

Project Update: January 2019

This is the progress report of activities during the second quarter (October- December) of the project timescale. The period concerned the focus group discussion with CBOs, interviews with key stakeholders, and data processing/analysis, to come up with preliminary results of the study.

1) Focus- Group with CBOs:

In this activity, 84 leaders from committees (seven members) of 12 community based organisations (CBOs) involved in the management of Volcanoes National Park (VNP), were invited to participate in the focus group discussion. Therefore, the discussion with CBO committee leaders concerned the assessment of the contribution of Community Conservation Program (CCP) in reducing threats of VNP, using the Threats Reduction Assessment (TRA).

Threats Reduction Assessment (TRA):

This technique is a cost-effective way of measuring conservation success with a principle that the extent at which the threats are reduced, will be the same extent the related intervention success or failure. It concerns three steps: first, participants were asked to identify and rank VNP threats from 5 (maximum) to 1 (minimum) by considering the park destruction speed, their intensity, the area that they can affect and then having the total sum score (RV); second, a consensus was to agree upon, with extent to which CCP has reduced each threat (PTR); third, after the scoring and ranking exercise, total ranking scores was multiplied by the percentage of the threat to get a raw score for each threat (RS). Finally, dividing the sum of the raw scores for each threat by the total possible rankings of all the threats and multiplying by 100 will give the threat reduction index (TRI). This means that the higher the index, the more successful CCP has been in reducing the threats of VNP. Table 1 provides the related details.

Table 1. Threats Reduction Assessment _ Indices

Criteria Ranking									
No	Threats	Area	Intensity	Urgency	RV	PTR	RS	TRI	
A	Poaching	4	5	4	13	70	9.1	20%	27%
B	Bamboo Cut	3	2	2	7	85	5.9	13%	17%
C	Water collection*	1	1	1	3	30	0.9	2%	-
D	Feral Dogs*	2	3	3	8	10	0.8	2%	-
G	Problem animals	5	4	5	14	75	10.5	23%	29%
TOTALS		15	15	15	45		27.2	60%	-
Totals without (*) Threats					34		25.5	75%	

Source: Focus- group, 2018

Notes:

- **RV** (rank value = area+ intensity+ urgency); **PTR** (Percentage threats reduction); **RS** (raw score= RV*PTR); **TRI** (Threat Reduction Index= RS*100 / RV) and is converted in percentage.

- **Critical (*) threats:** VNP management was almost overwhelmed, due to socio-demographic factors.

2) Interviews with key stakeholders:

In total, 60 key respondents were invited to participate in the interview with myself and assistants. They included local leaders, school headmaster, church leaders, women representatives, and VNP head ranger from 12 sectors around Volcanoes National Park (VNP). The interview concerned the assessment of the Community Conservation Program (CCP) in improving community livelihoods using structured questionnaires. In fact, leaders were asked to list the existing livelihood problems in their sectors/ villages, to agree upon the CCP effectiveness in addressing them and to identify the remaining challenges towards sustainable management of VNP (Table 2).

3) Data processing: Preliminary Results

The preliminary results (Table 2) from the analysis of the information/ data, which were collected during the survey, focus group and interviews with leaders, are presented following the order of Analysis points as per the research specific objectives. It starts by showing the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, and presents the contribution of CCP in improving community livelihoods' capitals and reducing threats of VNP.

Table 2. The summary of preliminary results

No	Analysis Point	Summary of Preliminary Results	Implication
01	Socio-economic characteristics of respondents (N= 240)	The most of respondents were females (52.9%); and farmers (80.9%), who have primary education (64.2%), were in the age class of under-20 (61.6%), and live in the families of 5-10 individuals (52.4%). They also own fragmented lands (68.9%) and forests (40.5%); some own cattle (30.9%), sheep (23.8%), goats (19.1%) and Pigs (11.9%), with little who own rabbits and poultry	The discussion will show the relevancy with data at national level, and the implication of the results on community livelihoods and gorilla conservation.
02	Current status: Park- people Problems in VNP:	Threats of VNP, according to the results from the focus group with CBOs (n= 84), mainly include but are not limited to poaching, bamboo cutting, feral dogs, water collection, and problem animals. Community livelihoods problems, according to the results from interviews with local leaders (n=60), mainly include but are not limited to lack of income generating activities (29%), food shortage (25%), lack of VNP resource- alternatives (20%), problem animals (18%), and soil erosion (8%).	The discussion will deeply define these problems, putting them in the context of effects they can have on gorilla conservation; while suggesting potential related solutions.

		These problems are explained as gaps in livelihoods capitals (Human, social, economic, physical, natural)	
03	Contribution of CCP in improving community Livelihoods, and reducing Threats of VNP	The calculation of TRA- Index (Table 1), indicated that CCP has been successful in reducing VNP- threats, with the average of TRA-I of 60% when all the threats are considered; and 75% when the threats out of management full control are excluded. Importantly, the FG revealed that although CCP has been successful in reducing VNP threats in general, some threats i.e. feral dogs and water collection, remain critical and almost out of the management control due to other socio-demographic and managerial factors	The discussion will reveal those factors that are behind the failure to address critical problems, and the implication the later may have on gorilla conservation and community livelihoods
		According to key respondents during interview, local communities benefited from social infrastructures (19.4%), ICDPs (32.3%), VNP- resource alternatives (10.2%), wildlife conflicts management (27.7%), and cooperatives engagement (10.4%). These benefits, according to key respondents, helped communities to get livelihoods capitals i.e. economic capitals (42%), physical capital (24%), natural capitals (15%), social capital (10%), and human capital (9%).	Related discussion will thoroughly provide the details of every livelihoods' capital, in which CCP has contributed into community livelihoods promotion near VNP
04	Remaining Challenges	Remaining challenges, according to key respondents, include poverty (26%), lack of buffer zone near VNP (20%), the climate change (18%), scattered human settlements (15%), inefficient land use (12%), and misallocation of funds (19%). For a broader sense of understanding, we put these challenges into three aspects: socioeconomic, managerial, and cross-cutting challenges	The related discussion will provide deep explanations on how these challenges, if not wisely addressed, can dilute CCP efforts, leading also to the total failure of its initial objectives.
Next phase-Activities (January - Feb 2019)		Discussing the results for the cause- effect, and the related trends Drawing Conclusion and Recommendations Final Report to RSGF Sharing the Report	



Focus- Group Discussion with CBOs



Interview with key respondents (local leaders)

