

Report for West Lunga Trust January - June 2008

The first six months of the year 2008 have been successful in consolidating the work of the Trust in the community to the point that there is a growing in recognition in the local area that we are 'here to stay'!

Wildlife Patrols

Wildlife patrols have been ongoing, though with difficulties in establishing salaried conditions, the scouts have been losing enthusiasm – as was predicted in the third year of operations. Local residents in the villages are now recognising the intervention of the scouts. This has been evident in that a number of times on field tours when community members complained about being harassed by the scouts. Upon further investigation it was clear that in fact, it was not a case of harassment but rather indignation at being found guilty.

The most interesting of questions was: 'If I have evaded the scouts in the bush and am eating game meat in my house, can I still be arrested?' Obviously, the main issue is one of 'being caught red handed' rather than a major transformation taking place. This change of heart will take a long time to happen.

To support the work of the village scouts, the walking boots (good quality ex German army) were distributed, and five more tents were distributed to the Chibwika scouts. A set of sleeping bags, bush hats, head lamps and Tee shirts were also distributed, so that each scout is fully kitted out on patrol.



Scouts Chipoya and Kanyembu showing off some exhibits from patrols



Setting up a tent; boots sponsored by Kesho Trust; showing off a sleeping bag!, Tee shirt

Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) has also shown their dedication to continue patrols with the village scouts. They did not manage to apprehend any poachers although there was minor evidence of the poachers around the areas. Events such as bush pigs running through the village in Ntambu, have convinced the local population that trends of depletion can and are being reversed.

During the month of May, ZAWA officials met and negotiated with the two communities so that satellite bush camps could be built for their officers to operate more regularly, close to the Game Management Areas. The presence of the ZAWA officers means that patrols will be able to have legal weapons for self

protection, something that has been an ongoing concern for all of us with the risk of engagement.



The proposed camp site for Ntambu is already in use as scout base.

A grant was kindly given by the Beit Trust to construct these two camps. Work will start in July.

The exciting news is that Africa Parks are very interested in taking over the West Lunga Park this year, and are in negotiations with ZAWA at the moment. There were two visits in May from senior officials of Africa Parks, including the chairman of the board of directors.

Tourism

Plans to build self-catering camps for the CRB's are still underway. Funding has been applied for to construct two camps this year on the West Lunga and on the Kabompo river. The bid was unsuccessful, but we will try other partners. The building of camps will need to be coupled with the training of one or two tour guides to make sure that there is a positive scenario for development of a community based tourism in the two areas we have been working in for these five years.

The plans are for a small rondavel (round cottage) which will be thatched, or alternatively a tented camp with thatched roof covers for shade. Ablutions and a water supply facility will also be incorporated for this facility to make it habitable and attractive for weekend tourism from the mining companies and from local 'well to do' businessmen in the area.

Conservation Farming

Conservation Farming is finally becoming more popular after four years of efforts by the Trust. The attraction of Agro-forestry is growing because of the high cost of inorganic fertilisers. There is an increasing demand for lime too, as it is so evident that it has a dramatic effect on yield – especially with legumes like ground nuts. 4 tons of lime has been bought for sale (at cost = \$3/bag) to the local farmers.



Above: Christine Sankowa with her Moringa tree

Moringa (which has been dubbed the 'miracle tree') has stirred great interest with the communities. It has many uses – fodder, relish, medicine etc., and they



Right: Moringa seedlings on the way for distribution

presently can't get enough of it. In particular, communities are interested in its medicinal properties. Almost 1000 seedlings of moringa have been planted this year with plans to distribute a further 2000 during the coming rainy season starting in December 2008. The growing of moringa is a requirement for all recipients of the livestock grants.

A team of eight participants went to Masaiti Training Centre in Luanshya for a seminar on Conservation farming. The participants have since been holding their

own training sessions with fellow VAG members in the community, which implies that we have reached the tipping point as far as acceptance of the new methods of farming over the old traditional slash and burn approach.



Winnord Kabinda showing members of his village how to plant Moringa

Conservation Education

This educational project called Chongololo Club has been consistently carried out on all the field trips. Support from Chongololo headquarters Lusaka has been erratic but there are moves to make this more readily available for use in the school work.

A new community FM radio station has recently been initiated in Mwinilunga town. West Lunga Trust has decided to take advantage of the facility to help in the educational process in the larger community which we are not reaching as yet. Chongololo are going to make available their materials for adaptation to the Lunda language medium at the community radio station.

Carbon Trading

West Lunga Trust has been investigating the feasibility of getting involved in Climate Change intervention. To this end, Sand County had funded WLT to undertake a study tour to Mozambique to observe what a commercial enterprise called Envirotrade are doing by combining Carbon Trading with rural development work in a buffer zone to the famous Gorongosa Park. The focus is on protection of existing forest, and replanting of new trees – indigenous and fruit trees.

Two visits from Envirotrade were conducted during this year to assess the local situation in the North West Province of Zambia and neighbouring areas of DRC and Angola.

The Mozambique trip was conducted by the two leaders of WLT, in preparation for a later group of community members, including the chiefs. The report of this field trip is included as Annex 1.

Income Generation



This year the Trust has been able to make use of a further \$ 4000 from Sand County Foundation to empower the community members with livestock grants, which are given on a revolving fund system. The concept is to reduce dependence on wildlife for protein supply. The initial livestock grants were done on a much smaller scale last year and the delivery was to VAG communities. Some hard lessons were learned in administration of these grants to groups. This time grants were given to individuals and the VAG communities were able to choose the recipients. Close monitoring will be done to make sure that the grants are not sold off, and also to measure just how beneficial it will be to the livelihood and income status of the recipients.

