

## **Process Framework for Involuntary Restrictions and Social Assessment**

**CEPF Grant:** 103543

**Grantee** Forest of Hope Association- FHA

***Project Title:*** Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into mining in Gishwati area, Rwanda.

**Project Location:** Gishwati –Mukura National Park

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3. **Grant number:** 103543
4. **Grant amount (US dollars):** 100,000
5. **Proposed dates of grant:** 01/01/2018- 31/10/2019
6. **Countries or territories where project will be undertaken:** Rwanda
7. **Date of preparation of this document:** 11/15/2018

## 8. Project background

The Gishwati-Mukura National Park (GMNP), is made of two different parts: the northern part called “Gishwati” and the southern part called “Mukura”. This project activities will be focusing on the northern part of this park. This part of GMNP is home to important biodiversity including world-wide recognized species such as eastern chimpanzees (threatened), golden monkeys (endangered) and mountain monkeys (vulnerable). It also shelters bush babies, squirrels and more than 130 species of birds that include 14 endemics to Albertine Rift and two IUCN vulnerable species (Martial Eagle and Grey Crowned Crane). Gishwati used to be the largest natural forest in Rwanda, but through the years it has seen a reduction from 280 km<sup>2</sup> in 1976 to just 9 km<sup>2</sup> in 2000. Even if the reforestation efforts increased this forest size to 15 km<sup>2</sup> from 2008 through 2011, and that in February 2016 the Rwanda government improved its conservation recognition by changing its status from Forest Reserve to National Park, this ecosystem remains under human pressure in search of minerals, poaching, firewood collection, animal grazing, charcoal making and timber harvesting. Thus, it is important to continue this forest protection to discourage illegal mining and other illegal activities and ensure that land users outside the forest including mining companies do not continue encroaching it.

Illegal mining in Nduruma, a site inside the Gishwati, the northern part of GMNP, did not completely stop despite Forest of Hope Association (FHA) efforts, in collaboration with local leaders, to discourage it. It causes degradation of this biodiversity habitat by creating mining bare holes that destroy vegetation and put animals’ life at risk. Natural trees are cut down during mining and animals lose their lives due to destroyed habitat, falling in bare holes or directly killed during the habitat destruction. In addition to this, Illegal miners release all sediments in the forest streams and rivers when they are extracting minerals from the soil, what threatens aquatic biodiversity. In the past, FHA and local leaders worked together to replenish the mining bare holes with soil, and FHA eco-guards continue patrolling the area. Eco-guards also plan joint patrol with army and police and in some patrols illegal miners are arrested and reported to local leaders and national police for law enforcement. However due to easy minerals smuggling for sale to accredited companies in the area, the illegal mining in this site does not stop. Also poor mining practices of the companies destroy biodiversity, pollute water bodies downstream and degrade land that is left behind useless once abandoned after mining.

Under this project, FHA is proposing to focus on illegal mining: (1) using patrols in this northern part of GMNP; (2) collaborating with local mining companies to discourage illegal mining by identifying illegal

miners and employing them; (3) raising awareness of the local community and mining companies about the negative effects of mining inside the park and (4) developing guidelines and promoting mining best practices that contribute to the GMNP biodiversity conservation. This project will build on the CEPF ongoing projects achievements especially the strengthened community based park protection. It will also contribute to the implementation of the interim management plan developed using the recently closed CEPF grant especially in its objectives related to the control, mitigation and elimination of the adverse ecological impacts of mining; build and strengthen the knowledge and capacity of the neighboring communities to be effective partners in the management of the park and surrounding landscapes.

#### **9. Indigenous and Historically Marginally People Affected**

In Rwanda we do not have ethnic groups. However, in the project area there is a group of vulnerable people that need to be considered in the implementation of this project. These are historically marginalized people, who used to be called “Batwa” or “pygmies”. They have been living in the Gishwati forest until 1970s when the government decided to settle them at the forest edge. Until now, they feel attached to the forest and they are mainly encountered in illegally collection of firewood, honey and handcraft making materials inside the park. Due to their low level of education, they are the poorest in the region and are recognized by FHA and local government among people who need special support.

