on accomplishment of some activities and pushing the others to the next phase of the project.

Part of the project funds intended to planting other trees and facilitating the Memorandum of Understanding between the community and investors will be used to fund the tree geo-referencing trip which will double as phase I project closure.

*Looking ahead:*

- Geo referencing of planted trees and sacred sites
- Negotiations of sacred sites restoration within the community land
- Continue planting of *Ficus* spp and *Meopsis emini* trees

**Project in photos**

Bird Identification techniques;  
use of equipment and bird guide



Lecturing, Facts about Birds



Handing over birding equipment  
to the community members



Birding training for target  
project communities

