

## Final Evaluation Report

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Your Details	
Full Name	Prudence Ndabasanze
Project Title	Engaging young people in conservation of Akanyaru wetlands, KBAs in Rwanda.
Application ID	29058-2
Grant Amount	£ 5,850
Email Address	<a href="mailto:ndabasanze@gmail.com">ndabasanze@gmail.com</a>
Date of this Report	Wednesday, May 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2020

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
Project introduction and selection of schools' partners.				<p>Nature Rwanda organised a consultative meeting with local authorities to align on conservation priorities in the area, and then selected five schools around the Akanyaru wetlands we partnered in this project. Prior to starting implementation, introductory meetings with the heads of the different schools were organised to share information about the project. We have learnt that engaging key stakeholders and project beneficiaries at the beginning of the project is crucial to ensuring the successful implementation and sustainability of project activities beyond the implementation phase.</p>
To Establish three new environmental clubs and revamp two existing environmental clubs.				<p>Nature Rwanda worked with the schools' leadership to create and revamp environmental clubs. The ownership and willingness of schools to engage their students in conservation activities contributed significantly to the success of this project. We have learnt that young people were ready to contribute to the conservation of the Akanyaru wetlands, all they needed was a collaboration platform. These environmental clubs will continue to serve as an entry point for other development initiatives targeting young people while ensuring the sustainability of this project.</p>
#MyWetlandMyFuture campaign				<p>Leading up to the World Wetlands Day celebrated on February 2nd, 2020, an online campaign entitled #MyWetlandMyFuture was</p>

			<p>conducted under the theme “wetlands and biodiversity”. To gather the contents of the campaign while involving young people through their environmental clubs, a talent competition was organised in the five schools around this year’s World Wetlands Day theme and the best students received awards including school materials. Their stories, poems, quotes were featured on Nature Rwanda’s social media platforms.</p>
Capacity building			<p>Nature Rwanda organised a training of trainers for teachers and head teachers to equip them with knowledge and skills they needed in conservation of wetlands and climate change adaptation to roll out the environmental clubs training in collaboration with Nature Rwanda and following up on club members. The 2-day training course was interactive and very productive, and it was followed by environmental clubs’ training that was facilitated by Nature Rwanda. This was completed before establishing fruit gardens so that students should be equipped with conservation knowledge.</p>
Establishment of fruit gardens that will contribute to addressing climate change and improve food diet in this region.			<p>Nature Rwanda worked with the school leadership, ToT also known as eco-mentors and club members, to establish fruit gardens. The school provided land, Nature Rwanda provided seedlings, and club members provided time and work through community services. This model will contribute to the sustainability of established fruit gardens.</p>

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

The unforeseen difficulty we encountered during the implementation of this project was the availability of land; some schools did not have enough land to set up gardens while others had ample land so that we could not provide the desired number of seedlings to plant in the school yard as part of this project. To meet this

challenge, we discussed with all the school partners and decided to provide 300 seedlings to each school.

It is worth noting that the COVID19 pandemic also hit the country while we were at monitoring and evaluation phase. The country has been under total lockdown since the end of March 2020 and the schools are closed until September 2020. As of now, it is difficult to assess the impact of this situation on the gardens until the lock is lifted and the students return to school. Nature Rwanda plans to continue working with these schools, beyond this project, so that we can support these activities in collaboration with the school leadership.

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

**Young people successfully engaged in conservation of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) in danger.** The #MyWetlandMyFuture contest provided communication materials that reflected local context and they were used in the online campaign organised to raise awareness on conservation of wetlands leading up to the World Wetlands Day. It was a good opportunity for rural youth to share their stories and ideas about protecting wetlands with the rest of the world. Despite the interruption of COVID 19, the students are conservation ambassadors and they are ready to contribute to the conservation of this key biodiversity area (KBA in danger) while promoting its sustainable use.

**Five environmental clubs empowered and ready to contribute to the conservation of the wetlands of Akanyaru.** Thanks to eco-mentors and school leadership, students have had the opportunity to increase their knowledge and skills in conservation and are determined to become activists in their communities. Organised capacity building sessions gave them hands-on experience in tackling a wide range of local environmental issues starting at an early age. Moreover, this project promoted women in conservation as 60% of the 250 members of environmental clubs are female. It is worth noting, thanks to our partnership with the Pan-African Conservation Education Project, that 10 books entitled "Africa, Our Home" were given to each school as documentation for students and teachers in order to continue to improve their knowledge on different conservation topics.