#### **10. Potential Impacts on Historically Marginally People Affected**

Although it is preventing people from conducting illegal activities, this project involves limiting access to the forest. We are thinking that the historically marginalized people can be affected differently if they are not considered. The project is expected to have positive impacts on people who are involved in mining activities and the people living around the Park. FHA supports a group of historically marginalized people in income generating activities including eco-tourism development (traditional dance and cultural shows) and employment in trail cutting and other unskilled casual labor. The Rutsiro District also employs them in roads maintenance. Since they do not like energy demanding work, they do not engage themselves in illegal mining or mining employment. For this reason, during this CEPF project implementation, FHA will continue to support them in types of activities that they like including casual labor and community tourism business of dancing and singing to tourists. In addition, FHA will continue liaising with the Rutsiro District to ensure that they get employment in public development activities.

We believe that the project will have no negative impact on historically marginalized people because FHA will build on the results of previous achievements and will continue improving livelihoods, awareness and ownership using other sources of funding. Illegal miners are neither indigenous nor historically marginalized. This project will help improve their livelihoods through employment in mining companies.

#### **11. Participatory implementation**

Our key stakeholders are mining companies and people who live in the four sectors surrounding Gishwati, the northern part of GMNP. FHA discussed this project with Rutsiro District and sectors, and

local mining companies. They will also be involved in all the project activities. The community partnership created through the establishment of community Forest Protection Initiative will continue to be strengthened to benefit both the forest protection and community development. The Rwanda Mines, Petroleum and Gas Board (RMPGB), Rwanda Development Board (RDB), Rutsiro District and Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA), will be involved in discussions of the environmental friendly guidelines and its validation workshop. These institutions were consulted while developing this project and three of them provided supporting letters to this project. Involving government institutions in this project will help them document the negative effects of mining in the area on water quality and thus support the implementation of the guidelines. This will furthermore encourage these institutions to monitor the implementation of EIA recommendations and to understand the issues encountered by companies in the area, propose possible solution and thus fix related dispute. Indeed, the success of this project may inspire those government institutions and thus the possibility of replicating it in other parts of the country.

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

This project will be implemented around and in the northern part of GMNP, specifically located in western part of Rwanda, in Kigeyo, Ruhango, Mushonyi and Nyabirasi Sectors of Rutsiro District. The project will involve people and officials of Rukaragata and Nyagahinika Cells of Kigeyo Sector; Rurara of Mushonyi Sector; Mubuga of Nyabirasi Sector; and Bugarura, Gihira, Rundoyi of Ruhango Sector.

Only residents and people who do activities within the boundaries of the four sectors will be eligible for claims.

## **13. Free, Prior, and Informed Consent**

This project will address illegal mining inside the Park through patrols and this involves local government officials at Cell level to enforce the environmental laws. FHA will respect the decisions of local people and government officials and this will be considered during the project implementation. FHA discussed this project with the Rwanda Mines, Petroleum and Gas Board (RMPGB), Rwanda Development Board (RDB), Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA): Rutsiro District; Kigeyo, Ruhango, Mushonyi and Nyabirasi Sectors and; Rukaragata, Rurara, Bugarura, Mubuga, Gihira, Rundoyi and Nyagahinika Cells.

FHA received supporting letters from Rutsiro District and RDB and REMA to implement this project and basing on our experience working with the community in the area, local and central government; we are confident that the project will be successful.

This project is a continuation of a previous CEPF project and part of a long-standing presence of FHA in Gishwati. This presence started with research projects on chimpanzees over ten years ago and then evolved into management of the protected area. Through these existing relationships, FHA had multiple

meetings with relevant communities – practically, more meetings than can be counted, given FHA’s physical presence in a village on the border of the park. Thus, FHA formally presented this proposed continuation of the existing CEPF project to the various Rutsiro District villages and received relevant endorsements. These endorsements constituted people’s free, prior, and informed consent. These endorsements are on file with CEPF and were submitted with the proposal (i.e., prior to inception of the project).

In no sense was consent not “free” or coerced, and in no sense did people lack information about what the project will address.

