

## **Process Framework for Involuntary Restrictions**

**Date: 24/7/2018**

**CEPF Grant S18-500-RWA-RWCA**

**Rwanda Wildlife Conservation Association**

***Strengthening Rugezi marsh rangers to increase protection of Rugezi Marsh and its iconic Grey Crowned Cranes***

**Rugezi Marsh**

## **Grant Summary**

1. Grant Organization: Rwanda Wildlife Conservation Association
2. Grant Title: Strengthening Rugezi marsh rangers to increase protection of Rugezi Marsh and its iconic Grey Crowned Cranes
3. Grant number: S18-500-RWA-RWCA
4. Grant amount (US dollars): 49,746.90
5. Proposed dates of grant: 01/Aug/2018 to 31 August 2019
6. Countries or territories where project will be undertaken: Rwanda
7. Date of preparation of this document: 16/July/2018

**The Process Framework will describe the project and how restrictions of access to natural resources and measures to assist affected communities. Affected communities should have the opportunity to participate in the drafting of the Process Framework. Typically, the Applicant will prepare a draft Framework that will then be shared and discussed with local communities and other relevant stakeholders. Based on the consultations, a final Framework will be prepared. CEPF may provide guidance on development of the Framework and will review and approve the final Framework prior to approving the final project proposal application. The Process Framework should include the following elements:**

### **A. Project background**

Rwanda is a small country with an incredible variety of bio-diversity, yet it is challenged by high population density and extreme poverty. This results in resources and land being overstretched and high competition between people and wildlife. These challenges impact Rugezi marsh through habitat destruction, agricultural encroachment, and people using the marsh for washing, collecting grass, grazing livestock etc. These are illegal activities, but many people are not aware of this and/or are willing to take the risk due to the pressures they face. Despite Rugezi marsh being a Ramsar protected site, the pressure from the communities around it is too great and more needs to be done to engage the communities, find solutions to their problems and enhance the protection of the marsh from the level of the community. The encroachment on the marsh has an impact on the habitat and the whole ecosystem and is likely to have a devastating effect in the long term.

One species that is particularly impacted by the illegal activities at the marsh is the endangered Grey Crowned Cranes (*Balearica regulorum*). Despite being a symbol of wealth and longevity in Rwandan culture, Grey Crowned Cranes face increasing threats due to habitat reduction and a growing illegal trade. Around Rugezi, community members are involved with poaching cranes or chicks for the illegal pet trade as well as taking eggs or cranes for food. Additionally, the number of people entering the marsh unintentionally invades the habitat, disturbs nest sites and breeding activities and there are very few indigenous trees left around the marsh which are suitable for cranes to roost in.

When RWCA began working at Rugezi marsh, we held meetings with local stakeholders and District officials to discuss how the protection and management of the marsh could be enhanced. From these discussions it was clear that the officials wanted to improve protection and prosecute and punish illegal activities but did not have enough resources (mainly personnel) to successfully monitor and protect the area. Our model of establishing a co-operative of community marsh rangers, some of whom are ex-poachers, emerged from these discussions as a way to respond to the need identified by the local authorities. The model involves communities in protecting their own wetland, creating ownership and learning about ecosystem services they can benefit from.

This project will address the specific problem of local community members poaching cranes and chicks for the illegal pet trade and eggs for eating, as well as habitat destruction and lack of understanding about the importance of wetlands. This will be done through strengthening our existing team of marsh rangers through training and the recruitment of more rangers who are able to patrol more areas of the marsh. We will work with local leaders to raise awareness and build collaboration between them and the rangers, leading to more reports of illegal activities being successfully followed up. We will also improve monitoring of Grey Crowned Cranes in the area and plant over 2000 indigenous trees which are ideal roosting trees for birds.

The project activities will drastically reduce poaching at the same time as contributing to a new and engaging method of management for Rugezi marsh which relies on local community involvement. The project activities will also help protect the marsh by reducing the number of illegal activities and restore natural habitats which will serve to benefit the whole ecosystem at this important Ramsar protected site.

#### **B. Participatory implementation**

Founded and run by Rwandans who come from and understand local communities and their challenges, RWCA has the relevant experience to address the problem. We work extensively in the field and have built strong and collaborative relationships with key stakeholders, local authority officials and community members, as well as having support and backing from the Rwandan Government. The project activities we propose with this grant have been inspired by conversations and discussions with key members of the community and have been developed over time to become embedded in the community.

Throughout all our work, we continually engage and consult with community members as this helps us to better understand the conservation challenges we face. We are understanding and empathetic to the complex nature of conservation issues, for example the link to poverty and disadvantage in the community and work to find solutions that can benefit both wildlife and people. Our marsh rangers are members of the communities they work in and also understand the challenges people face. They have been trained to educate people and raise awareness and this is the first step for anyone found participating in illegal activities. The aim is for communities to want to care for the marsh land and find ways of benefiting from it sustainably, so rangers work collaboratively and engage, rather than punish and alienate community members.

#### **C. Criteria for eligibility of affected persons**

The project is not instituting new restrictions. Rugezi marsh is classified under wetlands with total protection status in Rwanda. It is also a Ramsar site, which means its importance is recognized at international level. With regards to the law, people entering the wetland or collecting resources without permission are acting illegally. There are existing mechanisms under Rwandan law involving local government representatives, police, and courts to resolve disputes and respond to people engaging in illegal activities within the marsh.

