COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN TREE PLANTING PROJECT-NKHOTAKOTA DISTRICT MALAWI.

Implemented by: Wildlife &Environmental Society of Malawi (WESM-Dwangwa Branch)

Funded by Cooperative Climate Action-Uk

October, Summarized Progress Report 2025**.**



1 **Formation of Cooperative zones awareness meetings.**

As a means of preparing communities who are involved in tree planting and giant bamboo planting, WESM in partnership with MAFECO with financial support from Cooperative Climate Action-



Above: WESM Manager Yassin Rasheed presenting the project to participants.

last week conducted two days awareness meetings. The activity meant to make communities learn and have knowledge of working in cooperatives. 3 out of 4 cooperative zones were reached and people are very happy and read to work through cooperatives



Above: MAFECO Manager Jerruzi Munthali raising awareness to participants of cooperatives.

Below is a list of clubs which participated

Club name	**Tradition Authority**	**Gps coordinates**
Tenje	Mphonde	-13.871460 latitude, 34.186582 longitude
Malala	Mphonde	-12.873677 latitude, 34.198005 longitude
Gowa	Kanyenda	-12.721823 latitude, 34.149103 long
Sasani 2-Lubwe	Malengachanzi	-13.009632 latitude, 34.208077 longitude

Ngondo	Malengachanzi	-12.950737 latitude, 34.179210 longitude
chinombo	Kanyenda	-12.451044, 34.09085
Chisangwala	Kanyenda	-12.445058, 34.092795
Palisanje	Kanyenda	-12.729320, 34.170056
Chizuma	Mphonde	-12.776653, 34.196475
Mphozongo-soil for life	Mphonde	-12.870715,34.199784
Chilasa	Kanyenda	-12.6615457, 34.138524
Mphonde	Mphonde	
Chilingali Cooperative-Chilingale	Malengachazi	-12.917115, 34.236655
Mphonde		-12.829243,34.233649





Above: Group photos during cooperative awareness meeting

2. MONITORING TREE MANAGEMENT

During the period we conducted monitoring of trees in the field, ideally to check growth, management, and care. The good news is that most of the clubs, they are managing their trees very well though in same places issue of goats eating some trees and water challenge came out, but generally communities are managing their trees well. There is need to continue visiting planters so that we are able to learn and advise planters on how to solve certain challenge.



Above: Grafted Mangoe trees growing health and fast.

3 LAND PREPARATION FOR TREE PLANTING

Villagers have already identified land for this coming planting season and each village have formed a committee to lead the community during afforestation work.

Clubs members have their own lands to plant trees. This will help planters to establish their own tree woodlots, hence reducing pressure on the communal forest. Hole digging and land preparation



Above: One of bear land being allocated to tree planting 2025/2026

4. Tree seedlings procurement. We are in consultation with tree seedlings supplier to make sure they supply seedlings in time and of good quality. Last year all suppliers provided us with good quality seedlings and hence we experienced good survival rate at 80%

5. **Tree planting for 2025/2026.** Tree planting for 2025/26 planting season will began when rains start, normally it covers a period from December to April. now a lot of our energy and resources are channeled towards community mobilization, trainings, awareness, and

land preparation. 7 more villages have been added on the program and we hope this planting season it will be like last year.

6. Community economic empowerment through revolving loans distribution. The project has identified 100 planters who are members of the involved clubs. These planters are requesting if they can be considered a provision of small soft loans so that they are able to do small business while managing tree. The project will use a business model which is being implemented by WESM under Chia lagoon community Water bird project. Later on planters will start generating their income capital through sales of their products from planted trees.

7. Lesson Learnt

1. All planting clubs have welcomed idea of working in cooperatives, they have now a feeling that there is power in working together.

2. Many communities want activities which would bring them quick benefits/results, hence an idea of providing them with soft loans for small businesses would improve economic status at household level hence reducing poverty levels in areas where the project is being implemented(Learning from Chai Community Waterbirds Project).

3. There is need to provide planters with alternative sources of energy ie provision of soler panels and solar lumps would help reduce energy poverty in communities where the project is being implemented.

Challenges

1. water problems. because of this summer season ,most villages are far away from water sources hence finding it difficulties to access water . Provision of water boreholes would help provide water close to their homes.

2. Frequent break down of WESM vehicle. This is a challenge as we are failing to frequently visit communities. Maintenance is under away since we have no any other alternative though costly.
3. High rising cost of operation materials such as vehicle fuel, vehicle maintenance and cost of living has negatively impacted the project and project human resources.

Plans for next month:

- Visiting tree nurseries to check tree seedlings quality production.
- Monitor tree land preparation activities(20,000 trees)
- Work on cooperative initiatives
- Conduct trainings for tree planters



By Yassin Rasheed Malandula with field support from Edreena Chirwa