

Final Project Evaluation Report

Your Details	
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Project Title	Assessing the contribution of Community Conservation Program (CCP) in community livelihoods' promotion and Gorilla Conservation, in Volcanoes National Park, Rwanda
Application ID	26111-1
Grant Amount	£ 5,000
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1. Indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
To assess the contribution of CCP in addressing community livelihoods near VNP				The assessment was done through CCP related benefits such as tourism revenue sharing and how the later benefit local communities towards their livelihoods' promotion. The CCP- benefits have been effective in improving livelihoods capitals within the communities living adjacent to VNP.
To assess the contribution of CCP in reducing threats of VNP				The assessment referred to community participation in conservation activities, whose results have led to the reduction of human-wildlife conflicts in and outside VNP. The TRA shows that threats in VNP were reduced at 60% when all threats are considered, and at 75% when critical threats are excluded.
To identify the remaining challenges in VNP conservation and livelihoods promotion				The remaining challenges were identified. People have discussed and come up with a list of diverse challenges, which were grouped into socioeconomic, managerial, and cross-cutting challenges.

2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.

Emergence of local leaders: three times we have been obliged to change our planned activities, due to an intensive evaluation of human security issues within the local communities (at village, cell and sector level), which were not communicated before reaching the site. Fortunately, in order to save time and avoid financial issues we had to be flexible and shift from one activity to another. For example, we chose to start with the focus groups discussion with community based organisations (CBOs), rather than the household survey.

Bank overcharges: the bank charges were not budgeted for and were not expected to raise up to £100. Fortunately, the costs were compensated through questionnaire printing, whereas cost reduction was negotiated.

3. Briefly describe the three most important outcomes of your project.

- a) The real meaning of poverty in the study areas, as well as concrete solutions were revealed. The study demonstrated poverty as multidimensional phenomenon, encompassing livelihood insecurity in health, food, education and socioeconomic aspects which also constitute key drivers of threats in national parks of Rwanda, including VNP. Poverty was explained as a situation in which individuals and/or the whole community face the partial shortage (or total lack) of livelihoods capital i.e. human, social, economic, physical and natural capital. Therefore, the study suggested that dealing with every specific livelihood capital would serve better solutions towards sustainable management of Volcanoes National Park (VNP).
- b) Conducive environment, and conservation incentives/benefits as key to community participation in the conservation of national parks, were highlighted. It is very crucial to be aware of what threatened people's participation from CCP- initiatives in order to address them towards sustainable management of national parks. In fact, the study revealed that local communities, especially the poorest people were not empowered enough to participate in the decision making, and benefit through the CCP due to different hindrances. The study suggested that managers will have to create a conducive environment for the poorest people who strongly depend on VNP natural resources to survive, by removing all the revealed barriers, and specifically empowering them through livelihoods' capital- development.
- c) New tools/indicators for planning, evaluation or performance appraisal in the domain of conservation/ development, and management of national parks were documented. The project results in line with livelihoods capitals for community development objectives and/ or projects' benefits on one hand, and threat reduction assessment (TRA) for wildlife conservation on another hand; will serve planning/evaluation tools/ indicators.

4. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project.

Local communities including individual heads of household, members of community based organisations (CBOs), local leaders, and opinion leaders in 12 administrative sectors around VNP were truly involved in the whole processes of this project's implementation. In fact, during both the preliminary phase of contacts to leaders for permission, and primary data collection phase, participants have discussed and shared experiences on CCP outcomes since it was initiated, the remaining challenges to tackle; have agreed upon the available opportunities; and come up with the list of potential projects towards sustainable development, which puts emphasis on VNP threat reduction, and livelihoods' promotion. Also, conservation/ development decision makers have gained a model (tools) of performance appraisal for their respective programmes. Finally, three CBOs of men and women (mainly the youth) were facilitated to organise themselves as a results of this project, and will be engaged/ benefitted through VNP conservation and/or from potential projects that will emanate from this research.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Following key findings of this study, I would be very happy to participate in the proposed project implementation and see how conservation and development objectives as recommended through the study will be fulfilled at higher extent. Key projects, as per the study recommendations include one of providing local communities, especially the poorest people with VNP alternative natural resources i.e. bamboo, livestock (sheep, and/or goats) and water. In fact, most of local communities near VNP live in absolute poverty (with 52% under poverty line), lack livelihoods capital, and depend on the park natural resources to survive, which cause the everlasting threats to VNP and Gorillas.

Providing people with alternative items they often collect from the park, should serve real solutions leading to sustainable management of the national park. It is very essential that funding organisations be mobilised to gather efforts toward tackling this problem. While this project served the programme assessment of CCP achievements and gaps, the next project will much more focus on tangible solutions in addressing gaps through specific activities i.e. bamboo propagation (and processing when needed) to address bamboo cutting, and livestock (sheep) distribution as a solution to poaching in VNP.

