



KVTC's Dar es Salaam Office Team

From left to right Khadija, Francis, Barnabas, Fambo and Arlene



LISTEN TO "MITIKI YETU" ON RADIO PAMBAZUKO 89.5 FM EVERY FRIDAY 19:30-20:00 & SATURDAY 07:30-08:00

KVTC SINCE 1992

## From Irvine's desk

KVTC is fully committed to improve gender diversity within its own ranks and that of its contractor base.

Each year we put more effort into making sure that the company reflects the diversity of the population within which it operates.

In a space of about 5 years, the company has been able to nearly double its percentage of female employees to 27%.

5 years ago, the company had no female foresters but now has 5 qualified competent female foresters.

About 70% of KVTC's landholding is managed for conservation purposes. The company has been able to keep most of this conservation land almost intact through various conservation and protection programs.

The company is going a step further to ensure that the High Conservation Value Areas identified in a study carried out last year are protected and their status enhanced.

All these programs can only be supported through ensuring that KVTC continues to be a profitable enterprise. Management will ensure that continues to be the case now and in the future.

Goodbye KVTC.

By Hanta Rwegoshora

I joined TANWAT one of the first CDC group of companies in Tanzania in January 1990. By then I didn't dream of working for KVTC since the company never existed. It was in 1992 when CDC established KVTC and assigned TANWAT to manage and oversee the initial establishment process of KVTC. By then CDC had opened a liaison office in Dar

es Salaam (DPSO) to provide support services to CDC group companies in Tanzania. These included TANWAT, EUTCO, Kibena Tea, Wakulima Tea and then KVTC. I found myself working for KVTC at the time of its inception. I was assigned to offer support services which included procurement of capital goods and all inputs such as farm equipment, factory machinery, teak seeds and seedlings/clones, plus related office supplies.

In 2008 KVTC transformed from a forest/farm project to a fully-fledged integrated forestry company that includes an ultramodern sawmill processing teak products for local sales and export. A new management team was established and DPSO's role was also transformed into that of a liaison office, serving KVTC only. With this new setup, my role also changed to include facilitation/support for the export operations. Thanks to the strict compliance of KVTC management the company earned the confidence of all its stakeholders. The trust also helped to nurture reliable suppliers and customers. This has indeed helped KVTC minimise overheads which otherwise would have burdened the company's entire value chain.

Early in 2023, I started preparing for my retirement by training Fambo Etamagwe as my successor.

By the end of 2023, my successor was already in full control. I have not stopped extending all the required assistance to ensure sustainability of KVTC operations. Officially I retired on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024. However, I will continue to provide consultancy service as and when required.

The unique part of my story is that I participated in the inception of the company, its growth and leave while it's rising to be Africa's largest sustainable teak forest company; a model for responsible forestry in Africa.

There are important lessons learnt from my working life at KVTC.

1. Excuses of failure to deliver don't add value in your work performance
2. There are always alternative ways of solving problems, explore all available options before you give up or seek for help
3. Success is derived through team work, hard work, honest, patience and belief in the Grace of God.

What I will miss from KVTC: real friends, a professional and hardworking team and the numerous calls seeking my assistance.



Hanta Rwegoshora

## KVTC's Dar Es Salaam Office.

By Arlene Gomes

KVTC Dar es Salaam Office provides support services to the main KVTC operations in Kilombero Valley. The team is made up of two female and three male employees, all of them Tanzanian nationals. The team carries out all the procurement and export processes for the company.

Khadija Bakari was employed in October 2009 and worked as an Assistant Clerk in Mavimba, Ifakara. In October 2013 she was transferred to Dar es Salaam office and works as an Administrative Clerk. Her responsibility is to carry out all administrative duties in the office. She receives all the invoices from suppliers and checks the invoices to ensure that they are correct before forwarding the invoices onto the accounts department.

Francis Kimonje was employed in March 2008 and works as an export clerk. His responsibility is to process and obtain all the export permits for teak timber that is exported to India and other overseas markets.

Barnabas Mkude was employed in March 2008 and works as an export clerk. His responsibility is to apply for all the export permits online, among other duties.

Fambo Etamagwe was employed in May 2011 and worked at the headquarters at Mavimba Village as a Cashier and Stores supervisor until November 2023. In December 2023 he was transferred on promotion to Dar es Salaam as the Procurement Manager. He deals with all the purchasing of materials from local and overseas suppliers.

Arlene Gomes was employed in November 2017 and is the company's Commercial Manager. Her main role is to manage all the exports logistics from booking of containers, trucks, upliftment of cargo from the sawmill, forwarding in Dar es Salaam and preparation of all the required export documents. Arlene is also responsible for the presentation of all shipping documents to customers' banks which triggers the payment process. Arlene plays a significant role in some of the company's administration and banking duties.

## Maria Mrema

By Maria Mrema



Hi. I am Maria Mrema. I am married with one child. I joined KVTC in 2022 and I am working as the Log Yard manager. KVTC operates a central log yard that receives all the logs from the forest. The logs are offloaded, measured, tallied and sorted according to size and quality. The log yard team is responsible for allocating the logs to 6 external log buyers and the company's own sawmill.

The team is made up of 1 supervisor, 4 logger operators and 8 tally clerks, 4 of whom are ladies.

