

## Barack Obama Visits Tanzania

On July 1-2, 2013, US President Barack Obama traveled with his family on a State visit to meet with Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete, reinforcing a long and friendly relationship between the two nations. Fifty years previously, in 1963 (then) Tanganyika's first President, Julius Nyerere, had travelled to Washington to meet President John F. Kennedy. In 1966, Robert Kennedy, as a US Senator from New York, also made an official visit to the African nation.

Obama received an enthusiastic reception, with admirers lining the parade route between the airport and the State House. On arrival, Kikwete showed him a sign designating the newly re-named 'Barack Obama Drive', a picturesque street that fronts the State House and runs along the Indian Ocean. After an afternoon press conference, a tree planting ceremony on the grounds was held in the evening, with Obama planting an mpingo, the national tree of Tanzania. When observing this ceremony on television, Sebastian Chuwa commented that he was touched to see the tree being so honored in international circles and recalled that he himself, some years ago, had planted two mpingo trees on the State House grounds.

During his stay, Obama announced several new initiatives to the peaceful East African nation. *Power Africa*, in partnership with the African Development Bank, will attempt to double access to electricity in sub-Saharan Africa. *Trade Africa* will boost trade both internally and internationally, with initiatives beginning in eastern Africa. An executive order will aid anti-poaching efforts to overcome the alarming increase in elephant and rhino slaughter that has recommenced across Africa.

During the visit Michelle Obama attended the African First Ladies' Summit in Dar es Salaam with First Lady Salma Kikwete officiating. It was also attended by George and Laura Bush and Cherie Blair, wife of Tony Blair.



President Jakaya Kikwete of Tanzania stands to right of US President Barack Obama who is planting an mpingo seedling with help from Tanzanian government officials (left). The tree was planted on the grounds of the Tanzania State House in Dar es Salaam on July 1, 2013 during the Obama family Africa trip. (Photo Credit: [REUTERS/Gary Cameron](#))

## Makuyuni Planting Project

Since 2008 we have been reporting on an mpingo planting project in Makuyuni. As a result of funding by the British Good Gifts Catalogue Sebastian sought out a village area where large numbers of mpingo could be planted. In Tanzania, each village has at its disposal some amount of land that is held in common and a Village Community Council decides how that land can be used for the best interests of its citizens.

In Makuyuni it was decided to devote some acreage of their community land to the growing of mpingo, in association with the ABCP. This has been an ongoing effort, involving many village workers and keeping the ABCP Moshi Mpingo Plot nursery attendants busy in

producing seedlings for the project. Residents of Makuyuni have been devoted to the project, even digging by hand a 1½ mile pipeline to bring water to the plot from a nearby water source. Mr. Gladstone Mariki, a Makuyuni landowner, supervises work at the project site.

Since most of the funding for the project is given to villagers who help with the planting and infrastructure effort, many of the villagers have been able to improve their lives. They have repaired and renovated houses, or purchased bicycles, farm implements and supplies.

Most notably, some have been able to send their children to secondary school, often a rare privilege in African society. This year the village allocated



**Sebastian Chuwa at mpingo orchard in Makuyuni. Planting here began in 2008, when villagers cleared the first acreage of village land in order to participate in the planting project.**

another 45 acres to the project and in addition a number of private landowners have also requested mpingo for planting on their own holdings. One of the difficulties of the project since its beginning has been the work involved in clearing the land.

In this part of Africa there grows a bush called *Acacia mellifera*, a thorny species that poses problems in cutting and handling. It is popularly known as

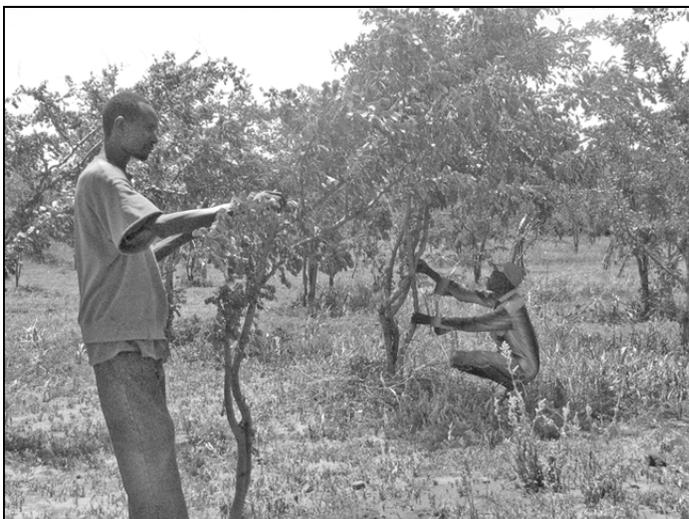


**Elizabeth Chuwa helps to deliver mpingo to Mr. Maole, a villager who is planting mpingo on his private land in Makuyuni.**

