

Final Evaluation Report

Your Details	
Full Name	Emmanuel Bugingo
Project Title	Improving Marginalised People's Initiatives for Biodiversity Conservation: Case of Women Conserving the Volcanoes National Park through Weaving
Application Id	28076-2
Grant Amount	£ 6,000
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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
Help women understand and play their role in mitigating threats to park natural resources.				One of the key outcomes of the first project has been introducing women to alternative raw materials to park natural resources. This project has been an opportunity to monitor how women were coping with buying raw materials whereas they used to find them for free after invading the park of course. We realised that women were happy with the imported materials and the profit they were making. Thanks to local and international volunteers, women received varied trainings in environmental education programmes whereby they were able to discuss issues affecting the environment in general and the park in particular and how a small activity like weaving can help conserve the park and its ecosystem.
Training 16 women				Despite delays in starting the project due to armed attack that happened just after the funds have been received, and following challenges caused by the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, all 16 women left behind during the first project were this time trained
Upgrading knowledge and skills of 66 women from Historically Marginalised People Community in modern weaving				Due to varied measures to stop the spread of COVID-19 including total lockdown and the social distance that has limited to 15 persons by any gathering, some techniques such as mixing paints and making curtains were partially covered.
Capacity building of Inkingi to become officially registered women based cooperative				The project supported women to develop their constitutions which enabled them to be recognised as a cooperative up to the district level. To be a full recognised cooperative, Inkingi has to be registered at the national level by the Rwanda Cooperative Agency.

Production and selling			It was planned that after the training of 16 women, the project would move on by upgrading women's knowledge and skills in weaving to help them increase the production in terms of quantity and quality. Unfortunately, due to the outbreak of COVID-19 and followed measures to stop its spread, the project invested much time in training than planned therefore we could not produce enough for us to assess the impact of this step.
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2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.

Armed attack:

A few days after we received the funds, rebels attacked Musanze district from the Volcanoes National Park. The attacked areas neighbors Shingiro where we have the project. Living in the neighborhood of the attacked area has left most of our beneficiaries affected. In fact, some registered relatives among victims or simply horrified psychologically. As a result, and in regard to the project, we had to move forward the starting dates as we had to wait for the green light from local and security instances and eventual recovery of the community. For this, a meeting was held on November 12th, 2020 between PFC, beneficiaries and the local authorities, and after the situation evaluation, the project was allowed to start.

Outbreak of COVID-19 and related measures to stop its spread:

Even though COVID-19 took a slow speed to spread in Africa especially in Rwanda, once the country registered the first case was registered, the Government of Rwanda initiated strict measures including total lockdown to try to stop the spread of the virus. In fact, Rwandans waited until July 2020 to see some of the measures softened such as reopening of markets, some gatherings, etc. This has been a windfall for the project as we resumed with the training. However, this had to be done in respect to social distance measures and to overcome this, the project suggested the split of the trainees into four groups and the increase of the number of trainers from one to four trainers. It's important to mention that before the outbreak of this pandemic, the project registered visits from local and international tourists that appreciated the initiative. It is actually within this period within that we had volunteers that supported the project by providing some training such as in environmental education, gender and equity, marketing, etc.

Lack of enough space for workshop:

The project still suffers a lack of workshop for the training and exhibition. While designing the first project phase, the local authorities agreed to provide a space for the training and exhibition which unfortunately became impossible halfway due to other priorities. Thanks to fee perceived from our volunteering programme, the project managed to secure a small hall that was used for the training and exhibition. However, this place was not sufficient, and we had to proceed to small groups

formed randomly to help beneficiaries from one place easily meet in the compound of any member of their choice.

Lack of Competitions:

Whereas during the implementation of the first phase we faced competition from other projects using different strategies to support/attract historically marginalised people and other poor and vulnerable people in the area, this time we instead faced a lack of interventions from other stakeholders mainly due to COVID-19 outbreak. This has left the project with an important crowd of people trying to join. If it hadn't been the establishment of various to stop the spread of the pandemic, I'm wondering what we could have done to face such demand.

