

Final Evaluation Report

Your Details	
Full Name	Aghah Valery Binda
Project Title	Communities and conservationists: Protecting great apes and elephants together in the Campo Ma'an National Park
Application ID	27712-1
Grant Amount	£4984
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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
Heighten awareness of the importance of the park and the need to conserve it				Through poster presentations and direct talks with community members, our team educated them on the importance of target species and their habitats, and the need to conserve them. Species factsheets and relevant wildlife laws were also distributed to them. It was impressive to note that they were seeing/hearing some of these laws for the very first time.
Reaffirm positive attitudes towards elephants, promoting a message of tolerance and understanding of the needs and intrinsic value of wild elephants				During the project, we realised that the indigenous people had serious conflicts with not just elephants but also gorillas. Some farmers confessed that they preferred crop damage caused by elephants than damage caused by gorillas. We therefore decided to modify our sensitisation campaigns to include human-great ape conflicts in the area. Target communities acknowledged how important co-existing with these species could be for their survival upon completion of the awareness raising campaign.
Developing a business model for 60 hunters/farmers in sustainable commercial beekeeping as alternative to bushmeat hunting				It was strange (but advantageous for the project) to note that no single person in all three target villages had ever carried out beekeeping before. They were thus very excited about the activity and therefore paid a lot of attention during training. Preliminary analysis of questionnaires indicates a preference for beekeeping as a livelihood activity as it is less costly and risky compared to bushmeat hunting.
Train three site-adjacent communities on safer farming practices (e.g.				Training on how to construct beehive fences around farms was done by practically constructing a fence

<p>block farming to enhance collaborative efforts in guarding fields) and on the use of beehive fences to deter elephants from farmlands</p>				<p>around one farm in each of the target communities. For each farm, a different construction style was used. Local assistants have been trained to continue monitoring and collecting data which will be analysed to understand which fencing style will be most effective in deterring elephants. Unfortunately, it is still too early to provide any scientific data as to the site-specific effectiveness of this technique. A farmer offered her 1 ha farm which was used to demonstrate block farming.</p>
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2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.

Although the site appeared to be very rich in honeybees (as observed during our pilot visit), colonisation of hives turned out to be very slow and near impossible without baiting than expected. During our first follow-up visit, participants were taught new baiting methods which improved colonisation by slightly more than 20%. But generally, the colonisation rate was poor in the area. Findings revealed that the area being mostly rainforest, lacked fruiting trees that could favour bee reproduction. Thus, a proposed solution was introduction of agroforestry involving flowering non-timber forest products like cocoa (already practised in small scale in the area) and other bee-loving trees. This proposed solution was strongly supported by the conservation service.

Community members were reluctant to accept us and welcome the project as they thought it was going to be one of those “failed” projects in which they have once participated. To gain community acceptance, we had to first win the interest of the local chief of each target village who in turn convinced his subjects as to the importance and necessity of such a project.

Selecting leaders of various HEC warriors’ clubs created during the project simply by means of questionnaire that reveal their ability to lead, interest in the programme, management skills, etc., was challenging as those we found to be best suited for the task (based on our analysis) were rejected by their communities. As a solution, each community was allowed to choose their club leader by means of a vote which interestingly was unanimous in all cases.

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

- Out of the 60 indigenous people (30 farmers and 30 hunters) trained in beekeeping, 30 of them (10 farmers and 20 hunters) have started their individual bee farms. Out of the 20 hunters, 15 have pledged to give up

hunting as soon as honey harvesting begins, while out of the 10 farmers, six of whose hives colonised have confirmed zero signs of elephants visiting their farms.

- The percentage of respondents who did not know or understand existing wildlife laws has increased from 15% (pre-project) to 77% (post-project) in the target villages (i.e. Akak, Nko'elon and Mvini).
- The percentage of respondents who believe that it is possible and necessary to co-exist with elephants, gorillas and chimpanzees has increased from 0% (pre-project) to 30% (post-project) within the target communities.

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

This project targeted three major communities with very high prevalence of HEC. We used a completely community-based approach wherein communities were involved in activity planning through implementation. Three local assistants, one from each target community were trained in data collection and other project protocols. They now serve as conservation focal points/local resource persons in their respective communities.