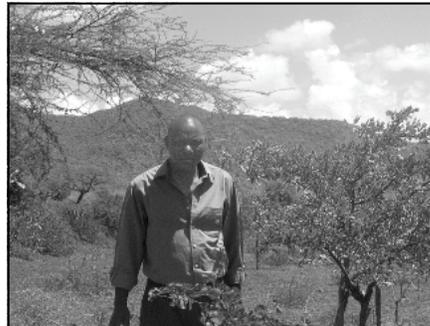
‘wait-a-bit’ because its numerous claw-shaped thorns tend to hook onto passers-by, thus causing them to stop (wait a bit) to remove the prickle carefully in order to avoid injury or shred clothing.

Because of this problem Sebastian is experimenting with a new way of planting. He says, “I have experimented last year with a new method called that area focused at

random planting in attempting to reduce the quantity of land that must be cleared before planting. I only clear circles where we plant the trees in a circular formation with a 10 meter radius allowing us to save space instead of the old system of doing long strict lines. This removes the need to clear the whole area. It is proposed that we can plant over 25,000 trees.”



**Musa Saidi (lt) and Edmund Zakayo (rt) are tending young mpingo trees at Makuyuni Plot. Aftercare is an important aspect of ABCP work, to insure long term survival after the early vulnerable years.**



**Mr. Gladstone Mariki is supervisor at the Makuyuni Plot. He is also planting mpingo on his private land holdings.**

The people of Makuyuni say this is the first large-scale project that has come to their village and are proud of the work they are doing. The ABCP is grateful for the contributions of private donors and the Good Gifts Catalogue in making this project an important part of our conservation of *Dalbergia melanoxylon*.

### Clarinets for Conservation Teams with ABCP in Planting Trees

As a child Michelle Von Haugg dreamed of Africa, hoping someday to follow the path of British primatologist Jane Goodall, in working to protect the fragile wilderness of that far-away continent. In high school she found a second love—classical music and the clarinet. Concentrating her college studies on music, she has since taught private students, performed publicly and traveled with the US Air Force Band. Through

the clarinet, she also learned of the work of Sebastian Chuwa in replanting the mpingo tree from which it is made.



**Michelle Von Haugg**

In 2009, the various strands of her life and interests seemed to coalesce and



**Michele instructs clarinet students at Korongoni Secondary School. In 2010 she started C4C with 12 donated instruments. Other students who were interested attended as observers.**

Michele decided to embark on a new and unique course in life—she determined that she would travel to Tanzania, plant blackwood trees and teach children to play the clarinet. Within the country, although use of the wood in carvings for the tourist industry is well known, its international uses are not. Many have never heard, nor seen a clarinet. Michele wants to change that, to give students the opportunity to play and to set up programs for conservation of the tree. Thus was founded Clarinets for Conservation (C4C).

Michele has taken 3 trips to Tanzania. On her first trip in 2010, Elizabeth Chuwa, Sebastian's wife, helped her find a teaching location and she decided on a secondary school at Korongoni, where she has taught 62 students to date. She comments that they are very fast learners, often picking up the basics faster than her American students. Along with teaching music, she incorporates environmental studies for part of the day.

To fulfill the other part of her mission—tree planting, she works with two conservationists, Samweli Mochiwa and Sebastian Chuwa. Both supply her with nursery seedlings and accompany her to different schools, where they instruct students about conservation and show them how to plant the trees.

performance venues, thus integrating their musical talents with the music and cultural heritage of the country.

Future plans for C4C are ambitious.

The team plans to expand the teaching program to other schools, increase the number of trees planted and eventually build a center for the arts at Korongoni. They are forming partnerships with teachers and conservationists in order to see their dreams materialize: a secure future for African blackwood and the building of a foundation in the musical arts for students in northern Tanzania.

### Moshi Police Academy

In 2011 the ABCP began a planting initiative at the Moshi Police Academy, an academic institution for the training

of law enforcement officials, located in the township of Moshi. Three acreages utilized by the Academy for training purposes were chosen as planting locations: the main grounds in Moshi, a 200-acre location at Kilele Pori and a 35-acre site at Mabogini. Police cadets and members of local Malihai (environmental) Clubs are cooperating in the planting. This year 2,000 trees were planted.

Michele Von Haugg has also established an affiliation with the Police Academy, after accompanying Sebastian on a visit. While there they met with several officials, and had a long discussion with the Commandant, the highest ranking officer at the Academy. On learning of Michele's mission to teach clarinet to Tanzanian students, the officer introduced her to John Machibya, a clarinet player in the Academy band. During subsequent discussions, the Academy and C4C found several points of possible cooperation.