However, a lot of people still rely on this wetland for livelihood. If it was not for the restriction, everyone living near Rugezi marsh would in one way or another use the marsh. So the protection status of Rugezi and the restriction of resources extraction make everyone living near the marsh affected.

#### **D. Measures to assist the affected persons**

RWCA have been involved in education and outreach programs from the start, regularly sensitizing local communities on the values of wetlands, ecosystem services and the regulations and laws protecting them. Communities are not only informed about the regulations related to illegal activities, they are also encouraged to engage in livelihood alternatives and explore the possibilities of using the marsh in sustainable ways such as ecotourism.

One of our key strategies is community education and raising awareness around Rugezi marsh about the importance of wetlands and protecting Grey Crowned Cranes. We have reached over 2,200 students and run engaging workshops with a comic book to educate and inspire young people to care for their environment, respect wild animals and help protect the Grey Crowned Cranes and their habitat. Our pre and post evaluation questionnaire showed a positive impact on changing the attitudes of students. RWCA has also set up two youth environmental clubs nearby the marsh, with over 130 young people meeting weekly to discuss and learn about the environment and get involved with activities to protect their local habitat.

We have also conducted 3 conservation campaigns trying to reach a large number of community members living near the marsh to raise awareness of the protection status and the importance of protecting the marsh. We explain about the indirect ecosystem services they gain from protecting the marshland and how much these are far bigger than the direct benefit they get from participating in illegal activities. Our organization is also committed to engaging local communities through different livelihood and ecotourism programs.

We hope to change people's attitudes through our awareness raising campaigns but also reduce the dependence of local communities on illegal non-sustainable activities through our livelihood programs.

#### **E. Conflict resolution and complaint mechanism.**

If any dispute, controversy or grievance arises, affected persons, RWCA and local authorities at sector level will first seek to resolve the dispute or address grievance through informal discussions. During meeting with local leaders, contact details of people from RWCA will be shared to local leaders to pass on to whom community members can address their grievances and disputes if any. At these meetings, RWCA will also tell stakeholders that if they are uncomfortable with approaching these parties, that they are free to approach the CEPF Secretariat, or the local World Bank office. RWCA will also brief the marsh rangers on how to manage complaints and who to direct them to if necessary.

All such discussions will be confidential but documented. If the dispute, controversy or claim cannot be resolved informally within 15 days, RWCA will report them to Burera district for mediation. In the event that no amicable agreement can be reached through the above mechanisms, the complainant or the defendant is free to take the case to the justice or court.

In any grievance mechanism: "RWCA will share all grievances – and a proposed response – with the Regional Implementation Team and the CEPF Grant Director within 15 days. If the claimant is not satisfied following the response, they may submit the grievance directly to the CEPF Executive Director at [cepfexecutive@conservation.org](mailto:cepfexecutive@conservation.org) or by mail. If the claimant is not satisfied with the response from the CEPF Executive Director, they may submit the grievance to the World Bank at the local World Bank office."

Stakeholders will be advised to raise their complaints in the order listed below, but the information below will be available to all, and all will be advised that they are free to express their concerns to any of the parties below with whom they feel most comfortable.

Antoinette Niyonambaza, President of Ranger's Co-operative +250782769121

Jean Ferus Niyomungeri, RWCA Community Conservation Officer, niyoferus@gmail.com  
+2500788261221

Dr. Olivier Nsengimana, RWCA Executive Director, rwandawildlife@gmail.com +250788387041

Local leaders at Village and Cell level (easy for communities to reach to)

CEPF Regional Implementation Team. [Maaike.manten@birdlife.org](mailto:Maaike.manten@birdlife.org). +250784983854

CEPF Executive Director: [cepfexecutive@conservation.org](mailto:cepfexecutive@conservation.org)

World Bank Rwanda: [rwandaalert@worldbank.org](mailto:rwandaalert@worldbank.org) . +250 591-3300

## F. Implementation Arrangements

Component	Stakeholders involved	Roles and responsibilities
<b>Local leaders meeting</b>	RWCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Responsible for organizing workshop</li><li>- Invite participants and speakers</li><li>- Conduct evaluation</li></ul>
	ICF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Collaborate on key messages</li><li>- Attend as speaker</li></ul>
	District, sector authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Participate in workshop</li></ul>
	RDB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Collaborate on key messages</li><li>- Attend as a speaker</li></ul>
<b>Training of Rangers</b>	RWCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Lead for project and overseeing co-operative of rangers</li><li>- Recruit and manage rangers</li></ul>
	RDB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Provide training for rangers</li></ul>
<b>Monitoring of cranes</b>	RWCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Manage project activities</li><li>- Collect and collate data</li><li>- Disseminate data</li></ul>
	Community ranger's co-operative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Participate in monitoring activities</li><li>- Reporting to RWCA</li></ul>
	District, sector authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Collaborate with marsh rangers in patrols and reporting</li></ul>
	ICF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Integrate data into wider databases</li></ul>
<b>Tree planting events</b>	RWCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Mobilization of communities and youth environmental clubs to participate in planting event</li><li>- Produce and transport saplings for planting</li></ul>
	District, sector authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Participate in planting events</li></ul>

	Community members	- Plant indigenous trees
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**G. Monitoring and Evaluation**

Dr. Olivier Nsengimana, Executive Director of RWCA and project lead, will ensure project implementation as planned and will report to CEPF every 6 months.

For each of the project’s objectives and project outputs, there are plans in place to measure change and monitor the impact of the activities, as documented in the project logical framework.