

CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	Sustainable Rural Growth and Development Initiative (SRGDI)
Project Title:	Misuku Hills Art Challenge (MiHAC)
Date of Report:	08/08/2017
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CEPF Region: Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity Hotspot

Strategic Direction: Mainstream biodiversity into wider development policies, plans and projects to deliver the co- benefits of biodiversity conservation, improved local livelihoods and economic development.

Grant Amount: \$20,000

Project Dates: 01st February 2017 – 31st July 2017

Implementation Partners

Misuku Hills Arts Challenge (MiHAC) engaged the following key partners;

- **Ministry of Tourism & Department of Forestry**
- **Misuku Hills Beekeepers Association (MBA) & AfES (CEPF Grantees)**
- **The Media**

Ministry of Tourism & Department of Forestry - The project had A PROJECT briefing and planning meeting with the Departments of Tourism and Forestry at Crossroads Hotel in Lilongwe. The Department Of Tourism was represented by the Director of Tourism who pledged full support to the program as such the implementation at so many levels has been in collaboration with the department of tourism. The department assigned senior officers to be our liaison at the departments. The project was able to acquire current information mostly on department's plans on the tourism industry and forestry. The tourism department assigned officers to accompany our teams to Misuku. These officers were a very useful resource as they could give helpful insight on the tourism industry around Misuku and Malawi in general. The department of tourism invited SRGDI to the first National tourism conference held at the capital hotel where in his remarks the Director of tourism acknowledged the efforts being made by various organizations in promoting tourism and community participation in conserving natural resources with a special mention to SRGDI and the MiHAC.



Left: The Regional Tourism Officer, Michael Chigaga is being interviewed by the media and artists in Misuku Hills.

The Ministry of Tourism delegated him to accompany the team of artists and journalists that visited Misuku Hills in the MiHAC project.

The Department of Forestry has also been very committed to MiHAC project. The project has been communicating directly with the Director of Forestry, Dr. Chilima who was also the guest of honor at the Misuku Hills Art National Exhibition. The department of Forestry also offered the project free airtime on their TV program called Chilengedwe.



Left: The Director of Forestry (*in glasses*) presenting a certificate to one of the winning photographers in the Misuku Hills Arts Challenge, during the National Exhibition.

In his speech the director recognized MiHAC as one of the most innovative projects he has seen in forest conservation in Malawi

The Environmental Affairs Department has also played a significant role in the Misuku Hills Art Challenge. The Biodiversity Focal Point for Malawi, Mphatso Kalemba, was one of the three judges for Misuku Hills Art Exhibition. The other two were Mr. Harold Chisale (Deputy Head of Department of Forestry from Lilongwe University of Natural Resources) and Mphatso Chidothi (Former Lecturer of Arts-Chancellor College-University of Malawi). During the National Art Exhibition, The Principle Environmental Officer, Monifer Msasa also provided a presentation on the state of biodiversity in Malawi, she however indicated that there was very little information about Misuku Hills in her department as such the project was an eye opener in her department.



Left to Right: Mphatso Chidothi (Former Lecturer of Arts-Chancellor College-University of Malawi), **Harold Chisale** (Deputy Head of Department of Forestry from Lilongwe University of Natural Resources), **Dr. Chilima** (Director of Forestry) , **Mphatso Kalemba** (The National Biodiversity Focal Point for Malawi) and **Maynard Nyirenda** (SRGDI, Executive Director) captured during the Misuku Hills Art National Exhibition

Misuku Hills Beekeepers Association & AfES (CEPF Grantees) – Misuku Hills Beekeepers Association (MBA) facilitated the art competition in 10 schools around Misuku Hills. They were very crucial in hosting artists and providing them with guidance (tour guiding) to experience the beauty and biodiversity and also interact with local communities. MBA and AfES also provided information on CEPF interventions in Misuku Hills. These partners also helped in translation to ensure that the artists and journalists conduct interviews and have access to all sites without problems.



Left: The Executive Director for Misuku Hills Beekeepers Association briefing a team of artists and journalists upon arrival in Misuku Hills. During the briefing he also presented on interventions that the association were doing with support from CEPF

The Media – MiHAC engaged a team of journalists from both print and electronic media. The role of the media was to enhance publicity of Misuku Hills Art Challenge (MiHAC) Competition and also Misuku Hills KBA. The media have been key to the success of MiHAC. Amongst other things they have published/broadcasted the following;

- Stories showcasing the beauty and ecological, cultural, aesthetic and economic value of Misuku hills
- Stories on the competition & artists
- Stories promoting conservation / tourism in Misuku Hills

The Media team included the following 5 major media houses in Malawi as follows;

- a. Zodiak Broadcasting Station (ZBS) - Television, Radio & Online
- b. Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) Television and Radio
- c. Nation Newspapers (Paper & Online)
- d. Daily Times (Newspaper, Television and Radio)
- e. Voice of Livingstonia Radio



Left: Maynard Nyirenda, Executive Director of SRGDI, making a press briefing on MiHAC project to the MiHAC media team