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

- 1. Conservation of the Volcanoes National Park and its ecosystems:** despite its exceptional biodiversity values, the park is subject to a variety of serious and growing anthropogenic pressures largely related to it being situated in one of the most densely populated parts of Rwanda. Among identified type of pressure include but not limited to: (1) Poaching: Gorillas are maimed or killed by traps set for other animals; (2) Habitat loss: Rapidly expanding human settlements are removing the gorilla habitat. Fragmentation of forested areas has resulted in the isolation of mountain gorilla groups from each other, reducing their genetic diversity; (3) Disease: Regular contact of tourists with the gorillas allows transmission of diseases from humans to the gorillas, domestic animals and livestock also contribute to disease transmission; (4) War and unrest: Refugees removing trees to create settlements and farms. There's also increased use of gorillas for meat by displaced peoples. Gorillas can be killed by land mines placed along forest paths; and (5) Local communities: Habitat removal, lack of support for conservation efforts due to insufficient education and awareness amongst locals. Addressing these threats remains a major issue.

By training and initiating 66 women in modern weaving as well as environmental education, the project has contributed to the reduction of existing anthropogenic activities that keep the fauna and flora most of which is endemic at high risk especially the mountain gorillas.

- 2. Improvement of living conditions by 66 families through income generating activities: upgrading knowledge and skills was a tremendous contribution to mitigate one of the historical threats.** In fact, different studies have suggested that the poor living conditions of historically marginalised communities in the park surroundings keep the park under anthropogenic pressure. Most of those studies recommend community-based projects to ensure communities are capable to find alternatives to park natural resources which is basically key in the park conservation. It is anticipated that by training 66 women both in modern weaving as alternative activity and environmental education, the project is contributing to the conservation of the Volcanoes National Park and its ecosystems by reducing the dependence to the park and ignorance.

3. Capacity building: one of the social protection approaches is to ensure vulnerable and marginalised communities are represented in decision making instance. In this regard, the first phase of the project helped beneficiaries form a local community-based structure called INKINGI. With the second phase, the project aimed at building the capacity of this platform to become a legal entity. For this, the project supported beneficiaries to elaborate their constitution, and embark on formal registration process. Although the outbreak of COVID-19 has affected the process, it is however important to mention that this platform is registered up to the district level. With this status, INKINGI is acknowledge as a development partner at the sector level which is a great step for them to start participating/influencing local economic and conservation decision. We expect to resume with this process in our next phases to ensure INKINGI Is registered at the national level.

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

Through the project design: after the completion of the project first phase, we collaborated with project beneficiaries to evaluate the project. Together, we concluded that a second phase was necessary to bridge some gaps observed in regard to project expected outcomes. Both parties collaborated to put together the project proposal for the second phase that was submitted to the RSG. This close collaboration has allowed beneficiaries to outline their expectation and priorities towards the second phase. The emphasis has been put on extending the training to 16 women that were left behind during the first phase and introduction of new knowledge and skills.

Through the consultative Committee: this advisory core group was formed to enable representatives of project direct beneficiaries, local and park authorities as well as representatives of PFC to meet and share the project progress to eventually advise on way forwards. This project has been very instrumental during the compilation of the second phase by providing their views on beneficiaries proposed priorities. But, most importantly, this committee has been influential when Partners for Conservation was looking for alternative approaches to resume with the training after the total lockdown was lift.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

The COVID-19 outbreak and various measures to stop its spread have affected the full implementation of the project. In fact, out of 100, only 60% of the planned activities was covered. However, we're delighted to state that there are some areas where the project performed well, and we would like to build on those positive stories from this second phase to move forward towards our goal of making Shingiro a hub of modern weaving through strengthened local economy and environmental resilience with Inkingi accepted as a development partner at local and national levels.

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

Using of the social media: Partners for Conservation uses different social media to communicate but also promote and market its activities. The website is regularly updated as well as its Twitter and Facebook accounts. Best practices from the project will be compiled and shared through these channels.

Extending the project best practices to another group of women supported by PFC: PFC is envisaging to help historically marginalised and disadvantaged women from Kinigi to form a community based structure in the model of Inkingi to help them acquire basic vocational training using the case study of Inkingi

Networks: Partners for Conservation is a member of different platforms for conservation. Normally, we use such platforms to communicate and share experience. They represent great opportunities to talk about this project as well.

