

## **Project Update: August 2011**

### *Eco-cultural Research and Documentation*

The survey was spearheaded by the project team and involved local community members, volunteers and officials of Lake Simbi Nyaima Conservancy. It involved baseline-surveys and recording flora, fauna and cultural attributes of the lake. Moreover, threats, livelihoods, locals' perceptions and values on the lake conservation were recorded. The baseline information on the lake biophysical and cultural aspects is informing conservation action and evaluation. There was emphasis on birds' survey and this has resulted into Lake Simbi Nyaima preliminary bird's checklist which will be populated by future bird's survey and counts.

### *Training and Capacity Building*

This targeted officials and volunteers of established Lake Simbi Nyaima Conservancy. The aim was to empower the target group to be able to spearhead conservation initiatives. The participants were trained on:

- a) Nature restoration.
- b) Conservation education and advocacy.
- c) Lake monitoring and research.
- d) Eco-cultural tourism products development, management and promotion.
- e) Natural resources co-management.
- f) Tour guiding.
- g) Group leadership.
- h) Conservancy management and processing or dynamics.

### *Nature Education and Public Awareness*

The project has managed to undertake 12 nature education and public awareness outreaches for attitudinal and behavioural change for sustainable utilisation and conservation of the lake. Most of the outreaches targeted community networks such as markets, beaches and schools and employed applied live drama and puppetry. Our next outreaches will target schools and will employ video shows and outdoor practical or experiential actions.

### *Conclusion and Recommendation*

The project implementation trajectory is advancing smoothly and milestones in activities outputs are being recorded. The intervention is gaining momentum in terms of community, local administration and other stakeholders support in an area hardly reached with nature conservation projects except for numerous hit and run projects or intervention ideas which have been in pipeline for prolonged periods of time. The final report will illustrate and cover the results of this project in a more detailed and graphic form.