



FORS News

Volume 16

Issue 1

September

2007

CONGRATULATIONS MBOMIPA!

The Friends of Ruaha Society

FORS is a registered charity based in Iringa, Tanzania near Ruaha National Park. FORS was started in 1984 to assist with the task of safeguarding the wildlife in the park and its environment. FORS strives to increase the responsibility of the local communities around the park, in Idodi and Pawaga divisions, to slow the destruction of the environment and assist in the search for new balances between people, wildlife and the environment.

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FORS extends their heartfelt congratulations to MBOMIPA (Matumizi Bora ya Malihai Idodi na Pawaga/ Sustainable Use of Natural Resources in Idodi and Pawaga) for their successful bid to establish the Pawaga-Idodi Wildlife Management Area (PIWMA), one of the first of its kind in Tanzania, allowing local people to manage and benefit from their wildlife.

The village association, with the assistance of the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), has worked hard towards this goal which will allow both the protection of an important dispersal area for wildlife just south of Ruaha National Park, and for local people to

realize benefits from these wildlife. This area is home to significant numbers of elephant, buffalo, lion, leopard, cheetah and hunting dogs.

The area also has tremendous potential for tourism which will contribute to the sustainable improvement of livelihoods in Idodi and Pawaga divisions.



MBOMIPA village game scouts returning from training in Songea this year

In our ongoing support of MBOMIPA and their goals, FORS, with support from the Rufford Small Grants Organization, continues to fund MBOMIPA village game scouts to attend training at Likuyu Sekomaganga Training Centre. The course provides relevant education on conservation management and anti-poaching activities. The trained scouts become leaders in MBOMIPA's increasingly professional team of caretakers for the new Wildlife Management Area.

For a detailed map of the new WMA and FORS Schools, see Page 3

FORS' Trademark Educational Safaris Continue With New Support

As FORS went to press with this edition of the newsletter, we received word that our proposal to the Waterloo Foundation for support of the 2007 Education Safaris has been funded! The generous funding will allow FORS to take all standard two and standard six students and teachers from all 22 of our primary schools in Idodi and Pawaga on excursions to the park in 2007!

Children and teachers alike come back changed from these trips, with a deeper understanding and appreciation of their precious ecosystem. Thank you, Waterloo, for your support of this vital educational experience.

FORS uses both theoretical and practical learning methodologies throughout its Environ-

mental Education Program. One of our most popular and important field experiences continues to be our Educational Safaris to Ruaha National Park.

Last year's FORS safaris were the third for the Idodi schools and the first for Pawaga teachers and students. Standard six students from nine Idodi schools and three Pawaga schools were included in our 2006 excursions to the park.

Ruaha National Park once again provided wonderful guides who taught the Idodi and Pawaga visitors about the animals, the river and the vegetation.

Wildlife highlights included basking crocodiles, hippos, elephant, giraffe, warthog and lions.

Question and answer sessions, film showings and a walking sa-

fari were also part of the experience.

During the walking safari teachers and students were encouraged to identify different animals, common trees and shrubs and ground birds as well as tracks and signs of different animals.

"It is impossible to forget what we have learned through the game drive and the films" said one of the teachers from Pawaga division.

Veteran Idodi visitors were as enthusiastic about their safaris, saying "Learning is a process because each new day I visit the Park I always learn a new thing".

For photos of last year's safaris, see Page 5

Educational Materials Help EE Program Come Alive

(By Magreth Fadhili)

A central piece of any good education program is access by teachers to the appropriate and necessary materials.

For the FORS EE teachers this is our own EE manual, which outlines the lessons and activities that FORS designed to complement the national curriculum's environmental education requirements. Generous funding from the British Tanzania Society (BTS) and Liz de Leyser has enabled FORS to print and dis-

tribute enough manuals for each standard in all 22 of our participating schools to have their own copies. Further fund-



The teachers from Mahungu receiving teachers manuals



Our esteemed visitors Liz and Ron Fennell From BTS in the FORS Office appreciating the printed teachers' manual.

ing is being used to supply our new Pawaga schools with much-needed educational materials including notice boards and tree identification signs for their school grounds. FORS was fortunate to have a visit from two BTS Board Members, Liz and Ron Fennell in giving us a chance to share our vision and learn more about BTS' important work in Africa. Thank you Liz de

Leyser and BTS for your support!

