

Final Evaluation Report

Your Details	
Full Name	Byron Ssemambo
Project Title	Influence of Anthropogenic Activities on Wetland as a Habitat for Shoebill (<i>Balaeniceps rex</i>) in Uganda; Case study Lutembe Bay Wetland System, Wakiso District
Application ID	35515-1
Date of this Report	12.08.2022

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 spatial and temporal changes in the Lutembe Bay Wetland System from 1995 to 2020 and the consequences for the Shoebill habitats				Lutembe wetland land cover and change map from 1995 to 2020 was developed, and we were able to assess the causes of wetland destruction and impacts on the wetland as a habitat to shoebills.
To identify key strategies to conserve the wetland and ensure the survival of this vulnerable species in Uganda				Sensitisation workshops and training with local communities adjacent to the wetland to enable them to conserve and access wetland resources in a manner that is sustainable for the future generation was carried out, and key strategies were identified.

2. Describe the three most important outcomes of your project.

a). Lutembe wetland land use and land change map from 1995 to 2020 was developed.

b). Over 25 local community members adjacent to the wetland were trained on building capacity of restoring and managing of Lutembe wetland.

c). The community-based field assistants were equipped with advanced knowledge and skills on behaviour, ecology, distribution, habitat and diet of wildlife especially the shoebill and this will improve on the information during their guiding tours provided to tourists.

d). The existing Community Action Plan for Lutembe Wetland was updated.

A community action plan was developed using the participatory rural appraisal as a road map for implementing community change in wetland management, where the local community members clarified on what will be done, who will do it and how it will be done to protect the wetland.

3. Explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.

Some of the local members (encroachers, hunters) during the sensitisation and awareness meetings first were concealing information and hesitated to share it but we assured them of confidentiality and all the information obtained by or shared with the project team will be used solely for the purpose of this project.

Harsh weather conditions (strong winds and heavy rains) during data collection affected the activity. Safety of the data collectors was important, they were provided with Personal Protective Equipment (including life jackets), and at times we had to cancel and postponed the monitoring activity to favourable weather conditions.

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

The village chairperson identified three community-based field assistants that were later trained in wildlife data collection and monitoring especially shoebill species and equipped with protective gear. A 5-day training session from ornithology expert was carried out with the three community-based field assistants to equip them with knowledge and skills on behaviour, ecology, distribution, habitat and diet of wildlife especially the shoebill and this will improve on the information during their guiding tours provided to tourists.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, we plan to build capacity of local community members to enable them to establish sustainable income generating activities, which can improve their livelihoods without impacting negatively on the environment. Also, we plan to continue the community monitoring activity, education and awareness on shoebills and their habitats.

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

- Findings of the work will be shared directly with key stakeholders and policy makers, including the Wetland Department in the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) and National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) during workshops and conferences.
- We intend to disseminate the findings in peer-reviewed national and international journals.
- We already shared the work and will continue to share updates on our social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook.
- I plan to attend and share the findings of our work in local and international conferences including the upcoming Rufford Small Grant Conference.

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

Basing on the outcomes realised from this project, Important next steps are:

- Implementation of the community action plan.
- Continuous monitoring of the Shoe bill around Lutembe wetland.
- Continued engagement and training of community-based habitat monitors.
- Exposing illegal activities and expansion/encroachment of Lutembe wetland through media.
- Create awareness in both communities and schools around Lutembe Wetland about importance and behaviour of the shoebills.
- Printing of awareness material such as t-shirts, and posters to create awareness about the Shoe bill conservation.

8. 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 Rufford logo was used on all our project documents, such as attendance sheets and acknowledgement receipts. The logo was also used in educational materials like posters used for awareness meeting and trainings. Additionally, logo will be used in the articles/ journals to be written about this project for publication.

9. Provide a full list of all the members of your team and their role in the project.

Lutembe Wetland User's Association (LWUA): They played a role in conserving and protecting the wetland as a habitat, awareness meetings and training. They also shared their local knowledge with project team to improve on the project implementation to achieve expected outcomes.

Community-Based Field Assistants: They played key roles in collecting data on the Shoe bill distribution, breeding and human activities around the wetland thus leading to success of the project.

Local government leaders: District leaders, Municipality leaders and village leaders, offered necessary support to ensure successful implementation of project activities within their areas of jurisdictions. Additionally, Municipality representative like Environmental officer shared their experiences with project team, key stakeholders and community members on how best to conserve and protect the wetland and wise-use of its resources.

Training facilitators: Professionals with extensive experience in wetland conservation awareness creation, and Shoe bill ecology, distribution as a targeted species and their habitat played a big role in training the community-based field assistants, and

other stakeholders about the need to conserve and protect wetlands as habitats for Shoe bill.

Technical project advisors: These were experienced professionals from University of Greifswald and London South Bank University with extensive knowledge in remote sensing tools, and education for sustainability respectively, they reviewed the wetland land use and land change map, educational materials for awareness meetings and training, all shared their experiences with the project coordinator to improve on project implementation techniques to achieve the expected outcomes.

10. Any other comments?

We were pleased to get support from The Rufford Foundation in implementing this project, which helped the local community members to understand more the importance of the wetlands as a habitat to wildlife and mankind.