

CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

I. BASIC DATA

Organization Legal Name: East African Wild Life Society

Project Title (as stated in the grant agreement): Rehabilitation of Chawia Forest for the Conservation of its Flora and Fauna

Implementation Partners for This Project: Chawia Community Environment Committee

Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement): April 1, 2005 – March 31, 2007

Date of Report (month/year): June 20, 2007

II. OPENING REMARKS

Provide any opening remarks that may assist in the review of this report.

Background

Chawia forest is one of the major fragments that make up the Taita hills forests. It is the second largest fragment within the *Dawida massif* after Ngangao. It is one of the most heavily disturbed with plantations of exotic trees, and is partly surrounded by agricultural land. It is home to a number of plants and animals that are endemic to the Taita hills forests. Major forest loss has been taking place through government-sanctioned and illegal activities.

The Problem

Recent study findings indicate that human disturbance is having negative effects on the populations of some of the endemic bird species found in the forest. For example, the Taita thrush (*Turdus helleri*) is seriously affected due to the destruction of its micro-habitat. It prefers a high well-shaded forest with a high abundance of leaf litter invertebrates. The following activities have contributed to the degradation of the forest;

1. Selective cutting of high value timber trees.
2. Planting of exotic trees in the forest.
3. Pole cutting for house/home construction curtailing natural regeneration.
4. Firewood collection.
5. Livestock grazing.

III. NARRATIVE QUESTIONS

1. What was the initial objective of this project?

The main goal of this project was to restore the micro-habitat for the conservation fauna and flora found in and depend on Chawia forest.

The purpose of this project was to facilitate the community in rehabilitating Chawia forest through enrichment planting with suitable indigenous species while reducing forest produce demand on the forest.

The Objectives were;

- To raise indigenous tree seedlings suitable for enrichment planting in the forest.
- To raise both indigenous and exotic tree seedlings for planting on surrounding farms.
- To carry out enrichment planting in the forest in degraded areas and areas under exotic tree plantations.
- To supply tree seedlings to the surrounding farmers for planting on their farms to meet firewood and fodder demands.
- To build the capacity of the local community in forest/biodiversity management.
- To build the capacity of Chawia Community Environment Committee in leadership and governance.

The Expected results were;

- Composition and structure of Chawia forest restored.
- The micro-habitat for the endemic and other forest dependent birds improved.
- Improved leadership and governance of the Chawia Community Environment Committee and thus forest management.
- Reduced demand for firewood and livestock grazing once the fodder and firewood stocks are available on-farm or outside the forest in adequate quantities.

2. Did the objectives of your project change during implementation? If so, please explain why and how.

- No, the objectives remained the same.

3. How was your project successful in achieving the expected objectives?

■ 68 000 indigenous tree¹ seedlings raised and planted in Chawia forest.

By August 31st, 2006 the Chawia Community Environment Committee (CCEC) had raised 68 200 seedlings in addition to 5 000 tree seedlings meant for planting on farms. Out of these 4 000 were given out to the community for planting on farms, schools, churches and on communal plots. Several planting sessions have been held. The tree planting day was marked in Chawia on 20th April 2006. The Executive Director of EAWLS was the chief guest accompanied by the District Commissioners' representative, the DO² Mwatate, the District Forest Officer and the area Chief (Plate 1).

¹ Main species for enrichment planting: *Prunus africana*, *Tabernaemontana stapfiana*, *Milletia oblata*, *Syzygium guineense*, *Ocotea usambarensis*, *Podocarpus latifolius*, *Newtonia buchananii* and *Albizia gummifera*.

² District Officer



Plate 1. The Executive Director of EAWLS, Mr. Ali Kaka, setting off the tree planting day.

■ 12 000 indigenous and exotic³ tree seedlings raised and planted in surrounding farms. 9 800 tree seedlings have been raised for planting on farms. Among the tree species were *Cupressus lusitanica* (mainly for timber production), *Olea welwitschia* (timber production), *Carica papaya* (fruit production), and other indigenous trees such as *Syzygium guineense*, *Erythrina abyssinica*. Over 6 000 tree seedlings were given out during the tree planting week to community members for planting on their farms, schools, churches and communal woodlots (Plate 2) In addition, the CCEC have made an open invitation for the community to collect tree seedlings for free for planting on their farms. In addition, the area chief made a request to the Chawia Community Environment Committee to assist in supplying tree seedlings for planting on community plots set aside for afforestation. The CCEC have also raised the Kei apple for sale for fencing. The District Forest Officer also supplied the community with 2 000 seedlings for planting on their farms. Among the species were *Casuarina equisetifolia*, *Syzygium guineense*, *Prunus africana*, and *Cupressus lusitanica*.

³ Species for on-farm planting include; fast growing timber species such *Grevillea robusta*, *Cupressus lusitanica*;; fruit trees such as *Mangifera indica* (grafted) and avocado (grafted); firewood and fodder species.



Plate 2. The District Forest Officer, Mr. D. Muigai, planting a tree at a communal plot in Chawia.

