

CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	World Wide Fund for Nature-DRC
Project Title:	"Discovering the Hidden Treasures of the Itombwe Natural Reserve"
Date of Report:	09 th July 2018
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CEPF Region: Eastern Afromontane hotspot, massif of Itombwe, *Réserve Naturelle d' Itombwe (RNI)*

Strategic Direction: The aim of this project is **to strengthen the Strategic Direction 1** of CEPF Communication materials that show the beauty of the Eastern Afromontane hotspot / Eastern Afromontane KBAs through (E-) Books, photos, films, videos, and/or other PR materials that can be used to raise interest/awareness about the hotspot and its many values (ecological, cultural, aesthetical, economic etc.).

Grant Amount: 20,000 USD

Project Dates: February 2017 to December 2017 extended with no cost June 2018

Implementation Partners for this Project (please explain the level of involvement for each partner):

WWF DRC worked with the following main partners with their level of involvement

Partner 1: WWF-DRC Team: WWF has three main offices: **(a)** the headquarters in Kinshasa which includes the financial team for validation of financial reports. **(b)** The office in Goma which has overseen the implementation of the project in the field (Bukavu/Itombwe). Through the coordination of the Eastern DRC program director, human resources are managed, the technical implementation is supported and the financial expenditures are tracked according to formal procedures; **(c)** the office in Bukavu which is tasked with implementing the activities in collaboration with local partners.

The team composed of units (a), (b) and (c), above, is responsible for overall project management, organizing the field visits, performing the interviews, providing text and pictures for the digital information brochure, and national and local dissemination of the communication products.

Partners 2: Aaron Muthembwi is a professional video producer and Victoire Batumike Bahizire, is a professional photographer. They were responsible for the production of video and photo materials and a video documentary. These two specialists were supported by two WWF main staff from the Bukavu office when filming and taking photos within and surrounding the Itombwe Natural Reserve.

Partner 3: WWF-Netherlands: was responsible for the production of a digital information brochure (pdf format) on the RNI, based on photo and text materials provided by the WWF DRC

team and the photographers. Responsibilities also included international distribution through digital networks. They also provided a financial contribution for conducting the field trip.

At the beginning, the estimated in kind contribution was 5,000 USD but, for improving the implementation of the activities, approximately an additional 5,000 USD were used for supporting an extension of the mission in the field and for covering unexpected expenditures.

Partner 4: WWF US through USAID funding, provided additional resources for completing the costs needed to support for the two video and photography professionals. In fact, due to insecurity reasons, the field trip was suspended for four month. When WWF DRC resumed, security measures were reinforced during the field trip (in terms of number of guides and Eco guards hired). All of the extra costs were supported by WWF US.

It is worth mentioning that at the beginning of the project, WWF US was not included as a partner but its contribution to project implementation was most helpful considering the context.

Partners 5: Local communities and traditional leaders: they were involved in the participatory identification of the riche sites / places / ecosystems of the RNI highlighted in the video and photos. They were identified as the most important category of partners. The video produced shows series of screenings with them. Their participation illustrated both the facts inside the Reserve and also their expectations. The video was also, through their participation, used as a tool for raising their awareness about the embedded value of the RNI that must be protected for present and future generations.

Partners 6: Local organizations / associations: They are partnering with WWF DRC for providing assistance in the actions carried out to support the livelihood of households living in the multiple use area of the Reserve. Some local associations are also working in the field of environmental awareness and were associated with the project for dissemination of the results (documentary showings).

Partners 7: The media/ community radio stations. In the beginning, two community radio stations were selected for the broadcasting of interviews conducted for the documentary. Nevertheless, due to the support from WWF NL and WWF US, the number of radio stations partnering with WWF was significantly increased (there are six currently).

Partners 8: Authorities: local, regional and national authorities were invited to talk in the two videos produced. Their participation is expected to raise both their awareness and support for the protection of biodiversity, and also the interest of other people living in remote areas.

Conservation Impacts

Please explain/describe how your project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile.

Despite the fact that the project was small, no similar work has been conducted before inside the Reserve, and with the local population being directly involved in preparing the video for discovering the hidden treasures of Itombwe. The value of this critical ecosystem is considered well understood by local population.