Rosemary Mukosayi – goat herd

Administration

CRB Administration

A capacity building workshop was held for the Village Action Group Secretaries, Treasurers and Chairmen. This proved very useful for them. It also highlighted the need for more training particularly for the treasurers who will soon become more active as more funds are being channelled through the CRB. (Appendix 1)

The Community Resource Boards are now taking steps towards official registration with the government of Zambia and they have opened banking accounts in Mwinilunga. This is a big step forwards. In November 2009, the CRB's are scheduled to hold their first re-elections.

A new development has taken place recently in the initiation of a 'Chibwika Development Foundation', which is comprised of senior members of the community stakeholders in the Chibwika area. The chief is the patron and two of his sons are committee members, together with other men of integrity such as the local magistrate who farms in that area. This development is an important step forwards and the WLT will work closely with this new foundation to support local initiatives to map the way forwards. An introductory meeting was held in June and the initial planning meeting is scheduled for July 19th, 2008. WLT is invited to make a presentation to the new board.

The large 'land use plan' maps were brought from Canada, kindly donated by David Henderson (a volunteer from 2006) and are being framed for presentation to the communities as the first draft for future development. The acceptance of their own land use plan will be the tipping point for control of development in these areas.

West Lunga Trust administration

West Lunga Trust underwent the first formal audit this year. Although it was confirmed that all funds had been used well, there were criticisms on the administration system which need to be addressed. Last year the Trust Board had made a decision to have an administration system designed and monitored. This was not taken up and we have been continuing in much the same modus operandi of low budget administration.

Development Fund of Norway asked that WLT align the component that is being funded by them to the system being used by Harvest Help of Lusaka. This has been delayed, but there is the promise that this will be done in July, so that all funding from DF can be administered accordingly to a higher standard.

WLT is undergoing a staff change. Rebecca Mpumba is moving on to a new job in Lusaka, and Mr Mubanga Tiza will be the part time co-ordinator as of July 1st, 2008. We are going to miss Rebecca as she has done such a lot these 3 years.

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WLT is in the process of preparing a 3 year plan which will be funded by Development Fund of Norway. It will include 'core activities' which has been a difficult area for other funding in the past years.

Conclusions

WLT is gaining credibility in its work. The original proposal of a Community Based Natural Resource Management was met with suspicion as communities are so used to NGO's coming and making promises which are never fulfilled. WLT is now being acknowledged as a local player in the rural development of NWP. The fact that the directors are resident in the community makes a significant difference.

Although motivation among the scouts was low last year, the improvements in game counts that they are seeing on patrols have been a large boost to their morale: that something will come out their hard work.

WLT is gaining in local knowledge with the communities where it is active.

WLT administration system needs to be designed and implemented to enable adequate monitoring.

External monitoring and evaluation needs to be undertaken at regular intervals to make sure that the program is fulfilling its objectives. These two points will make it easier for the various parties who are supporting WLT to assess what is happening with their funding.

There is need for another round of sensitisation in the community. As is common in the community, the initial sensitisation is always met with suspicion and aloofness.

Climate Change intervention through sale of carbon credits could be a very useful way of motivating community members to change their way of life into a more environmentally friendly approach. Envirotrade is engaging in this area together with the WLT and will conduct their third visit this year during August 2008.

Proposed Activities for the 2nd Semester

- Drama team presentations and DVD preparation
- Weekly Radio Program
- Annual General Meeting
- Land Use Planning Meeting with the various line Ministries
- Disbursement of income generating programme for the Scouts
- Building of CRB Depots/ Offices and Scout camps
- Envirotrade visit in August
- Transect game counts in August and September
- Scout visit to Nchila Game ranch
- Promotion of conservation farming

Charles Rea

Secretary

Appendix 1

Summary of Workshop Proceedings

A Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) Workshop was held at Nyang'ombe Christian Training centre from 29th April to 1st May 2008 under the auspices of West Lunga Conservation Trust (WLCT) in Mwinilunga District. Participants were drawn from Ntambu and Chibwika Chiefdoms comprising Board members and some VAG committee members. 36 participants were invited. The venue, which is a Christian training centre, was ideal for the workshop on account of its isolation and availability of training facilities.

In terms of Resource Personnel, they were drawn from Kasempa and Solwezi and are employees of Zambia Wildlife Authority in the capacities of extension officer and Ranger Operations.

Being the first of its kind, attention was focused more on the fundamentals of the CBNRM programmes. Subsequent courses therefore should be designed to equip them with basic knowledge and skills that are needed to manage sustainably community resources under CBNRM programme.

The course lessons were segmented into three parts to suit the 3-day duration of the workshop. These lessons began at 08:00hrs and ended at 16:30hrs everyday. In between lessons periods of one hour, breaks for convenience sake were integrated. In addition at 10:00hrs of everyday, participants were released for tea whilst at 12:30hrs for Lunch and Lessons resumed at 14:00hrs.

Prior to the beginning of each day's lessons recaps were made as to remind each other of the previous day's lessons. In line to this, people were asked to volunteer taking the participants into these sessions. Each day required different people who had never recapitulated.

Plenary sessions were held to encourage participation, brainstorming and collective resolutions in their groups. For maximum integration, groups were not permanent as such each group assignment demanded reorganization. During group discussion, each group was required to appoint one person to give a presentation on behalf the group. Flip charts and the board were used for presentations.

The workshop was concluded by having resolutions pertaining to the on going abuse of office by some CRB members and village scouts who are indulging in illegal activities. These activities range from releasing suspects to fining suspects and pocket the proceeds whilst exhibits were shared.