The Commandant requested that



**Stanslaus Nicholas, Clara Mwaipopo, Scott Horsington and Michele Von Haugg, of Clarinets for Conservation, pose with Sebastian (ctr) on visit to obtain seedlings from ABCP nursery.**

some of his troops be allowed to accompany C4C to planting initiatives so that they might get more involved with the local community, to show the people



**C4C at Police Academy: Back Row: John Machibya, Sebastian Chuwa, Commandant Matanga Mubushi, Samweli Mochiwa, Graifton Mushi, Martin Doni. Front Row: Michele Von Haugg, Katie Palmer, Audrey Miller, Brad Rodriguez, Mark Fugina, Gary Sperl.**

that their responsibility is to protect people, property and environment. In regard to music, John is interested in finding more players for the Academy band. Michele is working out a program with Korongoni Secondary School to make the C4C class a certificate program so that students they teach can graduate and enter directly into a job with the Police Academy—another unique confluence of music and mpingo conservation.

**Rolex Awards for Enterprise**

In November 2012 Sebastian Chuwa was sponsored by the Rolex Awards for Enterprise Committee to attend its awards ceremony in New Delhi, India. A biennial event, it honors the achievements of inspirational individuals who work to promote human achievement and protect the world’s cultural and natural heritage. In 2002 Sebastian was chosen as a Rolex Associate Laureate.

Pictured from left-Aggrey Otieno works with expectant mothers in Nairobi’s most impoverished



**Sebastian Chuwa with 2012 Rolex Award winners in New Delhi, India. From left: Aggrey Otieno, Mark Kendall, Barbara Block, Sebastian, and Erika Cuellar.**

slum. He has devised an innovative consultative service, setting up a telemedicine center that can be accessed by cell phone for informational and emergency situations. He will use the grant money to equip the central office, fund training for birth attendants and purchase an emergency vehicle.

Mark Kendall has designed a revolutionary inoculation technology that can deliver vaccines more cheaply, with lessened risk, and most importantly, without the necessity of refrigeration. Called the “Nanopatch”, Kendall hopes that his invention will allow people in the developing world to receive treatment in as timely a fashion as those in more prosperous nations.

Barbara Block is a California marine biologist who monitors marine wildlife to “build a report card on the health of the world’s oceans.” With the setting up of ocean observatories, the movements and activities of ocean mammals will be recorded and transmitted to oceanic labs, smart phones and computers around the world to be viewed,

not only by scientists, but by citizens of the whole world.

Erika Cuellar’s work is protection of the Gran Chaco, an immense forested region of Bolivia, Argentina and Paraguay that is being threatened by farming, hunting and uncontrolled logging. She is working at the grassroots level, training local residents as parabiologists with the aim of reducing destructive activity, setting up reserves and passing legislation to protect natural resources.



**Sebastian is teaching students about planting *africado* at Sungu School where Elizabeth Chuwa teaches.**

**Trees for Economic Progress**

Sebastian also supplies the farmers and families living on Mt. Kilimanjaro with a variety of trees for their domestic and economic needs. More than 10 years ago he organized a community-run, income-producing nursery on Mt. Kilimanjaro. The cooperative effort produces coffee and indigenous trees that are sold to farmers on the mountain. A friend in southern Tanzania recently gave him a gift of a grafted variety of avocado, called an *africado*. He is making it available to his neighbors and teaching its cultivation at local schools.

Because of his ongoing involvement with local residents, he is working with outreach workers from Sokoine University who are instituting a project to raise the economic level of communities on the mountain. Funding is being provided by the university to increase numbers of cattle, goats and poultry, to foster bee-keeping and to create programs for bio-gas production.

### Planting Mpingo in the Community

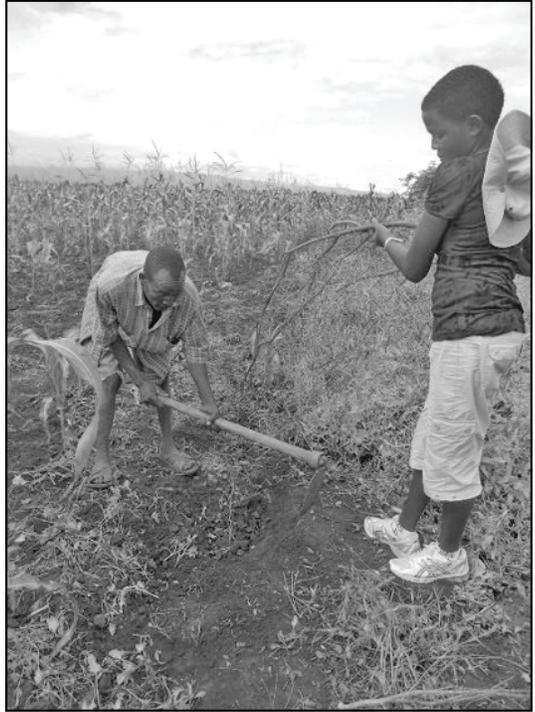
In addition to supplying tree seedlings for Makuyuni and the Police Academy, Sebastian continues outreach to Primary and Secondary Schools and private individuals who own land in the Moshi/Arusha area. Part of the planting program at schools is to arrange an environmental education class on the same day as tree planting activities, thus reinforcing the need for and purposes behind the planting project.