Environmental Education Expands in Pawaga

(By Jackson Ngowi)

Friends of Ruaha Society (FORS) has been implementing its Environmental Education Program (EEP) in Pawaga division since March 2006, after receiving generous funding from the United Nations Development Project. Currently FORS is working with 12 primary schools in Pawaga division. All of these schools are located in villages that are part of MBOMIPA, the village association that recently gazetted its own Wild-

life Management Area made up of donated village land. (See MBOMIPA page 1) FORS'S expansion in Pawaga would not be possible without the enthusiastic support of the District Education Officer, Ward Education Officers and Head Teachers. (For more information see the FORS Model pg 7).



River Update

By Festo Semanini, Eco-Hydrologist from the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)- Ruaha Landscape Program

On the day I was assigned to do my first job as Eco-Hydrologist for WCS, the Ruaha River was dry. My task was to set up and sample dozens of grid transects along 100 km of the Ruaha River so that we could compare the densities of animals in areas where the river dries to their densities where dry season water remains. With my field gear in hand, I went straight to business. I managed to sample several sites that day before

in the dry river bed. After sunset and several lively games, we called it a day. That night I heard a strange noise coming from the river. At sunrise I awoke to discover what had caused the mysterious noises in the night: the river was flowing! It was early in the season, so the water was met with surprise but also with happiness – the Great Ruaha River should never be completely drying up in the first place. We speculated that the river might stop after a few days and resume again later—as it did last year—but this year it just kept flowing! With just days to go before turning the calendar to 2007,



Late November—dry river bed



Early December—fully flowing



Mid August—drying again

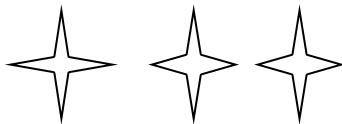
the Ruaha overflowed its banks at Lunda. This was more water than any of us could have hoped for! So although my whole exercise in the river bed was ruined, I felt optimistic that perhaps the health of the river was improving. Have we seen early signs of revival for this precious river? Maybe. El Niño brought good rains this year and the addition of the Usangu area to Ruaha National Park means that the swamp is no longer being battered by thousands of head of cattle, but it will take time to recover.

heading back to our field camp at Lunda. The camp was cheerful when I arrived home and a volleyball game was organized

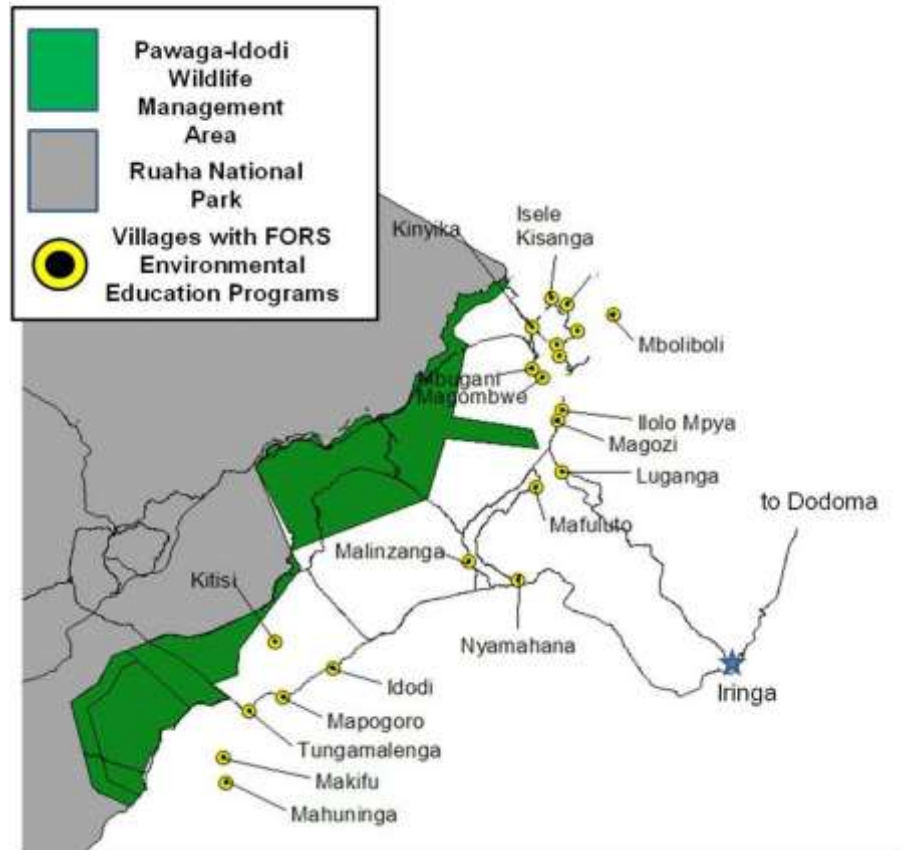
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Continuing from page 2