**Students contributed to climate change adaptation in their community by beautifying their schools through creating fruit gardens and building the essence of the astatic value of their schools.** In the long term, this will also help improve their diet when the seedlings planted will grow. In total, about 1,500 fruit and shaded trees planted will contribute to improving nutrition and adaptation to climate change in this community.

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

During this project, Nature Rwanda engaged directly with school leaders and students. The later transmitted the message to their families and respective communities during awareness campaign organised as part of World Wetland Day celebration. The community benefitted indirectly from this project through awareness

raising campaign and community services. In fact, to multiply the impact, club members were encouraged to educate their respective families on the conservation of the Akanyaru wetlands. The conservation message developed by young people from these schools was shared on our social platform (Facebook and Twitter) to reach an even larger group of practitioners beyond Rwanda.

**5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

Yes, the school leadership and the students have shown great commitment in encouraging other schools to do the same and to extend this initiative to their families as well. Nature Rwanda will continue to collaborate with qualified eco-mentors to help and guide environmental clubs and together establish a clear action plan for each academic year. At least once per semester, Nature Rwanda will work with the school leadership directly to support environmental clubs. Moreover, Nature Rwanda will work with different schools to set up nurseries in their schools, and each student will receive a certain number of plants to plant at their houses as part of the Nature Rwanda's #OneTreePerOneFamily program.

In collaboration with local authorities, club members will be encouraged to join the monthly community service to share their successes stories while encouraging them to join their efforts.

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

Nature Rwanda, as leading environmental organisation in Rwanda, share learning and best practices in conservation mainly with CSOs, development partners, students and conservation practitioners via our website and our social media platforms. Thus, Nature Rwanda plans to continue to leverage on those means while exploring the opportunity as well to share lessons learnt in this project through seminars and meetings that we will organise in the near future. Project beneficiaries will also be invited to share their stories where possible.

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

This project lasted 6 months, starting in November 2019 and finishing in May 2020. Despite the lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic from March 2020 till now, which had an impact on monitoring and evaluation component of this project, everything else went 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.**

The table below represents the total budget with Nature Rwanda's co-financing. The Randa exchange rate used: £ 1 = RWF 1,198.28 as of December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Telecommunications	300	200	-100	Communication costs for the project team and the eco-mentors to ensure smooth implementation. The saving of 100 pounds is the result of lockdown as monitoring and evaluation activities were suspended to curb this pandemic.
Fruits Gardens	2500	2800	+300	All plants were ordered from nurseries located in Kigali, far from schools, the quality of the plants in a nearby nursery was not good. The additional cost is related to transportation from Kigali to Bugesera district.
Travels for project team	1500	1350	-150	Due to COVID 19, the last visit has not been conducted because of lockdown.
Wetlands Conservation Campaign	500	480	-20	We made a saving of 20 pounds on awards provided to students who won <b>#MyWetlandMyFuture</b> competition.
Training for 5 environmental clubs' members	2000	2200	+200	Eco-mentor training has been added to the training provided which increased the budget. This was mainly prioritized to ensure sustainability beyond the implementation phases.
Miscellaneous	250	250		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7050</b>	<b>7280</b>	<b>+230</b>	<b>Matching funds and additional costs have been covered by Nature Rwanda to ensure the successful implementation of this project.</b>

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

We intend to work with the school leadership and the eco-mentors to improve students' awareness of biodiversity conservation and the fight against the impacts of climate change. This is to ensure that new members who join environmental clubs should be brought to the same level to multiply the impact. We will also seek other funding to be able to extend the results of the project to neighbouring communities.

**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 the Rufford Foundation has been used on all the communication material developed within the framework of this project. We will continue to use it for any other event / activity requiring the same message as that used in this project. In

addition, Rufford's social media (Twitter) has been tagged on all tweets related to this project.

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

**Prudence Ndabasanze**, led the overall implementation of this project, from design to actual implementation.

**Jean Claude Dusabimana**, supervised the implementation of this project as the Executive Director of Nature Rwanda. He also supported on the development of communication and the promotion materials developed under this project for the social media platforms.

**Clémentine Musengimana**, supervised the finance and accounting for this project. She worked closely with implementing partners to ensure the proper use of funding.

**Jeannette Iranzi Ntirivamuda** contributed to the organization of all the trainings conducted within the framework of this project and, she also worked with eco-mentors to support students.

**Regis Ufitamahoro** played an important role in organizing field activities and school selections as well as monitoring the impact of the project. He also worked with eco-mentors during tree planting.

**12. Any other comments?**

We would like to acknowledge the support provided within the framework of this project because it has largely contributed to engaging young people in conservation. As future leaders, it is crucial to start engaging them early so that they can grow with this passion.