#### **14. Measures to Avoid Adverse Impacts and Provide Culturally Appropriate Benefits**

FHA values local knowledge. We will ensure that all stakeholders including local farmers and government officials understand the project scope and will include constructive ideas from them. Around Gishwati there are groups of historically marginalized people and traditional healers. We will ensure that these stakeholders understand well the objectives of the project and expected results, and that culture aspects are considered. For instance FHA is supporting them in income generating activities especially in eco-tourism development (traditional dance and cultural shows). All of them use income to buy alternatives of what they were collecting from the forest. Also FHA continue supporting the traditional healers to find seedlings for medicinal plants for them to get an alternative source of medicine.

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

We believe that local people who do illegal mining in the park can stop it if they get aware of the importance of the forest and its biodiversity and if they get tangible benefits from conserving it. The community that lives around the northern part of the park, Gishwati, understands their rights to the forest and the punitive actions that may be taken. This project will be addressing the issue illegal mining inside the park. FHA in collaboration with community committees and agents (eco-guards) will identify illegal miners and link them to the existing mining companies for job provision. FHA will also train and provide small water pump machines to five mining companies around GMNP to improve their mining practices reusing water. All this will be incentivizing them to understand that they can continue their economic activities in a sustainable way and support biodiversity conservation at the same time.

Also, FHA already supports local community in improving their livelihoods as alternative to what they were getting from the forest use. We support local farmers in a beekeeping business around the forest, 3 local cooperatives in income generating activities and eco-tourism development. All of them use income to buy alternatives of what they were collecting from the forest. Also 10 of 13 FHA employees are from local villages. The income they earn helps them to improve their families’ lives, thus reduced illegal use of the forest resources. We also assisted local people to plant trees along the fences of their pastures and in partnership with a Government afforestation project, farmers received agro-forestry seedlings that they

planted on their pastures and agricultural land. We also supported eco-clubs to plant trees on their schools' compounds. This already provides alternative source of firewood and timber. Under this CEPF grant, we plan to continue liaising with Rutsiro district and Sectors so that they continue providing agro-forestry seedlings to farmers around the park and employ historically marginalized people and other poor people in the area. We will also continue to support the ongoing projects on alternative livelihoods and will continue seeking funding for more livelihoods activities.

## **16. Grievance Mechanism**

FHA welcomes claims and comments from stakeholders and local community. During the all meetings that will be organized, FHA will inform local people and other stakeholders that they have right to raise a grievance at any time to FHA, Rutsiro District or CEPF about any issue relating to the project. Before starting the project implementation, local communities will be informed of the objectives of the grant. They will be given telephone numbers and e-mails of contact persons at FHA, Rutsiro District and CEPF. This information will also be put on all education materials that will be produced during this project implementation including posters, brochures, and booklets. Contact information of the Regional Implementation Team and the CEPF Grant Director will be made publicly available in local language. FHA will respond to grievances raised by the communities' members and stakeholders in writing within 10 working days of receipt and communicated with CEPF within 15 days. Claims will be filed and considered in the project monitoring and reporting.

We 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 surface 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.

- Executive Director of FHA: [fharwanda2012@gmail.com](mailto:fharwanda2012@gmail.com). +250 788852401
- CEPF Regional Implementation Team. [Maaike.manten@birdlife.org](mailto:Maaike.manten@birdlife.org). +254-20-2473259
- The email of the CEPF Executive Director: [cepfexecutive@conservation.org](mailto:cepfexecutive@conservation.org)
- World Bank Rwanda. [rkayihura@worldbank.org](mailto:rkayihura@worldbank.org). +250-591-3303

## **17. Implementation Arrangements**

FHA will ensure that it works closely with the community, Cells, Sectors and District officials to monitor the work of forest patrols that will be done by Community Forest Protection Initiative Agents, Community Committees and Cells Officials. Progress reports will be prepared to stakeholders and CEPF and will be shared with the local community. Also during this project implementation period, FHA will be organizing stakeholders meetings twice a year to evaluate the forest protection related work. We will ensure that, together with stakeholders, we address any unexpected positive or negative changes that may occur in the community as a result of the project. FHA Coordinator and the Project Manager will

also organize separate and joint monthly meetings with the Agents, the Committees and Cells officials to discuss the progress and issues. FHA Coordinator and the Project Manager will closely work with local mining companies to ensure that all disputes are fixed.