As I write this article, the Great Ruaha River is low and getting lower every day. It is clear today that the river will dry again this year, despite the wet months behind us. Much water is still being diverted for rice upstream and not returned to the river bed. Perhaps this is the next hurdle to restoring the river to health. I believe there will come a year when I cannot complete a single sampling grid in the Great Ruaha River bed due to a river that flows year round. Let's hope that year comes soon.



NEW WMA AND FORS EE VILLAGES



On The Air— FORS/WCS

Tune in soon to hear FORS on the radio! Radio Ebony, FM 87.8 out of Iringa, will be hosting FORS and the Wildlife Conservation Society's (WCS) Ruaha Conservation Program who are putting together a bi-monthly program. The programs will highlight environmental

education and conservation issues and will include interviews, trips to the field, natural highlights from afar, a kids' corner and more. "The radio is a great way to reach a wide range of people," says FORS Program Manager, Jackson Ngowi, "Children

and adults alike are listening out in the villages. This is a great opportunity for community outreach and for FORS to expand its education efforts up and out."

Our first broadcast is tentatively planned for the afternoon of 15 September.

FORS & WCS

*ON AIR
SOON*

THROUGH

*EBONY FM
RADIO
87.8*

Letters to FORS

We would love to hear your ideas, opinions, suggestions and comments regarding FORS work or any other relevant issues. Please send us an email at friendsofruaha@yahoo.com or write to us at Friends of Ruaha, Box 692, Iringa, Tanzania, East Africa. Relevant photos are also welcome and may be included in future newsletter or website.

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY, 2007

(By Yassin Mbululo and Mariam Nguvava)

Each year FORS helps our participating primary schools to celebrate World Environment Day (WED) on 5 June. It is always a challenge to offer our support in a way that includes as many teachers and children as possible- especially now that FORS works in 22 Idodi and Pawaga schools!

This year, in order to accomplish this goal, we created a model we hope will serve us in the future. "Centers" were designated as central places for the celebrations. In Idodi division there were three Centers and schools traveled to the nearest one to partake in the day's events. Pawaga division also had three Centers at Magozi, Itunundu and Kinyika allowing several of our new Pawaga schools to enjoy their first FORS-sponsored WED.

The theme for this year's WED was "Climatic

Change" (Mabadiliko ya Hali ya Hewa).

Groups of students and villagers entertained each other with songs dramas, traditional dances, rap and poetry, all relating to the theme.

Standard six students participated in the annual FORS Environmental Story Board Event, working in small groups to create illustrated stories around the theme of Water: Floods



Drawings from standard six students



Students on the stage marking WED

and Drought. Awards were given for Best Story, Best Illustrations, Most Relevant Environmental Message and Best Overall.

Awards were also given for the School Environment Assessment. School grounds had been evaluated on the presence of trees, waste management and disposal prac-

tices and for active work toward environmentally friendly solutions to the management of the environment.

FORS staff welcomed Guests of Honour at each center. Our esteemed guests included Mr. Bakari Mbano from the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Regional Tourist Advisor

Mr. Nicolous Shirima, Mr. Duma (MBOMIPA Chairperson) and Village Chair people. Representatives from Ebony FM radio station also joined in the celebration.

In Idodi, FORS' most successful WED was capped off by the ever-popular football matches whereby Makifu and Kitanewa were the winners.