6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?

Firstly, the preliminary findings were presented through management reports and presentations in Rwanda Development Board (RDB), a government organisation whose responsibilities include tourism and conservation of national parks, in Rwanda. Secondly, during a tourism revenue sharing project selection meeting that was organised by community conservation programme in Musanze district, my presentation involved this project's results to serve guidance in the prioritisation of the problems in/ outside VNP, as well as the fund allocation. Thirdly, the findings will be published in the coming conversation on conservation (CoC), during the preparation of the gorilla naming ceremony, which always takes place in September every year. The CoC brings together conservationists and development actors and the media from national and international community.

7. Timescale: Over what period was the grant used? How does this compare to the anticipated or actual length of the project?

The project was implemented in three major phases including preliminary, survey and reporting. Activities that that required funding included preliminary meeting with the sampled household heads during preliminary phase (mid-August 2018), the focus group discussion with CBOs (September to mid-October 2018), and household survey with heads of household (mid-October to end of November 2018). The related paid needs included hiring transport, accommodation, paying assistants, daily food and soft drinks, and printing. However, due to emergencies within the area of the study (intensive evaluation of human security issues), we have been obliged to change and/ or postpone our scheduled activities, which consequently affect our calendar but we tried to work in times and off-times (nights) so that the periods of the study may be maintained at seven months and a half (30 weeks) as planned.

8. Budget: Provide a breakdown of budgeted versus actual expenditure and the reasons for any differences. All figures should be in £ sterling, indicating the local exchange rate used. It is important that you retain the management accounts and all paid invoices relating to the project for at least 2 years as these may be required for inspection at our discretion.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Payment for research assistants	1,800	1,800		
Printing research questionnaires	320	220	100	Reduced cost (£ 0.55) was negotiated with the printing house, whereas we agreed to provide them with reams of papers
Hiring Transport	2,160	2,160		
Accommodation	720	720		
Bank charges (Sender, receiver)	0	100		This was not planned before, and has even exceeded the pre-deposited sum
Total	5,000	5,000		Exchange rate on the day of funds transfer was: £1= FRW 1,140

9. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?

- ✓ Providing communities with alternative resources i.e. bamboo and bushmeat, replacing what they used to illegally collect from VNP. Specific projects include bamboo propagation and livestock distribution. The process will involve development of basic skills related to the bamboo propagation and processing (preparation of nursery beds and management), and agroforestry; animal husbandry, farming system, processing and marketing. All these projects aim to partially address livelihoods' capitals of local communities living near VNP, while also minimising its threats.
- ✓ Improving the management of community based organisations (CBOs), and formalising their participation into human-wildlife conflict management. The process implicates capacity building in terms of organisational/managerial skills, on one hand; and formal agreements of participation, on another hand.
- ✓ Strengthening monitoring and evaluation mechanisms between/among stakeholders engaged in conservation and development activities near Volcanoes National Park. Stakeholders include both national and international NGOs

10. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the Foundation receive any publicity during the course of your work?

Yes, the logo of Rufford Foundation was used in two shared progress reports, and is also heading the final report, which will be also shared with this final evaluation report. Also, the logo and the whole management of Rufford Foundation will presented and acknowledged during the imminent conversation on conservation (CoC) that will be held in September this year, for the preparation of annual gorilla naming ceremony in Rwanda.

11. Please provide a full list of all the members of your team and briefly what was their role in the project.

Mr. Hakizimana Jean Damascene- a warden in charge of anti-poaching operations; a master's degree holder in the domain of development studies. He helped in data collection, Threat- Reduction Assessment (TRA), and shared information related to biodiversity conservation and human illegal activities.

Four research assistants- their domain are related to their education (forests, agriculture, rural development & agribusiness, and accounting). They helped in data collection i.e. focus group discussion with CBOs, and households' survey, and data processing/ analysis.

Twelve Executive Secretaries- These are leaders of 12 administrative sectors surrounding Volcanoes national park (VNP). They served us with research permission, and facilitated in organizing the focus group discussion within their sectors/ cells/ villages.

Four zones' leaders of CBOs- these leaders helped in inviting CBOs committees' leaders from their respective zones.

12. Any other comments?

The project's results revealed great achievements in community conservation program (CCP), but the remaining challenges need to be addressed through specific projects as per the recommendations, if conservation/ development objectives have to be effectively and efficiently achieved in VNP.



Heads of sampled households during preliminary phase of data collection



CBOs' members involved in Focus- Group Discussion



Photo: Leaders in Nyabihu District



Photo: Leaders in Musanze District



Photo: Leaders in Burera District

Local leaders involved in the Interview with key respondents