

Proposal to CEPF:

(S18-524-UGA-KIWOCEDU; COMMUNITY RESTORATION OF BAMBOOS IN ECHUYA FOREST RESERVE-CORB project; KIGEZI INITIATIVE FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN EMPOWERMENT AND DEVELOPMENT-UGANDA (KIWOCEDU)

Free Prior and Informed Consultation of Indigenous Peoples

Background to Project

Since when have you been working in the area?

KIWOCEDU is a local organization founded in 2010 and legally registered in 2013 as a community based organization with Kabale District Uganda, (REG NO: 271). KIWOCEDU is an umbrella organization of many grass root based women groups (including groups of batwa) in greater Kigezi, who have been in existence on average of 12 years and registered at different levels-parish, sub county and district.

What has been achieved so far?

KIWOCEDU's activities are derived from the CBO's thematic themes which include: Gender equality and women rights promotion; advancing education for girls, young women and batwa's children; Basic Health Care; Food security and Nutrition; Socio-economic and political Empowerment; Psycho-social support; Children rights protection and promotion; Environment conservation; and Sanitation and hygiene

Summary of achievements is tabulated below:

Thematic area	Achievements so far
Gender equality and women rights promotion	<p>Awareness creation and capacity building of communities to respond to gender equality issues and women rights particularly to meeting the needs of girls and women done. KIWOCEDU brings the needs of girls and women including those of indigenous Batwa to the fore front of discussion and mainstreaming and also builds the capacity of communities and partners to understand and respond to those issues.</p> <p>Activities done here included use of men4women sensitization and dialogue meetings, psychosocial support, creating a supportive environment that support and protect vulnerable populations (Batwa, women and children) from abuse and discrimination.</p>

Advancing education for girls, young women and Batwa's children

KIWOCEDU supports three categories of education, meant to address educational needs for different community groups and age including the underprivileged.

Non-formal education: whenever possible, KIWOCEDU supports the education of vulnerable groups in vocational skills and other diverse life skills to the youths. in this project The batwa will form 1/3 of the direct project beneficiaries who will be trainees in improved basketry and value addition

Functional Adult Education (FAL) - KIWOCEDU has been actively participating in mobilising the Batwa among others to engage in programs aiming at helping them know basic reading and writing.

FORMAL EDUCATION – despite the fact that primary education is free, the Batwa previously dint value formal education, through KOWOCEUD continues sensitisation on the importance of formal support more and more of their children are enrolling for primary school and a few have crossed to secondary school which was not common before KIWOCED started inspiring them to work towards achieving their dreams

Food security and nutrition

KIWOCEDU has supported vulnerable women and their families in implementation of different smart climate agricultural projects including organic vegetable growing, mushroom growing, fruit growing, and livestock projects. This has empowered women and their families to ensure food security throughout the year while achieving improved nutritional standards especially among the children and increased incomes for general improved wellbeing of their households.

Socio-economic and political Empowerment

KIWOCEDU promotes implementation of a number of alternative environmental friendly income generating activities including organic wine making, sheep and rabbit rearing projects; fruit growing, handcraft making, bee keeping, for improved household incomes. The proceeds have also been used to finance children's education, medical care, clothing and other basic domestic needs.

KIWOCEDU has been investing in training vulnerable group's women children and Batwa in governance and leadership issues and facilitated to be part of local community governance structures, and also participate in local planning processes. **As a result, there is increased recognition of gendered and batwa's issues and increased supplementary support to these vulnerable groups from different programme and development partners.**

Environment conservation

KIWOCEDU believes in a 'people partner with nature relationship' for a better and sustainable living. It has therefore promoted

sustainable use of natural resources to benefit every member of the community batwa inclusive. This includes use of available land with modern and improved agricultural methods like sustainable organic agriculture practices, agro forestry, and soil & water conservation in order to increase productivity both qualitatively and quantitatively, promotion of agro forestry; and energy efficient stoves and solar.

In landscapes near central forest reserves, women and batwa have been encouraged and facilitated to participate in collaborative forest management (CFM) processes for purposes of achieving both sustainable conservation of forest resources and services for livelihood improvement of communities.

CFM implementation process has helped batwa to become better recognized and accepted by other community members as part of building a socially inclusive society, unlike before where they were highly marginalised; Batwa and women in particular are enjoying greater benefits from harmonised forest resource access, sustainable utilization of the forest and its resources.

Who are living in the area? Which Indigenous People are present? How many?

The community around Echuya Central Forest Reserve dominated by two ethnic groups, the Bakiga (app. 51%) and Bafumbira (app. 44%), who are both small-scale crop farmers. The other ethnic group is the marginalized, indigenous community, the Batwa (pygmies) that make up app. 6% of the population. There are 188 batwa households in the project area, with 292 males and 415 females (making a total of 807 batwa) the majority of them landless. The Batwa were originally forest-dwelling hunter-gatherers but have lived on the fringes of the forest reserve since 1964 when Forest and Game Acts made it illegal to reside, hunt and farm inside protected areas.