During the past year these schools planted mpingo: Chekerini, Msufini, Makuyuni, and Mabungo Primary, and Nsoo, Uchira, and Mji Mpya Secondary. Several private landowners, the villages of Uchira and Mijongweni, and the Uchira Mosque also participated.

Environmental Day ceremonies were held this year at Njoro in collaboration with Roots and Shoots. Mji Mpya

Secondary School hosted the event and students planted trees in the nearby forest.

The photo at right was taken at the farm of Mrs. Anna Mushe, who planted mpingo around her corn field. Flora Chuwa, Sebastian and Elizabeth’s daughter, is helping to clear the land and Benedict Massawe is digging holes for the planting of the seedlings. Mpingo can act as a soil enricher, windbreak and living fence in synergy with crops.



See a web version of this newsletter with color photos on the ABCP website by clicking the 2013 Newsletter link at the top of the home page.

### Support the ABCP With Your Tax-Deductible Donation

The ABCP was founded in 1996 as a US IRS 501(c)3 charity with the objective of promoting replanting and educational efforts for the conservation of *Dalbergia melanoxylon*/mpingo, widely used in the manufacture of musical instruments. Mpingo is one of the world’s most precious wood resources, known since antiquity for its beauty and exquisite working properties. Another part of our outreach is tree planting for poverty alleviation in the areas where we work. All trees are planted in climatically-appropriate areas where they will be protected and therefore have an excellent chance of long-range survival.

All donations collected in the US are used in direct support of the projects in Africa. The US team works on a purely voluntary level and in addition personally underwrites most costs in this country to support our fundraising and publicity efforts and the ABCP website. Please consider a donation using the form below and help us insure a viable future for African blackwood. You may instead find it convenient to make an online donation from the ABCP website using the PayPal system. Just visit the home page at [blackwoodconservation.org](http://blackwoodconservation.org) and click the PayPal Donation button midway down the page.



AFRICAN BLACKWOOD CONSERVATION PROJECT



• Please accept my tax-deductible donation to ABCP in the amount of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Mail this form and donation to:

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Please make check or money order payable to **ABCP**.

### Good Gifts Catalogue — Give a Creative Christmas Gift and Help the World!

Are you tired of giving gifts that you strongly suspect will end up in someone's attic or on a shelf at Goodwill? Would you like your gift to have an impact somewhere in the world where such a gift makes a real difference? Good Gifts Catalog is a charitable organization that gives you an opportunity to give a gift that will truly have such an impact, as every gift among its offerings goes to a person or cause that will lift someone out of poverty, help the environment, or address a pressing social issue. For example, Good Gifts contributions to the ABCP have now funded the planting of almost 80,000 mpingo tree seedlings, a significant support of our environmental program.

The Good Gifts Catalogue lists over 200 gifts, each of which has been selected to fill a social or economic need, often in an impoverished country. Gifts for all seasons and celebrations can be discovered in diverse array, choosing from such offerings as goats, ducks and cattle for needy families, books and teacher training, health care options such as life-saving inoculations, the environmentally relevant planting of trees (as for the ABCP), and even defusing of bombs and land mines. Other gifts, such as sewing machines and knitting supplies offer livelihood opportunities.



If this notion of gift giving appeals to you, you may want to check out the Good Gifts Catalogue website for possible alternative Christmas gifts. There you will find a collection of gifts that will truly touch the heart and change lives: [www.goodgifts.org/](http://www.goodgifts.org/). And if you would like to support the ABCP via Good Gifts, links to give the gift of African Blackwood trees may be accessed midway down the ABCP website homepage, [www.blackwoodconservation.org](http://www.blackwoodconservation.org). We have profiled the ABCP Good Gifts Program at [www.blackwoodconservation.org/goodgifts.html](http://www.blackwoodconservation.org/goodgifts.html).

[Good Gifts logo for Bagpipe Seedlings](http://www.blackwoodconservation.org/goodgifts.html)

### African Blackwood Conservation Project

P. O. Box 26 Red Rock, TX 78662 USA



So that  
the song  
of the  
Tree of Music  
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