

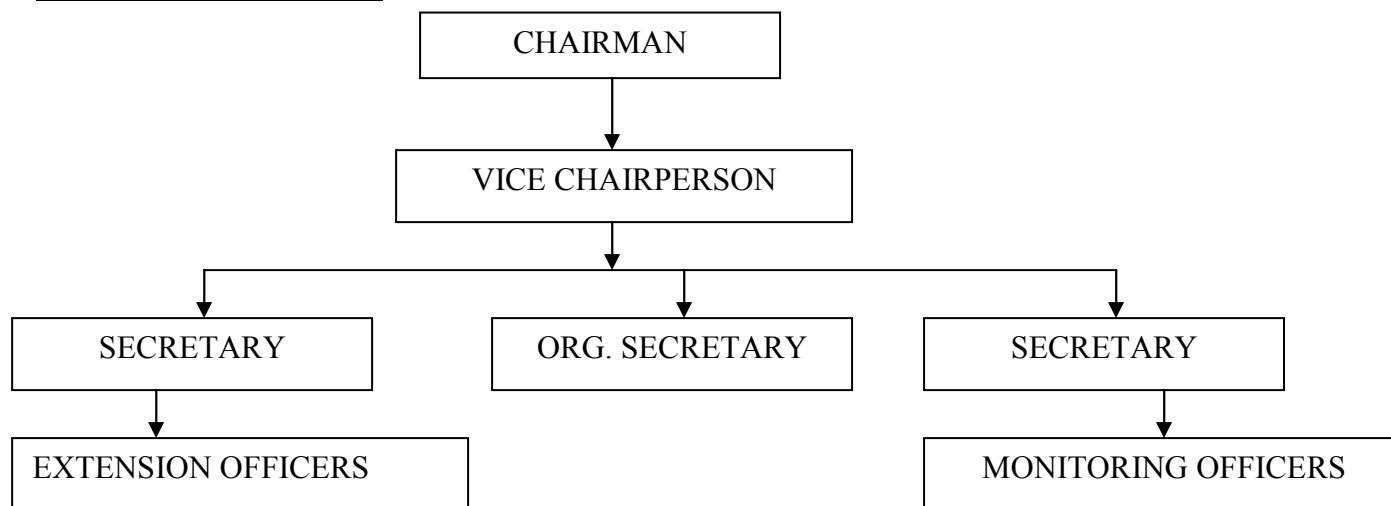


## MULIRU FARMERS CONSERVATION GROUP

**BRIEF HISTORY:** The name “Muliru” means Forest in Luhyia language.

Muliru Farmers’ Conservation Group is a community-based group that is composed of 30 members comprising of 20 women and 10 men. It is based at Isecheno village of Virhembe Sub-Location, Shibuye Location in Shinyalu Division of Kakamega District. All its members reside near Kakamega Forest. The Group was formed in 1997 and registered in 1999.

### GROUP ORGANISATION



### GROUP OBJECTIVES

1. The main objective of the group is to conserve the environment through Agro-Forestry and other conservation activities that can generate income for its members. The main activities of the Group include ‘on-farm forestry, bee-keeping, cultivation of *Ocimum kilmandscharicum* and extraction of essential oils from it.
2. Create linkages with other groups, institutions, NGO’s, to alleviate poverty.

### THE OCIMUM KIMANDSCHARICUM ENTERPRISE

*Ocimum kilmandscharicum* is a shrub that grows in some of Kenya and around Kakamega Rain Forest. In Luhyia languages of people who live adjacent to Kakamega Forest, it is called “mwonyi”. Traditionally *Ocimum kilmandscharicum* has been used for the treatment of colds, flu, coughs, diarrhoea, abdominal pains and measles.

It has also been used for repelling mosquitoes and for protecting stored grain. *Ocimum kilmandscharicum* takes 6 months to grow fully and requires minimum care and no pest control. Once mature, it thrives as a perennial and can be harvested three times in a year for more than three years.

*Ocimum kilmandscharicum* enterprise is a community enterprise that was set up by the Muliru Farmers Conservation Group to engage in commercial cultivation and processing of *Ocimum kilmandscharicum*.