- Capacity of the Chawia Community Environment Committee in forest/biodiversity management built through trainings.
 - Two training workshops were held. One was a residential training held at Msangachi guest house and another one on-site on nursery management.
 - The training on forest/biodiversity management was held on 13 & 14th September 2006. The participants were drawn from the Chawia Community Environment Committee (CCEC), the Forest Guards in Chawia, the area Chief and assistant Chief. The trainers were drawn from the District Forest office, EAWLS and Egerton University. The topics covered include; Forest Management, Biodiversity Management, The Forest Act (both Cap 384 & Forest Act 2005), Environmental Management and the Environmental Management & Coordination Act.
 - The training on tree nursery establishment and management was held on 6 & 7th September 2005 in Chawia at the nursery site. The training was designed to be as practical as possible. The participants were drawn from the CCEC, other group nurseries within Chawia, and the forest guards. The trainers were drawn from the forest department (the assistant DFO, the local forest extension agent and district forest nursery headman), EAWLS and Egerton University. The topics included; functions of trees, plant selection, nursery management, planting, seed collection, tree management and a discussion session.

- Chawia Community Environment Committee transformed into a Community Forest Association that will carry on the conservation work long after CEPF funding.
 - Awareness creation meetings have been carried out as an initial step towards the transformation of the CCEC into a forest association. However, this process has met with some difficulties due to local politics. Further awareness is being carried to further enlighten the community on the functions of a forest association and the legal requirements.
 - A meeting was held between the disgruntled community members (who had purportedly formed a Forest Association), CCEC and EAWLS and FD officers. The meeting resolved that the proper procedures as laid down by the KFS regulations regarding Community Forest Association formation ne followed. The resolutions were further ratified by the Provincial Forest Officer who held a baraza in Chawia on 27th March 2007.
 - In addition to public meetings, copies of the new forest law and the procedure in forest association formation and requirements have been made and distributed to local leaders in an attempt to make them more enlightened.

4. Did your team experience any disappointments or failures during implementation? If so, please explain and comment on how the team addressed these disappointments and/or failures.

- In the beginning, the community members could not meet the tallies or the task-rates as used by the Forest Department (now Kenya Forest Service). This problem was resolved by calculating the equivalent earnings per work accomplished, i.e. if the task was pot-filling – one person is supposed to fill 600 polypots per day and paid KShs 170 – this was worked out to 1 polypot for KShs 3.53.
- The vagaries of weather did not spare the project activities. There were some rather dry months and in delayed onset of the rainy seasons thus making planting be delayed or more time be spent in fetching water and the watering of the seedlings. A mechanical water pump – the moneymaker – was provided to reduce the workload of fetching water.
- The strengthening of the Kenya Shilling against the US dollar had quite an effect on the overall available budget for the activities. A contingency budget line needed to have been provided for to take care of this. In addition, the need to provide a moneymaker pump further aggravated the financial constraints.
- The increase in prices of equipment between the time the budget was written and the time of purchase also affected the financial aspects.
- The failure by the Director of KFS to give permission for the removal of the exotic trees in the areas to be planted with exotic trees was a drawback and also delayed the planting activities. However, it was decided to plant the indigenous tree seedlings under the exotic trees.

5. Describe any positive or negative lessons learned from this project that would be useful to share with other organizations interested in implementing a similar project.

- It is important to take cognisance of the local politics and the power relations in any community. Any activity or process that seems to upset this status will be

fought/resisted by those who view as loosing their grip or power over the other community members. This is especially in the activity whose main goal was to transform the Chawia Community Environment Committee (CCEC) to a Community Forest Association (CFA). A CFA at the local/village level can be a powerful political tool and any powerbroker at this level would like to have control/influence over such an institution.

- ☐ A thorough creation awareness programme/strategy must be carried out to avoid the local politics from interfering in the process.
- ☐ The involvement of the government agencies in the activities lends credence to the project and thus reduces suspicion among the local “doubting Thomases”.

6. Describe any follow-up activities related to this project.

- ☐ The completion of the conversion/transformation of the CCEC to a CFA is an activity that will continue until it is completed. This will be carried out jointly by EAWLS and KFS.
- ☐ The permission to remove the exotic trees will continue to be pursued because at one stage they will need to be removed to allow the planted ones to take over.

7. Please provide any additional information to assist CEPF in understanding any other aspects of your completed project.

IV. ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Provide details of any additional donors who supported this project and any funding secured for the project as a result of the CEPF grant or success of the project.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
Forest Department	Provision of 400 seedlings for on-farm planting	Equivalent value KShs 4 000 (USD 54).	Provided during the tree planting exercise marked in April 2006.

****Additional funding should be reported using the following categories:***

- A** *Project co-financing (Other donors contribute to the direct costs of this CEPF project)*
- B** *Complementary funding (Other donors contribute to partner organizations that are working on a project linked with this CEPF project)*
- C** *Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF project.)*
- D** *Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

V. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The momentum for forest and biodiversity conservation needs to be maintained. This could easily be done with the preparation of a Participatory Forest Management plan that the Community Forest Association could use to apply to the Director of the Kenya Forest Service for permission to manage their forest, as provided for in the new Forest Act. In addition, a PFM plan would have recommendations also targeting the area outside the forest, which once implemented will go a long way in promoting the conservation of the forests and its biodiversity.

VI. INFORMATION SHARING

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned and results. One way we do this is by making programmatic project documents available on our Web site, www.cepf.net, and by marketing these in our newsletter and other communications.

These documents are accessed frequently by other CEPF grantees, potential partners, and the wider conservation community.

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