Annual General Meeting

(By Magreth Fadhill)

This year's Annual General Meeting was conducted on Saturday, 24th March, 2007 at 10:00 am in Iringa

FORS Chairperson, Kate Forrester Kibuga, welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced herself, other committee members and new Program Managers Magreth Fadhill and Jackson Ngowi (see FORS Team Updates Pg 8). A financial report was given by FORS treasurer (Shanna Sheridan-Johnson) including the overview of 2006 and the budget for 2007.

During the meeting brief talks were given about the progress of our EE Program in Idodi and Pawaga divisions and our plans for the coming year.

Before closing, committee elections were held. Kate

Forrester Kibuga was elected to continue to be FORS Chairperson, Chris Coppolillo will continue as Secretary, Shauna Sheridan Johnson as Treasurer, and Will Phillips was reelected for the coming year as a committee member. FORS welcomed Mr. Ayubu Msago, the Wildlife Conservation Society's Community Liaison, as a new committee member.



Mr. Ayubu Msago



Yassin Mbululo



Mariam Nguvava

SUA INTERNS

In May of this year, FORS was happy to host Yassin Mbululo and Mariam Nguvava for their Field Practicals, part of their training requirements from Sokoine-University, where they are both studied Environmental Sciences and Management.

Yassin and Mariam helped FORS plan World Environment Day celebrations, worked on articles for this newsletter and offered gen-

eral office support.

FORS would like to thank them for their hard work and the interest they have in raising environmental awareness. We wish them the best in their future endeavors.



Film Shows Mark World Water Week

(By Jackson Ngowi)

The theme for this year's United Nations' World Water Week was Coping with Water Scarcity. FORS marked the occasion by spending two weeks in April teaming with Maajabu Film from Arusha to show films in Pawaga and Idodi division villages.

After a year of drought followed by a year of floods, the occasion was timely and the films well-received

“These activities will encourage our kids and the communities



Students from Pawaga celebrating the world World Water Week.

surrounding Ruaha to engage in best practices in water use and conservation.” (Head Teacher, Msolwa Primary School)

“I believe that with these strategies FORS will help us a lot in educating kids and our villagers about environmental issues. I would like to thank FORS and I am begging them to continue with this program of film shows next year.”

Environmental Teacher, Mafuluto Primary School)

The Village Executive Officer of Luganga had this to say: “We as the village promise that we will give FORS every possible assistance since we believe that environmental education will be of great help to our kids and society in general.”

FORS thanks Maajabu Film for their continued support in this important outreach activity.

Continuation of page 1



2006 Educational Safaris



ONGOING FUND RAISING EFFORTS

FORS thanks the British Tanzanian Society (BTS), the Rufford Foundation, UNDP, Waterloo Foundation and our members for their ongoing support. Currently we are raising funds

for the following:

- ⇒ Learning Lab
- ⇒ Teacher and Student Educational Safaris for 2008
- ⇒ Radio programs
- ⇒ Further scholarships for ranger training
- ⇒ Beekeeping project in Pawaga division.

- ⇒ Activities that supplement our EE program including World Environmental Day and Water Week activities.
- ⇒ Daily operation of the NGO including office rent, vehicle upkeep, staff salaries and benefits

T-shirts and other FORS products for sale in the FORS Office



FORS

Tanzania:
National Bank of Commerce
H/O Dar es Salaam
NBC IBD SWIFT: NLCBTZTX
I ringa Branch
I ringa, Tanzania
Branch code: 851528
Friends Of Ruaha Society
Account No. 028103002483

Overseas:
New UK account in process of
being set up. For the time being,
please send checks to Emma
Forrester at: 16 Fernwood, Albert
Dr, London SW19 6LR, UK,
emma@yseski.co.uk

Subscription Form

Friends Of Ruaha Society is a Non-Government Organisation registered in 1984 with the Registrar of Societies, Tanzania under Charity Number SO 6394
FORS, P.O. Box 692, I ringa, Tanzania
email: friendsofruaha@yahoo.com, website: www.friendsofruaha.org

We welcome new and old members,
the greater our membership the better our ability to achieve
our aims and objectives.

Those who would like to become a member for the present year are requested to fill in this form and send to the address mentioned above or contact FORS by email!

Those with an account in Tanzania wishing to continue to subscribe by Standing order are requested to fill in the necessary form (each bank has its own) and ask their bank to pay their subscription or make an annual donation on their behalf on the 15th of January each year without further reference to them. Donations made in this fashion are tax deductible under Tanzanian law.