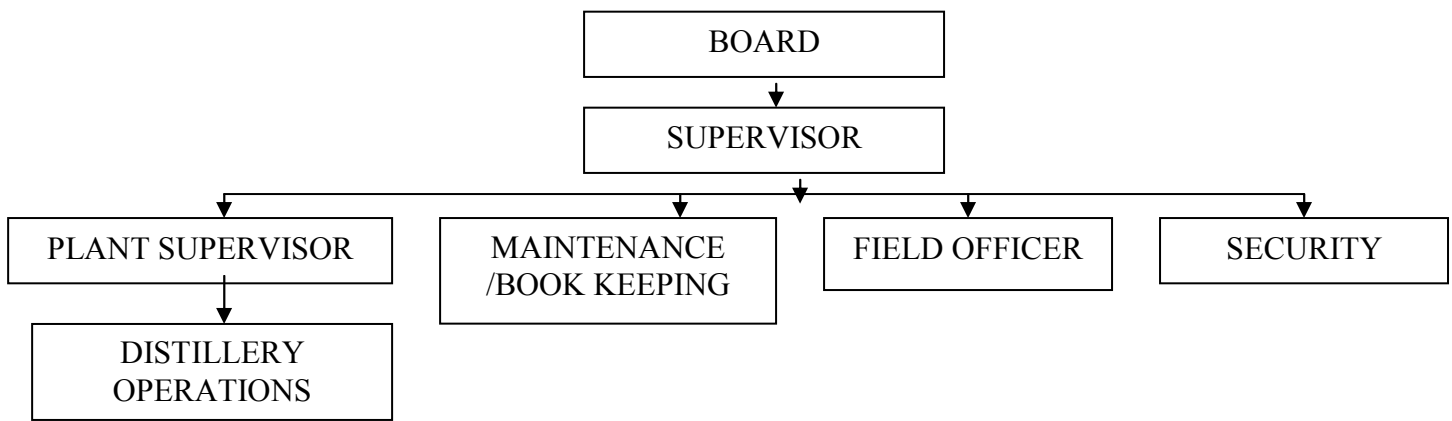
It is a small scale enterprise located adjacent to Kakamega Forest . It was initiated in 2000 with financial assistance from the UNDP/GEF Small Grants Programme and the MacArthur Foundation. The enterprise has a management and operation team that is composed of an overall supervisor, a plant supervisor, maintenance officer, 2 field officers, 9 essential oil distillery operators and a security guard.

The team is made up of the youth who have been recruited by the group from among the local community. The enterprise purchases Ocimum kilmandscharicum wet leaves from individual farmers around the forest at a price of 8.00 and dries them for distillation. The oil is then sold at Ksh.4,650 per kilogramme.

The money received is used to pay:

- Farmers deliveries 21.54%
- Gas purchase 26.88%
- Watchman & operators 16.13%
- Transport costs 6.45%
- Profit margin (operation & maintenance) 29%

### OCIMUM ENTERPRISE STRUCTURE

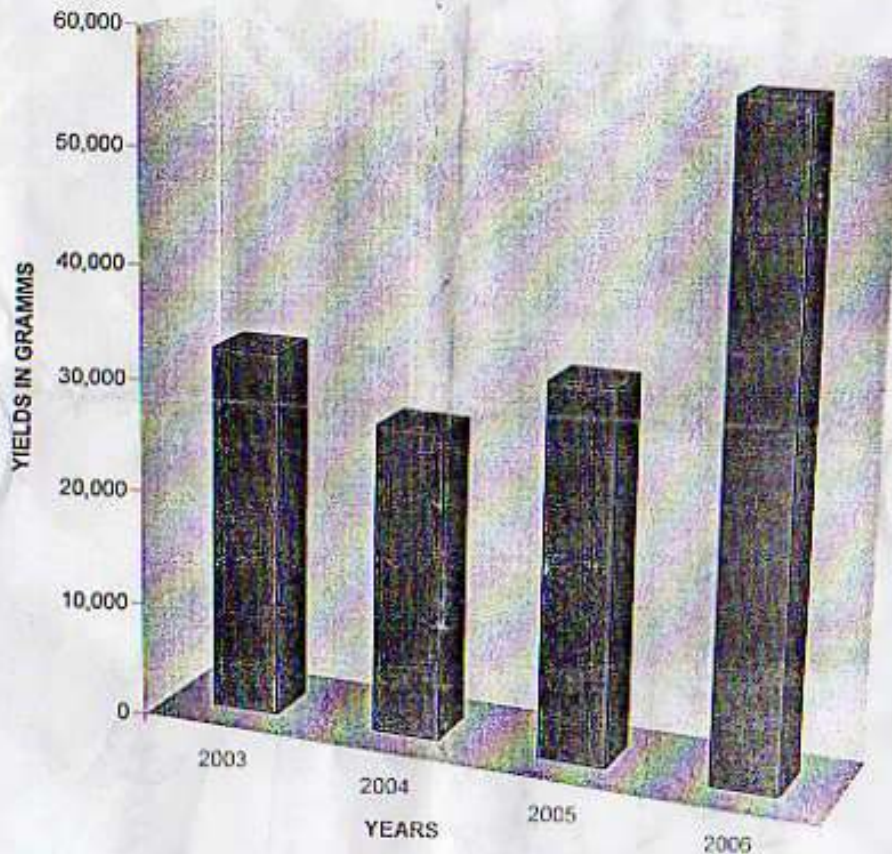


In 2002, a hydro distillation equipment for the extraction of essential oil from Ocimum kilmandscharicum plant materials was provided to MFCG through funding from UNDP/GEF Small Grants Programme and the MacArthur Foundation. The community group constructed a building on their piece of land at Isecheno adjacent to Kakamega Forest, to house the equipment; it was after the installation of the equipment in 2003 that the extraction of essential oil started in April.