My lifelong desire to visit forest areas led me to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Forestry from Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA). I graduated in 2019.

From 2019 to 2021 I got internship at Tanzania Forest Service Agency (TFSA) where I was working as a field officer. I led a small team in tree seeds collection. The internship and experience I got from university field work gave me the confidence to join KVTC.

I love encouraging teamwork and collaboration, always striving for accuracy to meet company goals and perform our duties effectively.

My goal is to ensure that all log yard responsibilities are properly managed for the success of the company.

## High Conservation Value Areas Training at KVTC

By Joseph John

KVTC manages 28,132ha of land. About 30% of this is planted under teak and 70% is set aside for conservation purposes. KVTC's conservation land (about 20,000ha) plays an important role in the area and can act as a wildlife corridor between Udzungwa Mountains and Nyerere National Park. It also provides refuge to a lot of animals and is also of high bio-diversity value.

In January 2023, KVTC's conserved natural forest was assessed to identify the status of high conservation value areas (HCVA) categories. The study was carried out by a team of experts from Environmental Forest Certification Limited (EFC) and it involved consultation of various stakeholders, participatory mapping, and field assessment of the HCVA and geo referencing them through GIS system.

The study confirmed that KVTC land has all six categories of HCVAs. The study advised on various strategies and monitoring programs to protect the six HCVAs which will enhance the existence of rare, threatened, and endangered species of flora and fauna, as well as provide refugia from unprotected land.

In February 2024 KVTC Management organized training on High Conservation Values. The training was conducted at Ifakara Health Institute in Ifakara town. It was facilitated by Environmental Forests Certification Company Limited (EFC) with the same team of experts who did the assessment study. A total of 63 participants attended the training. This comprised of KVTC forest contractor representatives, Village Game Scouts, Plantation Managers, Supervisors, Forest Managers, Social and HSE Manager.



Dr Richard Giliba (EFC) in full flow.

The training took place on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> February 2024, and it aimed at creating a good understanding of the importance of HCVs and capacity building on how to maintain the HCVs without them being compromised by any forest operations. The two-day training achieved the following objectives:

- Participants were exposed to local, national, and global impact of deforestation and climate change.
- Participants were trained on HCV Concepts and categories of HCVA based on HCVNR toolkit and their actual locations on Maps.
- Participants were trained on how to manage the HCV areas to either maintain or enhance their status.
- Participants were trained on monitoring the status of the identified HCVAs.
- Participants were able to identify threats and how to mitigate various threats that may impact HCVAs.

This training program helped the participants to improve their knowledge and skills on the concept of HCVAs and sharing experiences on various conservation challenges. These improvements will positively affect conservation efforts and commitments to protect all the categories of HCVAs with the collaboration of various stakeholders for local and national environmental, cultural, and social benefit.



Boundary between KVTc and Mbasa Village land.

## KVTc Management Team Forest Field Visit

By Geoffrey Kessy

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of July 2023, the forestry team arranged a field visit for all the KVTc managers working at the company's headquarters at Mavimba. The tour was aimed at giving the whole team a better understanding of what the forestry team encounters in their daily working lives.

The tour covered the whole forest value chain from the nursery to harvesting and haulage operations.

### 1. KVTc nursery production and nursery upgrade program

The nursery team led by Jeremiah Gumadi and Cleria Kahemela had the opportunity to show the managers the production of seedlings and stumps. KVTc is transforming from planting stumps to improved clones. Cleria had the opportunity to share what she learnt on her visit to Costa Rica on teak clonal propagation.

Jeremiah also highlighted the nursery infrastructure upgrade program where the company is investing in building new greenhouses for that purpose.

### 2. Silviculture operations

Plantation Managers, Yusta Abel, Godi Mwampamba and Gudrun Barnabas had the opportunity to showcase their activities, from preparing a clear-felled compartment to planting and management of teak until harvesting. They covered topics such as weeding, pruning, fertilizing and fire protection.

### 3. Planning and research

The Planning department, among other duties, is responsible for inventory of the company's biological assets. Led by Yusuph Kihwele and Emanuel Manuma the team demonstrated to the visiting managers how they perform inventory work which is critical in the planning of operations and valuation of the entire business. Jeremiah Gumadi also had the opportunity to showcase one of the research trials at block C where the genetic tree improvement program is ongoing.

### 4. Harvesting and haulage.

The team led by Amidu Karim and Hezron Revocatus are responsible for harvesting of teak, both clear-felling and thinning and haulage of logs to the mill.



Amidu Karim, Hezron Revocatus and part of their team (standing)

The team is also responsible for maintaining of forest roads.

At compartment Dgg in Block D, Amidu and his team demonstrated to management how they accomplish their daily operations.

### 5. Forest camp upgrade/renovation.

KVTc is upgrading accommodation of Plantation Managers and firefighting crews. The program started in 2021 where the upgrading/renovation of accommodation in Mafinji block D started and was completed in 2022. The Chief Forestry Manager, Geoffrey Kessy explained how the department has phased the upgrade of all the plantation camps including connecting the houses to the national power grid or installation of solar power.



Drone view of Nakafulu forest camp that is currently being upgraded.

A similar tour is on the cards for employee union representatives.