Through the implementation of the project, the filming team was in touch directly with people living inside the protected area. The exchanges with these people (indigenous and local communities, and even illegal small-scale miners) were highly valuable in terms of conservation. In fact, none of these people were aware of the value and/or the exact boundaries of the protected area. It was then an opportunity for the filming team, both as information sharing about the existence and status of the Reserve, and awareness raising about the Eastern Afromontane ecosystem of Itombwe as the largest KBA of the corridor; the local planning (information about

the participatory land use planning that led to the zoning and delineation of the RNI); national mainstreaming (official gazettement of the RNI); protection of priority Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs// the main goal of the RNI); and knowledge base research (the main focus of this project).

Please summarize the overall results/impact of your project against the expected results detailed in the approved proposal.

The overall impacts are presented through the output

- The production of the video/film about the hidden treasures of Itombwe was carried out. A video of 25 minutes illustrating the beauty and the characteristics of the protected area was produced. The realization of the video required 24 days in the field (more than planned) for a crew of 54 people (45 local people, 6 ICCN and 3 WWF staff).
- The production of the video/film about the indigenous people and their livelihood/way of life was completed: The 15 minute video is a general overview of indigenous peoples' life. The team used the video later to identify the support that will be needed in the visited locality due to their vulnerability and poverty.
- The production of a radio program based on the results of the field trip. WWF, with support from two radio stations (beginning in early January 2017) broadcasted on many topics related to environment and nature conservation. The number of radio stations was multiplied by three for reaching more listeners. Interviews based on the documentary were broadcasted started from December 2017 until June 2018.
- The establishment of a virtual library with on line e-books shared on the biodiversity value of Itombwe was performed at the end of June 2018. For reaching more people WWF DRC used the following link to share the photos , fact sheet and video:
 - Photos:: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/PQj3XyLfYrfkmpEt7> and at <https://hive.panda.org/Itombwe>
 - Fact sheet: http://www.wwf-congobasin.org/where_we_work/democratic_republic_of_congo/
 - Vidéos:
 - Tresor caché d'Itombwe_RDC_WWF_CEPF_2017: https://youtu.be/p3mFjbaUk_Q
 - A la Rencontre d'un groupe de Pygmées de la RNI_RDC_WWF_2017: <https://youtu.be/NXYkNIQLwuc>

Please provide the following information where relevant:

Hectares Protected:

Species Conserved:

Corridors Created:

Describe the success or challenges of the project toward achieving its short-term and long-term impact objectives.

Successes:

- For the first time in the life of the Itombwe protected area, a photo of a gorilla (even if is a baby gorilla), is available (illustrated in the video).
- One eagle assumed to be the “Prigogine eagle” was photographed (see in the brochure). Since no member of the team was a specialist in this mater, the identification of the bird is still hypothetical, but it was also the only eagle seen during the field trip.

- The expedition was the first one during the lifetime of the Itombwe protected area to be conducted for discovering the hidden treasures of Itombwe, and with the participation of indigenous people who were very surprised that “the state authorities” are finally interested in knowing their way of life.

Challenges:

- Finding the best places inside the protected area of Itombwe for showing the hidden treasures in project’s short time frame (six months, extended due to security concerns). Indeed, despite all the information gathered from local populations, the choice of the places to be explored was not easy due to: time constraints, logistical organization and security concerns.
- Facing the rude environment while producing the video: long distances to walk, in a very short period the dynamism of the team was HIGHLY TESTED by the rude environment and practically vanished at the end of the mission. Surviving in a rainy forest environment, very steep topography and tracking the fauna was not easy. At the end, the team (from local population to the ICCN Eco guards, WWF staff and video professionals) were all ill. But thanks to their tenacity, the video was produced nonetheless even with delay.
- Fulfilling the duties while respecting the budget, the dead line and keeping in mind that you are not working in totally safe environment.

These successes and challenges were noted for the short term objective of producing a documentary for the protected area. Nevertheless, over time, they will serve as reference for achieving more impact in the long term vision of Itombwe. The vision was stated as “*Itombwe Natural Reserve is managed effectively and sustainably to protect its habitat and its unique biodiversity and ensure natural resources sustainable exploitation for the benefit of residents and indigenous peoples*”.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

The two main unexpected impacts were:

- The hope of the ICCN team that the production of the video and the documents will allow them to mobilize more the attention of donors to support the conservation of biodiversity in Itombwe
- The expectation of indigenous people that the government will now pay more attention in the consideration of their expectations and for their development.