What is their status, means of livelihoods, and what is the relation between your project and these Indigenous People?

The batwa are considered as a marginalised community yet they suffer severe isolation, discrimination and socio-economic exclusion. Almost half remain landless (squatting on others' lands) and almost all live in absolute poverty. Although KIWOCEDU and other partners have helped to integrate the Batwa into the rest of community, they still have poorer levels of health care, education and employment than their ethnic neighbours. They are the poor of the poorest in the area. Their livelihood is dependent on the forest through extracting bamboos, fuel wood, honey; ropes and medicines for both domestic and commercial purposes. They remain culturally attached to the forest.

The demographic results from the Batwa population census 2016 conducted by Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Trust show that the more than half of the Batwa populations (52.9%) have never attained any formal education. It also shows that only 0.5% of the population have attained tertiary level of education. 53% of those who have never attained any formal education are females. About 44% of Batwa

households in the area have access to farmland, while the remaining 56.4% do not have access to farmland of their own. Batwa population being one of the people living in object poverty, their living conditions are also very poor-47.0% of Batwa live in grass thatched houses. Some batwa recently adapted to farming as a source of livelihood, with traditional methods and rudimentary hand tools. Some already own cows and goats are very common. However, majority still work as sources of cheap labour for other communities as a way of earning a living.

Consequently, the batwa and other communities in the project area view the remaining Echuya forest as one of their only remaining source of livelihood, providing fuel, poles for construction and non-timber forest products. Echuya is rich in bamboo- an extremely important livelihood resource of forest adjacent communities, and this is the sole livelihood resource for the forest dwelling Batwa [pygmy] population. The indigenous groups (batwa) were given a special privilege of harvesting bamboos, fuel wood, ropes, medicinal herbs e.t.c any time of the week as part of an affirmative action under Collaborative Forest Management arrangement. Batwa exchange or sell the bamboos to other tribes for money to use for buying of food and other basic needs, and sometimes is directly exchanged for such items. They solely depend on these bamboos for survival.

Recently, the bamboo resources in Echuya have declined due to number reasons and therefore access to bamboo restricted. Aware that adjacent communities have depended on this bamboo for centuries, its disappearance shall greatly and negatively impact on their livelihoods as well as the biodiversity inside and outside Echuya CFR.

Therefore CORB project objective directly links to ensuring a sustainable supply of forest bamboos for the batwa who largely depend on them for survival. Their cultural attachments to the forest will also be preserved through ensuring a well conserved natural forest with their active participation as forest custodians.

Consultations

Which consultations have taken place to date? How, when, with whom? Do you have any documentation (letters, minutes of meetings etc) with regards to these consultations?

Meetings with specific interest groups such as the Batwa and other community groups have been held to map out specific strategies aimed at bamboo restoration and liberation at Echuya. Batwa leaders on Executive committees of BECLA CFM (Mr. Elias Lukwago, batwa chairperson for Kacerere batwa, Mr. Tamusole Pafula, Batwa representative for batwa in Kashasha Parish, M/s Kyabazanga Norah, batwa representative for women) were contacted and later batwa bamboo harvesters met in order to capture their interest and their participation in project implementation.

These were done immediately after the call for Letter Of Intent was in order to capture their views and proposals to put in the concept note. The batwa have been updated on every stage of the LOI review; and already inspired to being part of active participation in CORB project Implementation.

Notes to different consultative meetings held with batwa leaders and batwa bamboo harvesters are available. safeguard

Are the Indigenous People informed about your planned project? Do they agree? How will you involve them during the implementation of your project? Will they be part of the decision-making process?

Batwa Leaders and the entire community in Bufundi were informed and are still aware of the forth coming CORB project. They were part of project design and are among the direct beneficiaries.

They will be involved throughout project implementation and monitoring through a number of activities including project launch/inception meeting; action planning meetings, men4women sensitisation meetings on ecological values and gender issue; About 15% of the Batwa households have a radio from which information can be sought for their development projects-these will be part of the listenship to the planned radio talk show programmes, and will be contracted to be part of bamboo liberation and restoration activities. As part promoting visibility of the project and the donor and increased awareness about ecological values of the forest, batwa leaders will be given T-shirts while the rest will be given posters.

Batwa will also be part of training in sustainable bamboo harvesting practices and value addition to bamboo products. In the joint management plan for the bamboo under management, batwa's roles and responsibilities will be clarified and will also be contracted to be part of the periodic bamboo maintenance team at Echuya.