Conservation Impacts

Misuku Hills Forest Reserve is located in Chitipa District along the Malawi -Tanzania Border. This area is very remote and separated from major towns and cities in Malawi. Misuku Hills is little known in Malawi and internationally. Misuku Hills is very rich in biological diversity. According to Birdlife Data Zone, over 100 species of birds have been recorded in Misuku Hills Forest Reserves. These bird species are attractive to visitors, and can therefore generate additional incomes for forest dwelling communities. The people of Misuku have a very rich culture and tradition and have a life connection with Misuku Hills. Although the potential for tourism is huge, the area receives less than 100 local and international tourists a year. There is very little awareness made at national and international level on Misuku Hills. Misuku hills rainforests have been under intense pressure from logging, charcoal production, and clearance for agricultural land.

In order to ensure that Misuku Hills Forest Reserve is well conserved and promote tourism and culture in Misuku Hills, Sustainable Rural Growth and Development Initiative (SRGDI) in Partnership with Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) embarked on Misuku Hills Art Challenge (MiHAC), a massive awareness campaign on Misuku Hill KBA and development of communication materials. The project aimed at generating interest and awareness in species/ecosystem conservation in Misuku Hills and also showcase the culture of the people in Misuku Hills, at local, national and international level. The project had the following outcomes;

- At least 13 potential donors, tour operators and investors aware about the beauty , ecological, cultural, aesthetical and economic value of Misuku KBA
- At least MK200,000 (\$272) per month worth revenue generated/collected from visitors/tourists visiting Misuku Hills
- At least \$100,000 leveraged for conservation from government, conservation donors and investors
- At least 1000 school children surrounding Misuku Hills KBA aware about the beauty , ecological, cultural, aesthetical and economic value of Misuku KBA
- 4million television viewers aware about the beauty , ecological, cultural, aesthetical and economic value of Misuku KBA
- At least 10visitors/tourists per month visit Misuku KBA (Currently the KBAs receives less than 10 tourist/visitors in 4months)

The Misuku Hills Art Challenge (MiHAC) was a national competition that brought together 12 top artists, photographers and film makers in Malawi to showcase the beauty and ecological, cultural, aesthetical and economic value of Misuku Hills Forest Reserves. A smaller art competition was also conducted for school children in schools surrounding Misuku Hills. The overall goal of the project was to ensure that Misuku Hills Forest Reserve is well conserved and also promote tourism and culture for people in Misuku Hills.

The project engaged the general public in Malawi through the media. A National Exhibition was conducted in the Lilongwe where paintings, sculptures, photographs and short films on Misuku Hills KBA were exhibited. The exhibition brought together government departments, NGOs, Companies, Development Partners and general public. Live images and sounds of birds in Misuku Hills were streamed and displayed, opening up views of Misuku Hills never before seen by the public. The exhibition also

displayed school children art work. Leaflets about Misuku Hills were produced and distributed to encourage people to visit the Misuku Hills. During exhibition best performing participants will be awarded with cash prizes. After exhibition, paintings, sculptures, photos, short films and students art have been shared to CEPF, and Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife Websites, Facebook, Twitter and other social media. The best paintings, photographs and sculpture are yet to be displayed at strategic places such as Airports and Hotels in Malawi. The paintings, sculptures, photographs and short film will however remain property of SRGDI & Misuku Hills Beekeepers Association and will be used for the purpose of awareness and marketing Misuku hills at local and international forums.

MiHAC Project was implemented in the Misuku Hills Forest Reserves (including Mugesse) [KBA nr 164 which is one of the priority KBAs in the CEPF Investment Strategy. The project relates to the CEPF Investment strategy of mainstreaming biodiversity into wider development policies, plans and projects to deliver the co-benefits of biodiversity conservation, improved local livelihoods and economic development. MIHAC has made significant contribution and impact as follows;

- 1) **Development of Misuku Hills KBA Communication Materials** - The project has developed communication materials that showcase the beauty and ecological, cultural, aesthetical and economic value of Misuku Hills Forest Reserves. These communication materials are now being used to generate interest and awareness in species/ecosystem conservation in Misuku Hills and also showcase the culture of the people in Misuku Hills, at local, national and international level. The communication materials include; Three (3) short films/documentaries, 16 pieces of fine Art, 3 pieces of sculpture, over 68 photos , 1000 brochures, 10 children drawings, website for promoting Misuku hills KBA (<http://misukuhills.org/>), Facebook page(<https://web.facebook.com/Misuku-Hills>) and Twitter ([@MisukuHills](https://twitter.com/MisukuHills)). These materials will continue to be used to generate awareness and interest about Misuku Hills KBA in the coming years.
- 2) **Raised awareness and interest about Misuku Hills KBA** – Baseline data indicated that there was very little known about Misuku KBA. This area is very remote and separated from major towns and cities in Malawi. Misuku Hills is little known in Malawi and internationally. Most Malawians were not aware of unique beauty and ecological, cultural, aesthetical and economic value of Misuku Hills Forest Reserves and its unique biodiversity. Little was being done to raise awareness and market Misuku Hills and there were just a few photos on websites. A visitor to Misuku Hills could not find even a single brochure on Misuku Hills. Very few individuals, companies, organizations and government departments showed interest to invest in Misuku Hills. There was very little awareness made at national and international level on Misuku Hills. This was having very serious consequences on conservation efforts. The MIHAC has made great contribution on awareness.

