

Project Update: December 2023

Summary

The Jaibui Island Biomonitoring and Community Based Ecotourism project implementation is on the right trajectory towards achieving its planned outputs and outcomes. Through coordination and collaborative effort from the project team and the target beneficiaries, the project has made significant progress, and it is positively impacting the lives of the community members, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable management of the Jaibui Island.

In line with the first update, the second phase of the project has been supported through a series of complementary activities as outlined in the original project plan. To date, the implementation of the project has achieved a successful stakeholder engagement that disclosed the scope, current actions and vision of the project; identification, recruitment and training of six community bio-monitors for biomonitoring using SMART and GAIA GPS installed on an android mobile phone; training of 21 community members on ecotourism services following structured modules; daily forest patrols by the bio-monitors within the Jaibui Island; construction of two local canoe boats to facilitate daily patrols; and procurement of field wears (rain boots) as well as two android phones for the bio-monitors to support biomonitoring and forest patrol activities.

Successful implementation of the activities highlighted above continues to uphold the purpose for which the project was designed to: support capacity building of local communities' members to tend and promote roles in the management of their natural resources especially biodiversity with focus on primates; local communities to embrace sustainable community-based ecotourism as a development options for improving many aspect of community livelihoods; and promote the conservation of threatened primates and associated biodiversity in community forests through consolidated community collaboration and efforts.

There are a couple of activities lined up on the project plan for implementation that will backstop existing and completed activities for the overall positive outlook and outcome of the project towards the long-term conservation of primates, other biodiversity, and human community livelihood improvement in many dimensions. The project team is yet to conduct the bushmeat survey to understand the purpose of hunting at the project site. However, planning to commence this activity is ongoing with the design of the questionnaires and mission for the survey. Also, pending the community sensitisation which will be undertaken after the bushmeat survey mission and the monthly follow up and downloading of biomonitoring data to know the activity patterns and movements of primates, other biodiversity, and human disturbance within the Island.

Detailed description of activities completed and ongoing under this second update is presented below.

Training on Ecotourism Services

A 3-day training on ecotourism services was undertaken in August 2023 at the Jaibui Island research station in Kambama. The training brought together 21 community members of all ages (youth, young adults, and adults) and mixed gender (10 male and 11

female) from the seven project communities. The training provided a cross cutting knowledge on various ecotourism modules to include hospitality, environment, and waste (collection and proper disposal) management; financial management; record/bookkeeping; food handling and preparation with focus on local recipes; community expectation management; forest walk/guide; recreation - traditional singers, dance groups, fishing, history of the land, storytelling, etc., and vegetable cultivation and gardening. Through this training, skills, and ability of the trainees to uphold the tourism intervention in the Island and adjacent communities were evident and in line with their willingness to fully support the initiative that resulted as a significant outcome from the 1st Rufford project.



Training the community members on various ecotourism modules at the Jaibui Research Station in Kambama Village.

Recruitment and training of community bio-monitors

The identification and recruitment of community bio-monitors was one of the key actions from the stakeholder engagement which marked the start of the project. Following that, community stakeholders from the seven communities selected six youths to be trained as community bio-monitors for the implementation of the project. The selection was purely a community led process with few guidelines from the project team to guide the community stakeholders select the right community member who at least can read, write, and recognise their names as a key criterion. The identification of the youths set the

foundation for the training on biomonitoring using SMART and GAIA GPS applications installed on an android mobile phone. Therefore, the bio-monitors have been trained both in theory and in practice on how to use the mobile device and required data collection applications to patrol within Jaibui Island and record encounter-based observations of wild fauna activities prioritising primates, and the human activities that impedes their survival within the Island. Active patrol started in November 2023 after the agreement and making sure that the bio-monitors have the tools and materials for effective patrols. Patrols are ongoing across the Island and patrol data is downloaded at the end of every month to visualisation and analysis to inform proper planning and understanding of primate's presence, movement, and activity patterns within the Island.