During training, community members happily provided local materials such as bamboo and grass for hive construction. Some offered their farms for use in demonstrating safer farming practices such as block farming as a method to easily deter elephants.

Through communities' practical involvements, they have gained skills in commercial beekeeping and construction of beehive fences to protect farms from elephant crop raids. They have also been able to acquire basic marketing skills through the project. With material support offered to the farmers, they have started their own individual bee farms which are looking very promising. For example, a participant who started with just two hives now boasts of 16 installed hives, 10 of which have been colonised.

Many farmers (in the target communities only) who had abandoned farming due to high economic losses from elephant crop raids are gradually getting back into farming and are ready to co-exist with elephants as they now see the animals as an essential part of their ecosystem and their survival and most importantly, and as they no longer experience elephant crop raids for areas with colonised bee hives.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

This work was designed to be a pilot project with the hope of scaling it up based on lessons learned. Following how promising this pilot phase has been and based on the number of local parties (the conservation office of the park, local councils and other neighbouring communities) that have pledged their support for project activities, we are even more committed to moving on with this project.

We therefore plan to scale up this project to involve other communities surrounding the park and to include further innovative activities realised in the course of the project such as agroforestry and other activities that will help mitigate human-great ape conflicts which we observed could be even more devastating in the area than human-elephant conflicts.

In addition, as the conservation office of the park is currently experiencing a lockdown due to the COVID-19 outbreak, we have been getting rumours of alarming poaching activities within the park. It is thus imperative that our work is scaled up as soon as possible if the health of the park must be restored.

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

Post-project (restitution) workshops were held with various stakeholders during which project results were presented.

Interestingly, the project has gained great favour in the eyes of the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF). During workshops, copies of the end-of-project reports were handed to the conservation office of the park (Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife), to the mayor of Campo, and to the three HEC warriors clubs created by the project. This report will in the days ahead be uploaded on our organisation's website (www.aboyerd.org) and on the 2020 annual reports of MINFOF as reiterated by the conservator of the park.

We are currently working on two papers which we intend to submit to the journals "Conservation Evidence" and "Biological Conservation" for publication.

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

At the proposal stage, this project was programmed to start in June 2019 and end in May 2020 lasting 12 months. However, because the grant payment was made a bit earlier than anticipated, the project was launched in May 2019 and ran through March 2020. The project ended in May 2020 instead of April 2020 because as soon as news of the Covid-19 outbreak was obtained, all activities which had been planned for the month of April 2020 were immediately forced into the month of March. Thus, the project effectively lasted 11 months and not 12 months as initially anticipated.

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
Customized pencils/ writing pads for 30 participants of stakeholders' meetings	31	26	-5	ABOYERD offered a printer hence reduction in printing cost
Reports preparation (20 copies)	54	44	-10	ABOYERD offered a printer hence reduction in printing cost
Cover files, photocopies, flip chart, printed items and flip chart presentation easel for post-project workshops	42	34	-8	ABOYERD offered a printer hence reduction in printing cost
Transportation of 20 participants for post-project stakeholders meeting	140	140		A fixed amount initially decided with guidance from local assistants during pilot visit was shared to all participants for transport reimbursement
Meals for 20 participants during post-project stakeholders' workshop	81	70	-11	Foodstuff for lunch turned out to be cheaper since we went for seasonal foods
Meals for 20 x 3 participants during post-project workshops with trainees	242	200	-42	Foodstuff for lunch turned out to be cheaper since we went for seasonal foods
Production of 300 project posters	282	350	-68	Since posters needed to be durable, we were advised to laminate them hence the extra cost
Toiletries and first aid kits for project staff	134	134		
Purchase of writing pads, pencils, rulers, erasers, registers to empower the HEC mitigation clubs	61	61		
Purchase of 9 honey harvesting suits to be donated to the HEC mitigation clubs	145	145		
Donation of beehive construction materials to 60 trainees	500	530	+30	The local chief of each of the 3 communities expressed high interest in having hive installed in