The MIHAC project has reached to over 6,000,000 people reached through Television, Radio, Newspapers, Facebook, Tweeter, Art Exhibition, Brochures and Website. The project has conducted a number of interviews for radio and TV which have been aired on Zodiak Broadcasting Stations (ZBS) and Malawi

Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) TV and radio station in a series of news and current affairs programs. The interviews were incorporated in current affairs programs twice on ZBS and three times on MBC. The project has partnered with the national youth network on climate change that has a working relationship with Timveni (radio and TV) for a weekly 30min program. Timveni TV and Times TV will broadcast the 3 Misuku Hills documentaries in their environment programmes. The organization conducted a press briefing at DOLVIC hotel which was attended by journalists from Zodiak TV and radio, MBC TV and Radio, JOY TV and radio, Times TV and radio as well as times and nation newspapers. The project has had over 10 newspaper articles (News, Reports, Features and Pictorial focus) in the country major newspapers, The Nation and Daily Times.

Below is one of Misuku Hills KBA Newspaper Article in one of Malawi's main Newspapers "The Nation"



MiHAC has also achieved some online article that can be accessed through the following links;

- a) <http://mwnation.com/misuku-hills-hidden-treasure/>
- b) <http://mwnation.com/12-qualify-for-misuku-hills-art-challenge/>
- c) <http://www.times.mw/misuku-hills-arts-challenge-ropes-in-12/>
- d) <http://mwnation.com/on-misuku-hills-art-challenge/>
- e) <http://eaace.com/misuku-art-challenge-climax-saturday/>

MiHAC project has increased awareness about Misuku Hills KBA to government potential donors, tour operators and investors. Specifically the awareness targeted the Department of Forestry, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, UNDP-GEF Small Grants Programme, The Norwegian embassy, US embassy, Germany embassy, South African embassy, and Chinese embassy, European Union Delegation to Malawi, GIZ-MIERA programme, Hivos, IM Swedish development partner, PERFOM, Land and Lake Safaris, Responsible Safaris,

Nyasa Adventures, Kiboko Safaris and Misuku expeditions. As we report these organizations and companies are full aware about Misuku Hills KBA.

The project reached out to 10 schools around Misuku hills with the arts competition for school kids to raise awareness on Misuku KBA. On average each school has about 650 pupils and each of these were allowed to participate as such an estimated total number of 6500 school children were made aware of the beauty , ecological, cultural, aesthetical and economic value of Misuku KBA. MIHAC enabled students and the community to engage in creativity while learning about the biodiversity in their area.

Below Left: Finalists school children exhibiting the art on Misuku Hills and on the right a team of artists assessing the work of the school children. During the even the 12top artists also to time to motivate the young artists in a career in biodiversity art and art in general.



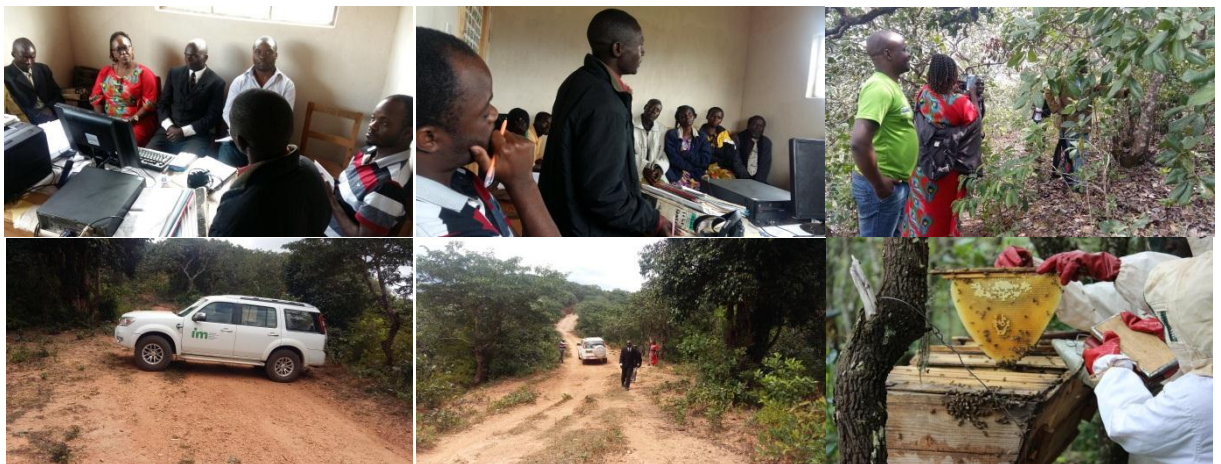
- 3) Mainstreaming Misuku Hills KBA biodiversity into wider development policies, plans and projects** - Through MIHAC Project we have influenced government to mainstream Misuku Hills KBA biodiversity into wider development policies, plans and projects. SRGDI engaged government at highest level to mainstream Misuku Hills Biodiversity Conservation in government policies, plans and projects. The project directly engaged with the Director of Forestry, The Director of Tourism and the National Biodiversity Focal Point. The project has influenced the Government of Malawi through the Environment Affairs Department (Biodiversity Focal Point) to consider conducting an assessment that may see Misuku KBA being recognized as a key biodiversity area. At the moment Misuku Hills is not recognized as a key biodiversity area by government.

The Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining and the Land Resources Conservation Department in the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development has proposed a National Workshop on Mountains and how they have been impacted biodiversity loss and climate change. The main aim of the conference is to bring together relevant stakeholders and initiate dialogue on how to conserve and sustainably develop mountain areas, the biodiversity that exists and other highlands in the Malawi. Misuku Hills has been earmarked as one of the mountains that will benefit from this platform. The workshop will also initiate dialogue on mountain ecosystems with greater emphasis on mountain

ecosystem services climate change, freshwater resources and livelihoods including sustainable mountain agriculture. On 1st August, 2017 the National Biodiversity Focal Point approached SRGDI to consider supporting the National Workshop recognizing it as key stakeholder through the CEPF supported project. MiHAC has been requested to input information on Misuku Hills KBA in the National Workshop on Mountains proposal. MiHAC has linked Misuku KBA to other programmes such as the Malawi REDD+ Programme and Landscape Programmes.

- 4) **Leveraged Financial Resources/Funding for Misuku KBA Conservation & Livelihoods-** MiHAC project reached out to 15 potential donors/development partners, tour operators and investors. These are UNDP- GEF Small Grants Programme, The Norwegian embassy, US embassy, Germany embassy, South African embassy, and Chinese embassy, European Union Delegation to Malawi, GIZ-MIERA programme, Hivos, IM Swedish development partner, PERFORM, Land and Lake Safaris, Responsible Safaris, Nyasa Adventures, Kiboko Safaris and Misuku expeditions. Within a short period of time, the project is happy to report that IM Swedish Development Partner, one of the potential donor/development partners has shown keen interest to fund beekeeping and also environmental mainstreaming in Misuku Hills KBA. IM Swedish Development Partner travelled to Misuku to meet Misuku Beekeepers Association and government officials. A proposal was developed and got preliminary approval and now IM Swedish Development Partner, SRGDI and Misuku Hills Beekeepers Association are working to perfect the proposal. Implementation is scheduled to start in January 2018 and expected to run for 5 years. The project is aimed at developing beekeeping; support Misuku Hills Beekeepers Association to become an economically viable cooperative and also boosting conservation in Misuku KBA. Some tour operators such as Misuku Expeditions have agreed to market Misuku Hills KBA on their websites and their networks and make Misuku one of the destinations for their tourists.

Below: A pictorial focus on the visit by the IM Swedish Development Partner Team to Misuku Hills on 13th July, 2017.



Through MiHAC project, discussions are underway for a public private partnership arrangement between SRGDI/Misuku Hills Beekeepers Association and departments of Tourism and Forestry to set up a tourist center in Misuku Hills KBA. The center will promote tourism, culture and conservation of Misuku Hills and provide tour guiding services. The department of tourism will be providing technical support e.g. porters and tour guides as well as linking the center to their website. The forest department will be providing information to the center and engage communities in conservation. The tourism department is also interested in carry out an assessment to find out the financial viability of a major tourism investment in Misuku KBA.

Promotion of Eco-tourism and culture promoted in Misuku Hills KBA

Reports from the Misuku Hills Forest Management Committees indicate that they received 45 tourists/visitors from January to June, 2017 (an average of 8 visitors/ tourists per month) .There is a huge change from the baseline of 10 visitors/ tourists in 4 months (an average of 3 tourists/visitors per month).The committees were able to generate at least MK160,000 (\$221) per month from a baseline of MK60,000(\$83) per month. An estimated 6million people are aware about the culture of Misuku Hills people. The media and artists have showcased one cultural heritage site called “**Musheto**” a burial ground for the chiefs in Misuku Hills. The site has so many legendary stories which are mythical and explaining cultural diversity in the area in Misuku Hills. This was covered on all major TV & Radio stations in Malawi and also major newspapers.

SPECIES IN MISUKU HILLS KBA

MiHAC project targeted the entire Misuku Hills KBA focusing on both flora and fauna. According to Birdlife Data Zone, over 100 species of birds have been recorded in Misuku Hills Forest Reserves. Misuku is an internationally known Important Bird Area (IBA). MiHAC project would like to make Misuku Hills KBA an international destination for bird viewing in Malawi and Southern Africa. The project has therefore taken some interest in raising awareness on bird species in Misuku Hills KBA.