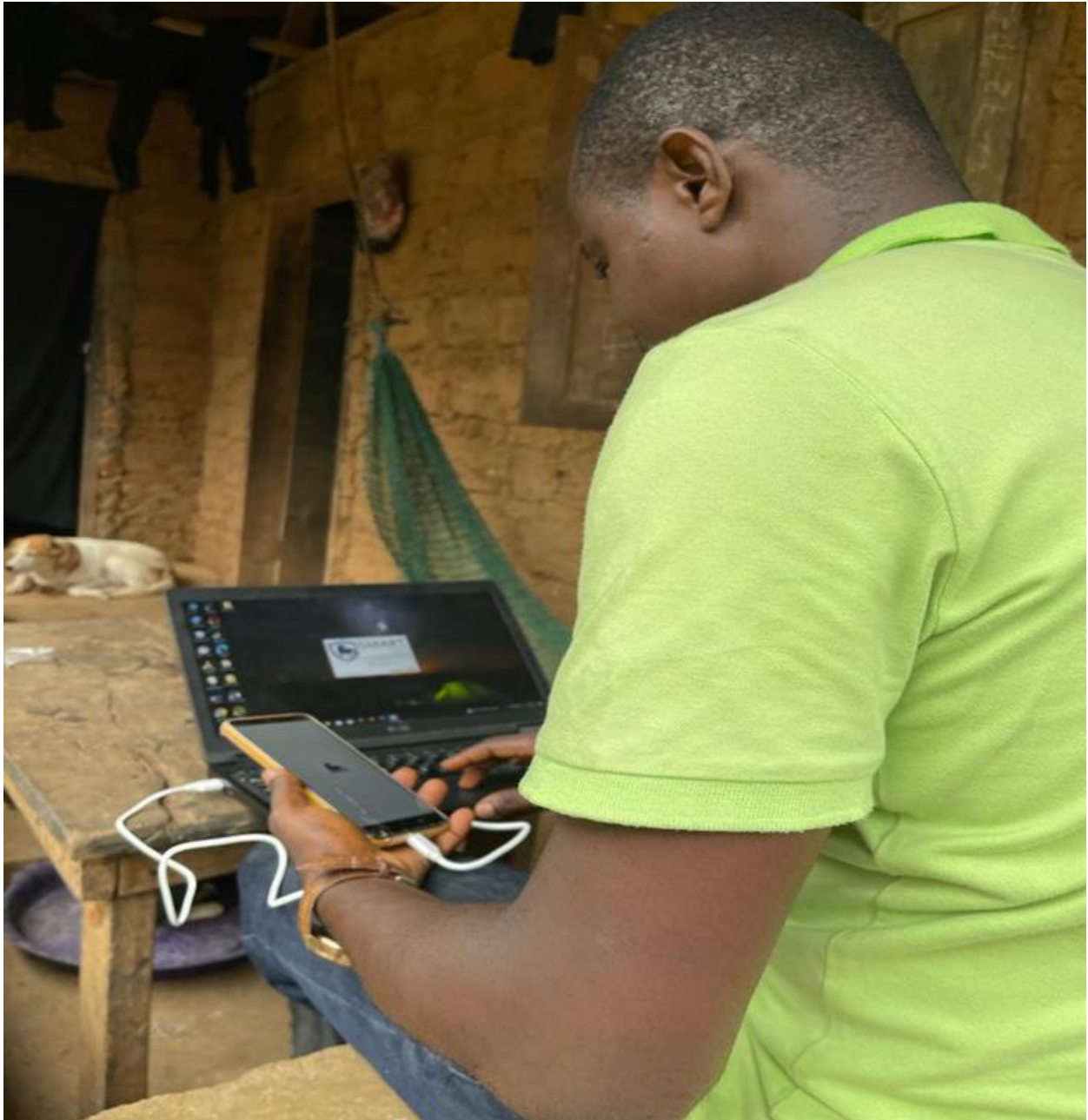




Training the community bio-monitors to commence forest patrol.

Biomonitoring data collection

The bio-monitoring data collection forms another major component of the project that will be in effective operation for 10 months during the 1-year lifetime of the project. The bio-monitors engaged in daily patrols during the day. The commencement of patrols was informed by the preparation and setting up of the mobile devices with SMART and GAIA GPS application as well as the training of the bio-monitors as described earlier. The SMART and GAIA GPS for the mobile devices was designed to fit for the study area drawing from knowledge and experience of known wild fauna species occurring within the Island and the level of literacy of the bio-monitors to properly collect forest biological data. SMART application is user friendly that allows people that have received little formal education to participate in data collection. Therefore, pictures of known wild fauna of the area and common human activities were programmed into the application to aid the memory of the bio-monitors to recognise the different species of primates, other wild animals, and human activities.



Setting up SMART and GAIA GPS applications on the phone to support data collection.

Upcoming activities

In accordance with the planned project outputs, the upcoming activities will respectively focus on:

1. Bushmeat survey in the seven project communities targeting community members to understand the source and purpose of hunting from the community members and aligned it with evidence from the SMART patrol data.

2. Bushmeat sensitisation and campaign to increase the awareness of the community members regarding killing and eating wild animals especially endangered species and the various benefit opportunities associated with the protection of wild animals and their habitats.
3. Monthly downloading of patrol data from the biomonitoring exercise.