				their respective palaces. We had to acquire extra materials for this.
Purchase of training materials (bamboo, hammer, saw, plastic cover sheets, ropes and wire).	500	480	-20	Participants provided bamboo for free
Per diem for local assistant during village visits	285	285		
Preparation of copies of species factsheets, relevant existing wildlife, forestry and fisheries laws, and diagrammatic illustrations of the sociocultural, economic and ecological importance of target species and their habitats, for village visits	200	150	-50	ABOYERD offered a printer hence reduction in printing cost
Purchase of megaphone for addressing the audience during village visits	20	25	+5	In the initial budgeting, we did not take into account the purchase of batteries for the megaphone
Per diem for local assistant during administration of questionnaires	290	290		
Printing of questionnaires and purchase of writing materials	54	44	-10	ABOYERD offered a printer hence reduction in printing cost
Feeding of project staff throughout project	570	570		
17 T-shirts carrying project name/logo of donor organization to be distributed to 10 best trainees, 4 project staff and 3 local assistants as promotional material	46	54	+8	Considering the role played by the 3 local chiefs in this project, 3 extra t-shirts were made for them hence extra cost
Production of 900 fliers as project publicity/promotional materials	31	31		
Per diem for 3 trainees during training session for local assistants	135	135		
Cover files, photocopies, printed items, writing pads, pens for each local assistant for taking notes	22	17	-5	ABOYERD offered a printer hence reduction in printing cost

during training				
Cover files, photocopies, flip chart, printed items and flip chart presentation easel for all 3 stakeholders' meetings	100	96	-4	ABOYERD offered a printer hence reduction in printing cost
Purchase of projector for video presentations (renting will be more costly)	162	162		
Meals for 30 participants of stakeholder's meetings i.e. 10 participants/meeting x 3 meetings	122	105	-17	Foodstuff for lunch turned out to be cheaper since we went for seasonal foods
Transportation of 30 participants of stakeholders' meetings i.e. 10 participants/ meeting x 3 meetings	210	210		
Local travel of project staff between target villages (most travels will be on foot)	200	200		
Long distance travel (to and from site) (3 trips for 3 main project team members and 1 CAMGEW volunteer)	325	391	+66	We had to pay extra considering that we were carrying some materials
TOTAL	4984	4979	-5	Out of £4,984 that was received from the Rufford Foundation, £4979 was used for the project leaving a positive balance of £5

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

There is a huge opportunity here which could be very beneficial to conservation in this important biodiversity conservation site; although the site is an excellent site for beekeeping and sustainable agroforestry, these activities are still largely unexploited. These activities should thus be harnessed.

For project activities to be sustainable and for project outcomes to be maintained, we must ensure that:

- Beehive fences are closely monitored, and data collected to understand which fencing style(s) will be most effective for the area.
- More and more farmers must be trained so that all farms can be protected, thereby avoiding a situation where elephants will simply avoid protected farms and converge in unprotected farms causing even more devastating damages for farmers.
- The project should be scaled up to include other communities surrounding the park and to address human-great ape conflicts as well.

- Constant communication with HEC Warriors Clubs must be maintained and more markets should be provided for honey from these communities.
- Agroforestry (a totally new practice in the area) is a great opportunity that should be taken advantage of in the area. In a long run, this will not only serve in raising production of food crops, climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration, biodiversity conservation, soil health enrichment, and air and water quality improvement, but will also go a long way to promote apiculture especially during flowering seasons.

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, as will be seen on project pictures (and videos if requested), the Rufford Foundation logo was used as promotional material on all project materials including species factsheets, posters, t-shirts, notebooks, wildlife law booklets, PowerPoint presentation slides, and end-of-project reports. We also had a TV talk on Canal 2 Television during which the Rufford Foundation was mentioned as main partner and funder.

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

Aghah Valery Binda: Served as project leader. He was in charge of coordinating all project activities and budget execution.

Tsi Evaristus Angwafo, PhD: He served as main project advisor.

Tantoh Bazil Tume: He was the main outreach officer and was also in charge of monitoring and evaluation.

Mouafo Takoune Alain: He was in charge of social research activities.

12. Any other comments?

We remain grateful to The Rufford Foundation for this seed grant that has not only permitted us to launch the first phase of a grand conservation project, but has also allowed us to gain field experience and identify many opportunities in the area which we could take advantage and design better conservation approaches for the future. Today, this project which started as a pilot project has been christened "Campo Ma'an Great Apes and Elephants Protection Program (CAMGAEP)".

Just the amount of support that came from local communities towards this project is an indication of their interest in project activities. This poses a huge opportunity to be harnessed in protecting elephants and great apes in this priority site before their numbers fall below sustainable levels.