Below are some bird species that were captured by MiHAC photographers and film makers in Misuku Hills. Some of the key notable species of birds are; Silvery-cheeked Hornbill , *Hirundo atrocaerule* - Blue Swallow, ,*Modulatrix stictigula*, *Andropadus masukuensis* and *Batis mixta* occur nowhere else in Malawi as they reach their southern limits of distribution in the Reserves.



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The project is currently using the information to encourage government, development partners/donors to protect these birds. These bird species are attractive to visitors, and can therefore generate additional incomes for forest dwelling communities. However, they have not exploited this resource to improve their incomes because of insufficient external support. Currently there are no functional bird viewing facilities, trained bird guides and information center where tourist can find information about Misuku Hills Forest Reserve and birds species found in Misuku Hills. SRGDI and Misuku Beekeepers Association has plans to embark on an eco-tourism center for birds viewing in Misuku.

Misuku hills unique vegetation which includes epiphytic orchids that occur nowhere else in Malawi. Some unique plant species captured by MiHAC included; *Rytigynia pawekiae*, *Habenaria petraea*, *Habenaria pubidens*, *Hirundo atrocaerule* and *Pavetta comostyla*

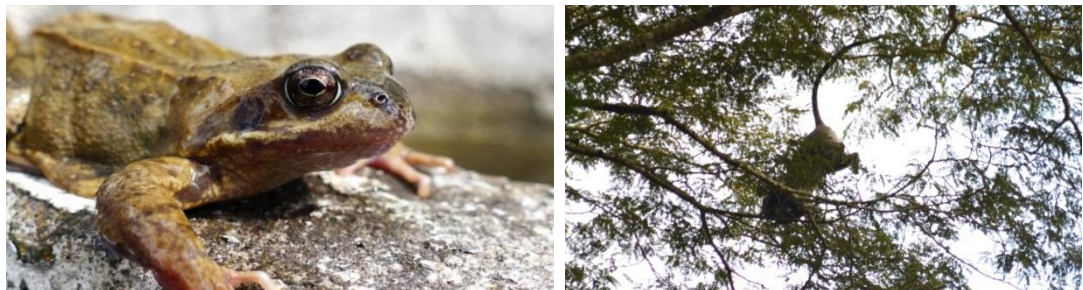


Misuku Hills has, bats, flying-squirrels, rodents and butterflies others that can only be found in Misuku Hills in Malawi. Below are some species of butterflies that the MiHAC project has captured in Misuku Hills KBA.



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Misuku Hills KBA has unique species are the Angola colobus monkeys and frogs such as the one captured below.



PROJECT CHALLENGES

MIHAC project faced some challenges that affected achievement of short-term and long-term impact objectives. The challenges were as follows;

- ✓ **Absence of Biodiversity Inventory for Misuku KBA – The** Government of Malawi (Biodiversity Focal Point) does not recognize Misuku Hills KBA as a Key Biodiversity Area. Therefore there was no immediate support available for Misuku hills KBA. However with MiHAC we will experience big changes in the next 12months after the awareness. There is a great need for a biological survey especially for trigger species/threatened species.
- ✓ **Geographic Location** -. Misuku hills have a very difficult terrain, with steep slopes, poor and seasonal roads. This becomes of a challenge for both tourists, donors and also posed a challenge during implementation. The challenge in implementation made it tough for the artists and reporters to tour the KBA.
- ✓ **Technical limitations of Artists and Media-** Although artists and journalists/reporters were best suited to raise the awareness; they themselves were also limited in terms of knowledge about issues of biodiversity e.g. little knowledge of species, ecosystems and other technical issues. Artists and Media were also limited in terms of equipment and materials e.g. Poor Cameras that could not capture quality pictures of biodiversity. In future project Artists and Media require at least 1 week orientation on Biodiversity before working on their art, reports and stories.
- ✓ **Limited Financial Resources-** MiHAC had a challenge of limited financial resources. Although the project has done great job with \$20,000, an assignment of National scale like this one, required at least \$100,000 for a period of at least 12months. Due to limited finances, we combined the Misuku Hills tours for donors and artists. Mass communication /public awareness/campaigns are usually intensive and expensive.
- ✓ **Limited Project Time Period –** MiHAC project was scheduled to take place for 6 months period. Although the project has been able to complete all the planned activities, some medium to long-term outcomes can only be registered at least in 12months time e.g. increased visitors and revenue from Tourism. It's too early to report on these indicators. Government has recommended that, MiHAC should have been designed as a long term programme that should help conserve Misuku Hills.
- ✓ **Lack of Tourist Facilities-** Misuku Hills has no tourist facilities. We need investment in tourist facilities (e.g. lodging/camping, bird watching platforms e.t.c). We need well trained, tour guides, tourist information offices and promotion materials. The community groups need to be organized and well trained to participate. There must be functioning co-managements arrangements between government and local communities including transparent and corruption free benefit sharing arrangements. We need experts to document the unique biodiversity. I would like to commend the government for constructing the tarmac road from Kapoka (along Karonga- Chitipa Road)to Misuku trading center. The road used to be a “night mare” However other roads to important sites and also trails should also be improved.