Publishing the result on the Global Biodiversity Information Facility website: once our final evaluation is approved, we will proceed to sharing the project results on Global Biodiversity Information facility.

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

The grant was used for a period of 16 months starting on October 1st, 2019 (as the grant was received on September 30th, 2019) to January 2021.

This implies 4 extra months to the actual length of the project which was due to 12 months.

This is mainly linked to two main unfortunate situation that has happened after the grant has been received. These include

- **the September/October 2019** armed attack that affected the neighbouring sectors of Musanze and Kinigi sectors. This has negatively impacted the project planning as we had to hold on the launch until the area was cleared again for community activities. This has put the project to a standoff for a period of two months between September through October 2019.
- **COVID-19 outbreak and total lockdown measures that followed:** this has put the project to a five-month standoff between March and July 2020.

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
A. Acquisition of materials				
SISALS (bundles)	1950	1946	-4	
Empty BAGS	120	118	-2	
Paints (buckets)	840	837	-3	
B. Training				
Salary per month: see the expenses for Production and selling & Project Management (rubric E) With the social distance and total lockdown that followed the outbreak of covid-19 suggested to increase the number of trainers in order to meet the project deadline optimize results. The RSG was contacted and approved the arrangement. PFC covered difference.				
C. Upscaling and introducing of new knowledge, skills and techniques				
D. Environmental Education				
E. Production and selling & Project Management				
Salary for Executive Director		4800	+4800	PFC funding
Salary for the Administrative Assistant		2760	+2760	PFC funding
Salary for Project Assistant/Trainer	1200	2190	+990	See budget for the training
Travel costs	1440	1432	-8	
Office running costs	300	294	-6	
Bank charges	150	110	-40	
TOTAL	6000	14487	+8487	Including the emergency funds provided by PFC in agreement with the RSG

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

Register Inkingi at the national level: this is a very essential step to endow this CBO with legal personality which is vital for any organisation to be accepted as a development partner.

Capacity building of Inkingi: it is desirable that a capacity building process be initiated along the registration process. The process should focus on organising refresher courses, organising experience sharing campaigns (study tour) as well as the provision of office stationary and equipment. In regard to conservation, the project will train women in tree nursery management. Whereas refresher courses will enable beneficiaries review all courses planned for the second phase, experience sharing will be opportunities for them to learn from others, as for office stationary and equipment will help the organisation acquire necessary facilities to start operating. With the tree nursery, a demonstration nursery will be developed to help women produce trees for the park buffer zone.

Provision of a workshop: providing Inkingi with its own workshop remains our priority. We believe that with a such infrastructure, the project will attract many visitors and potential customers. It will also be a useful tool for maintaining a daily exhibition of the products for crossing people including tourists.

Assessing of the 2nd phase: due to how the training was conducted, it would be a good idea to assess the beneficiaries acquired the planned knowledge and skills

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, we used the Rufford Foundation logo mainly in our correspondence such as project monitoring materials such as attendance sheets, decoration of the meeting halls etc

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

Names	Position	Responsibility
Emmanuel BUGINGO	Executive Director	Project design and Project coordinator
Emmanuel BIRACYAZA	Programme Assistant for Education, Research, Information Collection and Sharing	Development of education modules for project beneficiaries
Nicole KANZAYIRE Virginie	Administrative Assistant	Project funds management
Claudine MUTEZINKA	Project Assistant/Trainer	Designing the training module for modern weaving
Kiera Mullineux	Volunteer	Helping in day-to-day project follow up

12. Any other comments?

Despite the herein referred to handicaps that have affected the full project implementation, I'm grateful to The Rufford Foundation for their contribution to Partners for Conservation's goal thanks to which we have now pass 300 direct beneficiaries that we're working day after day in our conservation activities to ensure a sustainable conservation of the Volcanoes National Park and its ecosystems.

Besides that, from this second phase, PFC acquired additional experience in the management of community projects in difficult times such as wars or outbreak of pandemics.