Membership fees	Student/Volunteer	Individual	Family	Corporate
Tanzanian citizen (Tsh)	2,000.00	10,000.00	24,000.00	200,000.00
Expatriate (Tsh)	12,000.00	20,000.00	50,000.00	200,000.00
Overseas (US\$)	24.00	40.00	100.00	400.00
Overseas (£ Sterling)	15.00	25.00	55.00	225.00

Cheques in Tsh. Should be made payable to FORS and sent to P.O.Box 692, I ringa
Cheques in Dollars or Sterling should be made payable to the Ruaha Trust and sent to:
Emma Forrester, 16 Fernwood, Albert Dr., London SW19 6LR, UK, emma@yseski.co.uk

To avoid confusion, please let us know if you have made a payment to the bank!

Name:

Membership:

(tick) New member Membership renewal

(tick) Tanzanian citizen Expatriate Overseas

(tick) Student/volunteer Individual Family Corporate

Method of payment:

Postal address:

Email:

Date: Signature:

FORS Model

(By Magreth Fadhili)

Friends of Ruaha continues to perfect its environmental education model, with hopes of better serving our current schools as well looking toward the future and possible expansion into other areas of Tanzania.

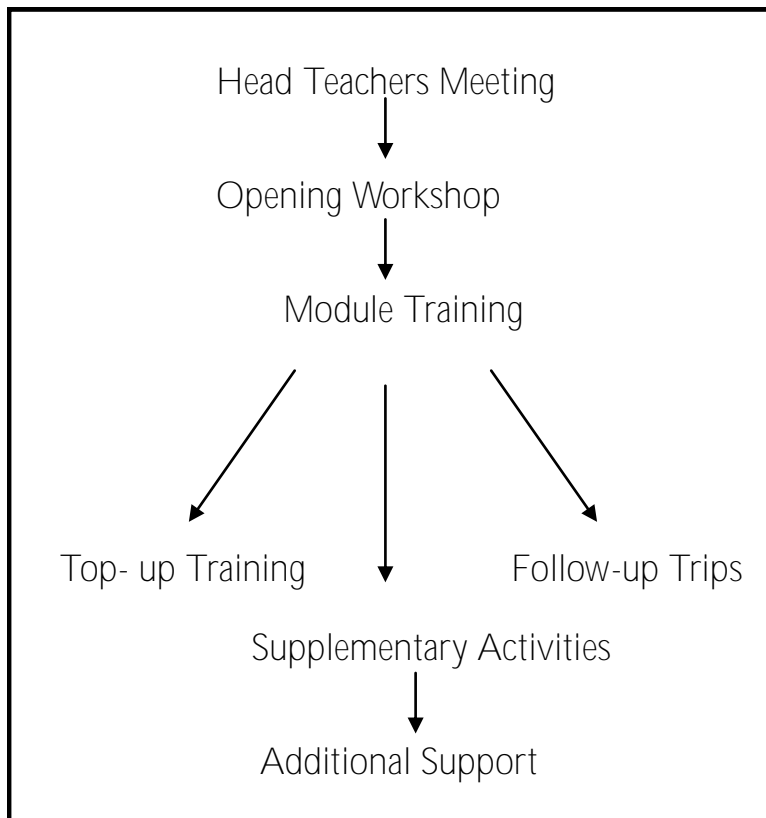
While our teacher's manual is our most important concrete tool (see article page 2), it is but one component of the larger model (see flow chart below). FORS continues to develop its program built on the belief that teachers and students are active participants in their own teaching and learning experiences, and that a layered, hands-on approach, with materials and activities that appeal to people with varied interests and strengths is an effective way of building knowledge and empowering children and the adults they live amongst. In this spirit, FORS maintains frequent contact with our participating schools, conducting both formal training and casual feedback sessions. Frequent updates of materials as well as creative supplementary activities are also important pieces of the program.

Head Teachers Meeting
Head Teachers and Ward Education Officers meet with FORS staff to plan the year's activities.

Opening Workshop
All EE Teachers meet with FORS staff for an overview of the four modules (Water, Weather, Wildlife, Soil/Forests/Fire) and how they fit into the national curriculum, training activities in new teaching methods and general discussion on incorporating and addressing environmental issues in the classroom. We have had great

help at our Opening Workshops from Mr. Pascal Mgelekele from Makifu Primary in Idodi as we have made our way in our new Pawaga schools.

feedback from teachers which we can then feed directly back into the program.