Unexpected Impacts

Promotion of Misuku Hills Honey & Mzuzu Coffee

The MiHAC project has also raised profile and exposed Misuku Honey and Coffee. Misuku Hills honey is produced in Misuku Hills by Misuku Hills Beekeepers Association. This will increase income and promote beekeeping. Beekeeping has been profiled as well. Misuku Hills is where 50% the internationally recognized “Mzuzu Coffee” is grown. International visitors have travelled to Misuku just to see the coffee fields/plantations including learn about culture, tradition and lives of local community that grow the famous Mzuzu coffee. Marketing Misuku hills has promoted Mzuzu coffee which is a forex earner and a source of income for people in Misuku Hills. Both Mzuzu Coffee and Misuku Honey have been exposed in the media articles and were displayed during the Misuku Hills Art National Exhibition. During the exhibition the general public has a chance to taste Misuku Honey and Mzuzu coffee and some products were sold.



Promotion of Artists

The Misuku Hills Arts Challenge has promoted and developed skills of artists. Most of the artists reported that what they found very important was the development of their skills, exposure and publicity they have received by participating in the Misuku Hills Art Competition. MiHAC is very proud to report that the winner in the short film/documentary category is Villant Jana, a lady. This is very important since in Malawi art is dominated by male artists. The winner in the fine art /painting category was Mr. Nelson Pamuyu. He has a disability (he is deaf). This competition meant a lot for Villant and Nelson, as winning has increased their confidence.

Below: Vilant and Nelson receive their awards from Director of Forestry



Below: Artists are captured in the field Misuku Hills during the tour



Below: Journalists and Artists interacting with communities in Misuku Hills to learn about the culture and tradition



Lessons Learned

The project has learnt the following;

- a) Engagement of the media has been a key to the success of the project. Media engagement was part of the design of the project. With all major/national media houses participating in this project, more people were reached than planned. Others were even able to carry out stories on their own without the project spending a penny on the publicity.
- b) The project engaged government at higher levels in the planning phase. This helped us to have a lot of support from the government. The team was able to community direct support from the directors of tourism and forestry. The involvement of government also gave us credibility to the general public as well as donors and investors.
- c) In order to reduce conflicts with participating artists, there is need to follow fair competition rules and also sign agreements during the onset of the competition. SRGDI signed contracts with contributing artists. There is also a need to set very clear rules of the competition to avoid unfair competition. Judges must be professionals and have trust from the artist. There is a need to identify artists that are passionate about nature and conservation.
- d) Identification and selection of participating artist – Artists need to be identified in a transparent and credible process. The project made a call for artists/filmmakers/photographers to participate in the competition. Two adverts were placed in two popular Malawi newspapers, The Nation and Daily Times. The adverts were also circulated through artists/filmmakers/photographers social networks. A team of judges from media houses made the selection of 12 finalists. The 12 finalists were published in the newspapers. This help to raised

awareness to the entire nation and already started to raise awareness about Misuku Hills.

Below: Newspaper advert that published 12 finalists in the Misuku Hills Art Challenge. This article captured the attention of the general public and the media who started to follow the competition with great interest.



Following the call for applications from Film Makers, Photographers, Painters and Sculptors to participate in Misuku Hills Art Challenge (MIHAC) we would like to announce and congratulate the following 12 finalists

FILM MAKERS	PHOTOGRAPHERS	12 FINALISTS		PAINTERS	
		SCULPTOR			

The team will tour Misuku Hills from 10th April - 14th April, 2016. They will then produce short films, photos, sculptures and art work/paintings showcasing the beauty and ecological, cultural, aesthetic and economic value of Misuku Hills Forest Reserves. Their work will be exhibited at a national exhibition on 26th May 2017 in Lilongwe. The aim of this competition is to raise on Misuku Hills in order to promote conservation and tourism. Misuku Hills is very rich in biological diversity. According to Birdlife Data Zone, over 100 species of birds have been recorded in Misuku Hills Forest Reserves. These bird species are attractive to visitors, and can therefore generate additional incomes for forest dwelling communities. The people of Misuku have a very rich culture and tradition and have a life connection with Misuku Hills. Misuku Hills is the home of the famous "Mzuzu Coffee". This is where over 50% of coffee is grown.

Like us on Facebook: Misuku Hills Follow Us on twitter: @MISUKUHILLS

The engagement of the country's top artists and media helped to raise the profile of Misuku Hills Art Challenge. The project was able to bring National Interest and focus on Misuku Hills KBA. Artists were also able to share Misuku KBA in their own networks. The Competition helped to bring quality artists, quality work and was a big motivation for artists and also generated interest amongst the public. Artists felt that winning the competition could help to raise their profile and also connect them to their prospective customers/partners. The project was also able to connect artists through a whatsapp group, which still exists even after the exhibition, artists continue to share opportunities and challenges using the Whatsapp group. The project also motivated school children in Misuku to consider a career as artists, filmmakers and journalists.

Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:

The use of artists in conservation has proved to be very successful when combined with media coverage. This is a lesson/case study that can be shared to the conservation community. The project has connected Misuku KBA to government, investors, local people and the general public. It is cost effective and can be a strong tool to influence government commitment towards conservation of key biodiversity areas and also lobbying for donor support and private investment. The project has also helped to promote the culture of Misuku hills local communities and also promote livelihoods interventions such as beekeeping and coffee production.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Provide details of any additional donors who supported this project and any funding secured for the project as a result of the CEPF grant or success of the project.

The project did not receive any additional funding from donors

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes

***Additional funding should be reported using the following categories:**

- A** *Project co-financing (Other donors contribute to the direct costs of this CEPF project)*
- B** *Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF project.)*
- C** *Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

Sustainability/Replicability

Summarize the success or challenge in achieving planned sustainability or replicability of project components or results.

MiHAC Sustainability

The MiHAC project has had implemented successful measures to ensure sustainability. The paintings, sculptures, photographs and short films remains property of SRGDI & Misuku Hills Beekeepers Association and will continue to be used for the purposes of awareness and marketing Misuku hills even after the phasing out of the project. The project has developed also website, Facebook and tweeter pages that will go a long way to providing information and raise awareness on Misuku Hills Conservation.

The project has transferred knowledge and skills and generated interest amongst artists and journalists to engage in developing art and stories on Misuku Hills KBA. Already there has been continued media coverage of Misuku Hills beyond the planned activity. The project has encouraged continued making painting, photographs, sculptures and films as a business at a profit. During the exhibition artists were able to get orders to supply more Misuku Hills art to customers.

In collaboration with Misuku Hills Beekeepers Association, MiHAC has engaged with Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife to start an eco-tourism social enterprise that will continue marketing Misuku Hills while generating funds for itself and conservation activities. Misuku Hills Beekeepers Association would like to establish Misuku Hills a major site for Bird Viewing.

The project has also been successful in getting Misuku Hills KBA mainstreaming in government development plans. This means that activities and programs that promote Misuku Hills KBA will be sustained through government support. MiHAC has also linked Misuku KBA to various donors, tour operators and the media. The project has engaged Misuku Hills to school children. This will ensure that children begin valuing and getting involved in conservation of Misuku Hills at the tender age and will grow to protect biodiversity in Misuku Hills.

The project is helping to generate revenue through promotion of tourism in Misuku. The funds generated will help the local management committees to finance forest conservation and tourism activities hence bringing financial sustainability.

MiHAC Replicability

MiHAC project model is a model that can be replicated in other KBAs within Eastern Afro-montane region and beyond. It has proven to be a cost effective and unique way to raise awareness and generate government, donors, investors and public interest in Misuku Hills KBA by engaging artists and journalists. With only \$20,000 the project was able to reach out to over 6million people, engage government, donor partners, media and investors in a space of 6months. The project model is good value for money, easy to implement and brings results in shortest possible time. The project has been identified as one of the most innovative approaches by the both the Director of Forestry and Director of Tourism in Malawi. MiHAC has been approached by several organization such as the Mulanje Mount Conservation Trust (MMCT). MMCT would like to use the MiHAC approach to raise awareness about Mulanje Mountain (The highest Mountain in Malawi).

Safeguard Policy Assessment

Provide a summary of the implementation of any required action toward the environmental and social safeguard policies within the project.

MiHAC undertook a consultation to identify environmental and social impacts of the project in Misuku Hills KBA with the aim of avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating adverse impacts, including protecting the rights of those likely to be affected or marginalized by the project. The project carried out meaningful continuous consultations with affected people (Indigenous people, local leaders, Village Natural Resources Management Committees, Beekeepers, Misuku Hills Coffee cooperatives, Local Forest Management Board, women, youth, school teachers and learners) , NGOs (AFES, Misuku Hills Beekeepers Association), Government (Departments of Forestry, Tourism and Environment). MiHAC oriented participating Artists (Photographers, Filmmakers, Sculptors and Painters) on social safeguards. The following simple rules were followed during development of art, films, sculptures, photographs and when capturing and publishing stories.

- a) **Respect for the rights of indigenous people and their effective participation** - All photos, films, radio and television interviews were captured and shared/broadcasted with full consent and dignity of the indigenous people in Misuku Hills.
- b) **Observe gender and social inclusion of marginalized people such as women, youth , children and people with disabilities** - A good example is that, the project engaged a sign language translator to ensure effective participation of one of our 12 artists, Mr. Nelson Pamuyu who has a disability (deaf). School children surrounding Misuku Hills were also included in their own art competition. This helped them to participate and contribute towards the awareness about Misuku Hills KBA.
- c) **Respect and promote the culture and cultural heritage sites** - MiHAC committed itself to promote and preserve the traditions and culture of indigenous people in Misuku. Artists and journalist had to seek consent from traditional leaders to visit and take pictures of one of the cultural sites in Misuku Hills. Artists also raised awareness on the history of the people in Misuku Hills, their food and way of life.