Lessons Learned

Describe any lessons learned during the design and implementation of the project, as well as any related to organizational development and capacity building. Consider lessons that would inform projects designed or implemented by your organization or others, as well as lessons that might be considered by the global conservation community.

The main lessons learned during the implementation of the project are:

- The Itombwe Reserve is vast and many campaigns of exploration, sensitization, patrolling and recognition of its value are still necessary;
- The collaboration between local and indigenous people is crucial for the protection of biodiversity in Itombwe and the Reserve's sustainable management;
- The indigenous people interviewed during the expedition were facing many challenges. But yet they were so proud that a such expedition was conducted inside their village for they will be next time beneficiating more attention from the authorities;
- The protected area management agency (Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation- ICCN) has to look for multiple partners with their respective specialties for handling many issues observed in the Reserve (conservation, development of livelihoods, illegal and legal activities like mining, wood harvesting, hunting, etc.).

Project Design Process: (aspects of the project design that contributed to its success/shortcomings)

The project was designed with the support of WWF Netherlands. Additionally, WWF DRC operates in Itombwe supporting the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation (ICCN) to patrol the Reserve. The two WWF offices (NL and DRC) agreed to use this small grant for the elaboration of videos and film which is expected to help the ICCN to raise funds for Itombwe. The project was then implemented in complementary to other ongoing projects in Itombwe to reach the goal.

Project Implementation: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/shortcomings)

Thanks to the existence of various projects implemented by WWF to support the ICCN in managing the protected area, the implementation of this filming project was facilitated. All of other aspects that were not defined within this project were supported by these projects. The success in implementing this filming project (with regards to its title and objectives) was then really the discovery of the hidden treasures of Itombwe and the production of videos and photos. Initially, the team (WWF and ICCN) working for the management of Itombwe didn't dedicate enough time to focus on discovering the beauty of the area through documentaries and photography. The combination of all the activities of several projects being implemented in the Reserve is then one of the key successes of the fulfillment this specific project.

Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:

- As this is the first time that the WWF and ICCN produce such document in Itombwe, it was also one occasion to raise the awareness of local communities on the importance of conservation.
- The field expedition went deep inside the forest and could talk with communities, as much as they could. This was also for ICCN rangers an opportunity to interact deeply with communities considering their rights and way of living and explain that the meaning of one protected area classified as category 6.
- The rangers based on exchanges with WWF team, the consultants and the local populations still need also some capacity building about the characteristics of a protected

area category 6 and, about rules and regulations managing each three zoning (core zone, buffer zone and multiple use zone) composing the protected area.

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.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
WWF NL	In kind contribution	5,000 USD	Already described in the proposal
WWF US/CAFEC/USAID	In kind contribution	15,000 USD	Supporting all other expenditures not counted in the current project (including the no cost extension period)

****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.

As the objective of the project is linked to raising awareness of large audiences on the beauty and diversity of Itombwe, it is expected that the film on this protected area will be known as much as possible by a large and diverse group of people. Additionally, a monthly radio program is part of an ongoing environmental education effort.

The main challenges:

- The suspension of the field trip due to security problems. The videos were then produced with delay (end of 2017). It was therefore not possible to measure success at the moment of the report. Nevertheless, the radio program broadcasts were well received and the communities even requested to offer them more frequently.
- The delay in production of the video about indigenous people, the delay for CEPF to validate the video lead to the no cost extension of the project. It is a big challenge as more other expenditure (for staff, for videos and photo makers) has to be taken in charge.
- At the national level, the official gazettelement of the RNI was not completed due to political instability.
- Sharing freely the video and photos to other people: Due to the respect of the agreement, WWF didn't duplicate yet and share the video and photos to so many people. It was

during the no cost extension period that all fact sheets were put on line (you tube, my clod and hive)..

Safeguard Policy Assessment

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

Not applicable

Additional Comments/Recommendations

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.			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?			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.	Not very relevant		
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	N/A		
5. If your project promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, how many local communities accrued tangible socioeconomic benefits? Please complete Table 1 below.	N/A		

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											
Total																							

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