Top-Up Training
Top-Up Training is done every three months for EE teachers as they prepare to teach the next module. The small workshop sessions include content training, methodology development, games and energizers, and feedback time.

Follow-Up Visits
These short but frequent meetings, conducted at each school or pair of schools, are all about feedback and monitoring. We try to visit with all of our teachers once or twice during each module. The aim of these visits is to provide a comfortable forum for teachers to share their experiences, and for FORS to both offer support and gather valuable

Supplementary Activities
These activities, which include World Water Week celebrations, World Environment Day events and our Educational Safaris, offer out-of-class opportunities for kids and their teachers to learn more about their environment. These are the most popular parts of our program with students and teachers alike and for good reason! The fun hands-on aspect is essential for meaningful learning.

Additional Support & Outreach
FORS continues to increase its efforts to reach the larger population with its conservation message. Currently, our ranger training, radio program development and community film shows are well underway.

FORS
P.O. Box 692
Iringa
Tanzania

Phone:
255 754 353521 (Office)

Email:
friendsof ruaha@yahoo.com
www.friendsof ruaha.org

FORS is a charity registered in 1984 with the Registrar of Societies, Tanzania under Charity Number SO 6394.

How to contact FORS

Anyone who would like to get in touch with FORS for information or other matters are welcome to contact any of the FORS Team at the postal or email addresses mentioned on this page.

Tanzania:
National Bank of Commerce
H/O Dar es Salaam
NBC IBD SWIFT:
NLCBTZTX
Iringa Branch
Iringa, Tanzania
Branch code: 851528
Friends Of Ruaha Society
Account No.
028103002483

Overseas:
New UK account in process of being set up. For the time being, please send checks to Emma Forrester at: 16 Fernwood, Albert Dr, London SW19 6LR.UK, emma@yseski.co.uk

FORS TEAM UPDATES



Magreth Fadhili

FORS would like to introduce Magreth Fadhili and Jackson Ngowi, graduates from Sokoine University of Agriculture-Morogoro.

Magreth began work with FORS as a Program Manager in December 2006 after completing her Bachelor of Science in Environmental Sciences and Management in May 2006. "I'm very happy to be working with FORS because it gives me the opportunity to work in the field of my study. Working with FORS has increased my enthusiasm for environmental conservation through the interaction we have with the environment and communities surrounding Ruaha National Park".

Jackson began to work

with FORS in January 2007 as a Program Manager and he has Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Management. Before joining FORS, he worked as an Assistant Field Researcher with the Tanzania Corridors Project through the University of California and WCS. "I am very excited to be working with FORS. I really like my job because it is in line with my recent studies concerning conservation of our natural resources sustainably".



Jackson Ngowi

WELCOME

**JACKSON
&
MAGRETH**

A Visit From Sarah!

Friends of Ruaha has recently had a visit from one of their first employees, Sarah Vatland. Sarah left FORS last year to return to America to start a graduate program at University of California, Berkeley. A few months later, Anna-Maria Simon also went for further studies in Holland. With these transitions, FORS reorganized their office, hired new employees and kept progressing, but we have really missed Sarah and Anna! Sarah returned to Tanzania in June of this year to see FORS' progress for herself. The full expansion into Pawaga made Sarah proud as she was one of the initial creators of the FORS Environmental Education Program. Sarah spent a few days in the office advising on administrative procedures and doing computer training for Jackson and Magreth. This training will assist our new Program Managers in their financial tasks as well as enabling them to do things like create this newsletter. Thank you, Sarah, for your time and continued commitment to FORS. We look forward to having Sarah back next year when she returns to Tanzania to pursue fieldwork for her graduate degree.

Fruits of FORS in Idodi

(By Mariam Nguvava)

One of FORS' first environmental education efforts back in 2002 was to help primary schools start tree nurseries. Five years later, we can see the fruits of that effort. The following photograph shows the Neem trees (Miarobaini), found at Mlowa primary school.



These trees have medicinal value and help to control soil erosion, not to mention making Mlowa primary a nicer place to go to school.

