Final Evaluation Report

Your Details	
Full Name	DAVID WARUI KIRUGUI
Project Title	Assessing role of satellite wetlands around lake Ol' Bolossat, Kenya for the conservation of Endangered Grey Crowned Crane
Application ID	411140-1
Date of this Report	28/7/2024

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
1Twenty satellite wetlands mapped and size of Grey Crowned Crane population in the satellite wetlands determined.				Thirty-six satellite wetlands mapped and 20 satellite wetlands prioritised.
2.Seasonal variation in the use of satellite wetlands by Grey Crowned Crane is determined and roosting site located.				Questionnaire survey conducted in 25 wetlands though captured in the proposal but not budgeted it was crucial in the implementation. 500 respondents were interviewed and this formed the basis of our project.
3 Within six months' Critical habitat, especially for breeding and foraging habitat will beestablished and also breeding activity and breeding success.				Thirty-four chicks managed to fledge from the 25 satellite wetlands monitored during the project. This clear shows the significance of satellite wetland in conservation cranes

4 After six months' potential threats to breeding sites for the species will be established and forsix months surrounding community will be involved in conservation of the Grey Crowned Crane. Overall, the project will contribute in stabilizing and reversing the declining population				The training of crane custodians was not achieved due to insufficient funds. However, we engaged the community through one-on-one awareness sessions and community gatherings. We also involved 15 schools after discovering that many learners were taking crane chicks and eggs. Initially, these chicks were taken for consumption, but now they are collected and sold.

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

a). Increased knowledge to communities around the satellite wetlands on the conservation of endangered grey crowned crane and its habitat.

b). Reduced threats to the species and its habitat after engaging the local users and through monitoring.

c). Improved population of endangered grey crowned crane in the satellite wetland after 36 fledglings were added into the wild.

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

a. High cost of fuel almost doubled than our earlier projections. We worked within the budget but we squeezed other budget lines to accommodate the effects.

b. Budget for questionnaire survey was not included in the initial budget therefore balancing the activities was a challenge. Therefore, we had to exclude the training of cranes custodian.

c. High demand and market for crane chicks especially in Laikipia County which poses as the main challenge for the increase in the number of cranes in the area. We worked with Kenya Wildlife Service who are mandate in the conservation, management and protection of wildlife in Kenya.

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

1.New knowledge- During field interaction the project did not only empower the community members but created local experts who can actively contribute to the ongoing efforts of conserving the cranes. During school session learners provide indigenous knowledge on how cranes are being poached and other crucial information which will be key in addressing threats going forward.

2.Community-Based Monitoring: The project engaged local communities in crane monitoring activities helping in gathering valuable data on crane populations and their habitats. This participatory approach fostered a sense of ownership and responsibility among community members for the conservation of cranes.

3.Improved Ecosystem Services: During the project, we encouraged protection of crane habitats, contributing to the overall health of ecosystems. This, in turn, benefits local communities by maintaining essential ecosystem services, such as water purification, flood control, and soil fertility.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

- Yes, some of the wetlands are in private land is to encourage them not to drain the wetlands and introducing conservation agriculture or other ventures that does not threaten the wetland.
- Each wetland has its own challenges so further engagement will be sought to create more awareness and find an approach on the wise use of the wetland.
- Presence of invasive species like *Salvinia molesta* in most dams was observed as challenge to the breeding of cranes and other waterfowl since it leads to depletion of the native vegetation that their use as nesting materials. CCV has developed an alternative use of the species by thermal decomposing it to produce biochar and then used to plant crops in farms, this would be an ideal approach

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

1. **Websites:** the final report will be uploaded in Cranes Conservation Volunteers website.
2. **Educational Programmes:** we will continue sharing the result of the project during school programmes, community workshops, and outreach events. Production of more awareness materials to increase knowledge on cranes conservation.
3. **Social Media:** We will utilise Cranes Conservation social media Facebook page to share the result of our project and key highlights of the project.
4. **Collaboration and Stakeholders:** We will engage with local communities, governmental agencies, non-profit organisations, and other stakeholders. This

will help in building partnerships in sharing information, garnering support, and ensuring the sustainability of conservation efforts.

5. On 10th November 2024 there will be a conference on people working for cranes in East Africa, we will share the results of our findings.

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

The loss of healthy wetlands and associated disturbance impacts crane productivity and the sustainability of community livelihoods. Promoting sustainable livelihoods and balanced healthy wetlands, we need to work with the community to adopt innovative, resilient livelihood practices that take advantage of the ecosystem servicers for increased crop production. These practices will ensure a healthy wetland, mitigating the effects of climate change and reducing conflicts with cranes.

Wetland Conservation and Restoration:

- Identify and protect critical wetland habitats for cranes.
- Implement wetland restoration projects to enhance and expand suitable crane habitats

Community Engagement:

- Involve local communities in conservation efforts to ensure sustainable practices.
- Promote awareness about the ecological importance of wetlands and cranes.

Research and Monitoring:

- Conduct research to better understand crane behaviour, ecology, and migration patterns.
- Implement monitoring programs to track crane populations and respond to changes.

Sustainable Agriculture Practices:

- Promote agricultural practices that minimise the impact on wetlands and wildlife.
- Implement buffer zones and sustainable farming methods that coexist with crane habitats.

Invasive Species Control:

- Manage and control invasive species that may negatively impact crane habitats.
- Restore native vegetation to enhance the quality of crane habitats.

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 foundation received publicity.

Awareness Materials-Posters - During awareness presentation the slide had logo of the foundation

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

1. David Warui Kirugui-Project Manger
2. George Ndungu Muigai-Technical Advisor
3. Cynthia Njeri Njogu-adminstrator
4. Charles Gichuki-Field Officer
5. Jane Njoroge-Field Offcicer
6. Victor Leteele-Field Officer
7. Doreen Kayuyu-Field Oficer
8. Daniel Mutai-Field Officer
9. Centrine Akiru-Field Officer
10. Vivian Chelangat-Field Officer

10. Any other comments?

I am greatly indebted to Rufford for the significant role they played in supporting this project. Adding 34 chicks to the wild is a major milestone. With an enlightened public and enhanced conservation measures, the population of cranes will increase and be uplisted in the IUCN Red List. The project has contributed immensely to the conservation of the grey crowned ccrane by establishing the crucial role that satellite wetlands play in their conservation.