### **Cash flow (Kshs) from sale of essential oil from year 2003 to 2006.**

Month	Year			
	2003	2004	2005	2006
Jan	00	00	37,548.75	8,687.50
Feb	00	1,627.50	27,435.00	9,687.50
March	00	00	23,831.25	20,687.50
April	23,017.50	1,627.50	30,225.00	20,341.25
May	21,046.85	41,552.00	12,555.00	45,341.25
June	11,764.50	34,317.90	6,277.00	29,285.60
July	4,836.00	28,812.65	25,110.00	21,285.60
August	3,999.00	3,069.00	6,277.50	36,347.50
September	42,609.00	42,609.00	-	-
October	33,502.80	33,502.80	-	-
November	48,708.75	48,708.75	-	-
December	3,255.00	3,255.00	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>194,742.40</b>	<b>125,885.30</b>	<b>169,259.75</b>	<b>305,471.95</b>

ANNUAL PRODUCTION OF *OCIMUM KIMANDSCHARICUM* OIL BY MFCG ENTERPRISE FROM 2003-2006



### **Development of Naturub commercial products from *Ocimum kilimandscharicum***

ICIPE and the University of Nairobi developed the product Naturub using extracts from *Ocimum kilimandscharicum*. Naturub is a commercial medicinal product that is used for alleviation of flu, cold, chest congestion, aches, pains and insect bites. The development of Naturub involved formulation, market evaluation and design and production of packing material in form of 4kg, 7kg and 25kg. The product is now on the market.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS**

- Group owns 1.1 acre plot, one hydro distillation equipment and its accessories, and a house (distillation facility)
- Encroachment on forest derived resources has reduced since most farmers now generate income from the cultivation of **Ocimum kilmandscharicum** plant.
- Capacity building of the community through skills enhancement
- Gender equity has improved among the community as all members participate in the activities and give suggestions in decision making
- Surrounding community members have indirectly benefited from the group's activity through on site temporary jobs as the group owned factory undergoes growth and development
- Employment opportunities for the community and group members have been created members have acquired specific skills during their participatory work
- A biological diversity that is sustainable and controlled.

## **STRENGTH, OPPORTUNITIES**

1. The enterprise is based in a rural area and hence it enjoys government incentives for rural small scale enterprise such as tax remissions
2. It also involves low production costs because of involvement of the community with abundant human resources and raw materials
3. It is a conservation based enterprise and hence it is supported by government policy, which promotes conservation and suitable utilisation of biodiversity, on farm cultivation and value addition to traditional medicine plant
4. The O.K. enterprise has commissioned over 300 out growers who are organised in 11 groups that supply raw materials regularly and the number is expected to grow with improved flow of income.

## **SUPPORT RECEIVED**

1. UNDP/GEF Small Grant programme who gave the initial funding of the project and purchase of the plant from Germany
2. ICIPE: Technical backstopping, co-ordination of project activities and market for the group's essential oil
3. BIO:-Vision – Completion work of a plant house
4. DED:- supported capacity building of the group members and out growers in skills enhancement and team building.

## **CHALLENGES/CONSTRAINTS**

1. The community group lacks appropriate business management, sales and marketing leadership and technical skills.
2. The group lacks capacity building.
3. Inefficient support tools like harvesting clippers have hampered progressive harvesting.
4. Lack of enough drying bandas – in various collection centres. Due to this delays are experienced backwards from harvesting to drying.

5. Logistics

- a) Transport of wet and dry leaves from the field sites to the central points.
- b) Extension education by the group's field officers to other out grower farmers is limited to only accessible areas.

6) Lack of water at the enterprise. The enterprise needs water for extraction of oil, this leads to delay in production and also lack of sanitation facilities.

7) Light provision:- Being in a rural area, where electricity is a problem, the group needs solar panels to use as power source, this will increase production as more runs will be made day and night and also will serve for security purposes.

8) Enough capital to buy the raw materials from the farmers.

9) After products manufacture the group needs a place in town to market its products.

10) Lack of enough capital to raise more tree seedlings.

**CONTACT DETAILS**

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**Above information provided by Muliru Farmers conservation Group, Feb 07.**

(Return to <http://www.communityconservation-initiative.org.uk>)