Below: Women in Misuku Hills captured with their traditional food “Bananas”



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- d) **Observe rules of Legally Protected Areas** - Misuku Hills KBA is a protected area. MiHAC project activities were therefore located within a legally protected area. Participants were to act in a manner consistent with defined protected area management plans. The project consulted protected area authorities (Department of Forestry) , Forest Block Management Committees, local communities to ensure that the activities were appropriate, to promote and enhance the conservation aims of the protected area.

Additional Comments/Recommendations

The MiHAC project would like to make the following recommendations;

- ✓ There is a need for continued support towards Misuku Hills Conservation so as to consolidate the gains that SRGDI/CEPF has made through Misuku Hills Arts Challenge project. SRGDI and Misuku Hills Beekeepers Association has plans to embark on an eco-tourism center for birds viewing in Misuku Hills and also an information Centre.
- ✓ SRGDI /CEPF should consider conducting biological survey that will expose trigger species / threatened species in Misuku KBA. This information will be very useful for awareness, advocacy and also planning for government, investors, donor partners and CSOs willing to work in Misuku KBA.
- ✓ SRGDI and its partners should continue to engage government to ensure that government commitment towards Misuku Hills KBA has been fulfilled. This is to take advantage of the political will that has been ignited and shown through this project. Our aim to ensure that Misuku KBA has been recognized as a key biodiversity area by the National Biodiversity Focal Point.
- ✓ According to the director of tourism, projects should also consider establishment of a tourist information centre as a cooperative trust for the villagers and training the surrounding communities on the concept of cultural-village experience such as village home stays as well as butterfly farming.
- ✓ There is a need to train artists and journalist in Biodiversity Conservation and also help to develop art and stories around biodiversity conservation, ecosystem services, culture and also livelihoods. This will help to write better stories and also make good productions.
- ✓ Government should urgently intervene to stop the deforestation in Misuku Hills and increase investment in conservation of Misuku Hills. The Government through Ministry of Tourism, Department Forestry and Department of Parks and Wildlife should consider making Misuku Hills a tourist destination. This will not only help to conserve unique biodiversity but also help generate forex and reduce

poverty in Misuku Hills. We would like to urge NGOs, Donors and other investors to develop and implement conservation and tourism projects in Misuku Hills.

Information Sharing and CEPF Policy

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned, and results. Final project completion reports are made available on our Web site, www.cepf.net, and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

Please include your full contact details below:

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*****please complete the tables on the following pages*****

Performance Tracking Report Addendum

Project Results	Is this question relevant?	If yes, provide your numerical response for results achieved for project from inception of CEPF support to date	Describe the principal results achieved during project period (Attach annexes if necessary)
1. Did your project strengthen management of a protected area guided by a sustainable management plan? Please indicate number of hectares improved.	NA		Please also include name of the protected area(s). If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.
2. How many hectares of new and/or expanded protected areas did your project help establish through a legal declaration or community agreement?	NA		Please also include name of the protected area. If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.
3. Did your project strengthen biodiversity conservation and/or natural resources management inside a key biodiversity area identified in the CEPF ecosystem profile? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	YES	2762	Misuku Hills Forest Reserves (including Mugesse) is one of the priority KBA in the CEPF Investment Strategy.
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	NA		
5. If your project promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, how many local communities accrued tangible socioeconomic benefits? Please complete Table 1 below.	Yes	MK160,000 (\$221)	The Misuku Hills forest management committees were able to generate at least MK160, 000 (\$221) per month from a baseline of MK60, 000(\$83) per month from eco-tourism

If you answered yes to question 5, please complete the following table.

Table 1. Socioeconomic Benefits to Target Communities

Please complete this table if your project provided concrete socioeconomic benefits to local communities. List the name of each community in column one. In the subsequent columns under Community Characteristics and Nature of Socioeconomic Benefit, place an X in all relevant boxes. In the bottom row, provide the totals of the Xs for each column.

Name of Community	Community Characteristics							Nature of Socioeconomic Benefit													
	Small landowners	Subsistence economy	Indigenous/ ethnic peoples	Pastoralists/nomadic peoples	Recent migrants	Urban communities	Communities falling below the poverty rate	Other	Increased Income due to:				Increased food security due to the adoption of sustainable fishing, hunting, or agricultural practices	More secure access to water resources	Improved tenure in land or other natural resource due to titling, reduction of colonization, etc.	Reduced risk of natural disasters (fires, landslides, flooding, etc)	More secure sources of energy	Increased access to public services, such as education, health, or credit	Improved use of traditional knowledge for environmental management	More participatory decision-making due to strengthened civil society and governance.	Other
									Adoption of sustainable natural resources management practices	Ecotourism revenues	Park management activities	Payment for environmental services									
Misuku Hills Forest Management Committees (Representing all communities surrounding Misuku Hills- Over 71 villages)	X	X	X				X			X											
Total	1	1	1				1			1											

If you marked "Other", please provide detail on the nature of the Community Characteristic and Socioeconomic Benefit:

