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# Increasing Employment of Indigenous Women Rangers

2017 John Hartley Churchill Fellowship to  
investigate ways to increase employment  
of Indigenous women as rangers



Report by Penelope Mules, Churchill Fellow  
Awarded by the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust

## **INDEMNITY**

The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust

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Date: November 2019

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## **KEYWORDS:**

Indigenous, women, rangers, conservation, environment, employment, equality

*Cover Image: Doma Paudel, Chitwan National Park, Nepal, October 2018*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*I would like to acknowledge the contributions of all the Indigenous women I have worked with over the years. I have been lucky enough to have gained a fairly unique breadth of experience working with Indigenous women on country, and I acknowledge the honour of being allowed into that space. This Fellowship was an opportunity to leverage the little knowledge I have, being in a better position than most Indigenous women rangers to be undertaking this sort of research.*

*In particular I am grateful to the NLC rangers who created the video message I was able to share with other women throughout the world. Special thanks go to Julie Roy, Eslyn Wauchope, and Sheila White who intrepidly got on a plane and flew to New Zealand to participate in an exchange.*

*Thank you to Jobs Australia for sponsoring the John Hartley Churchill Fellowship in recognition of his contributions assisting job seekers. Hopefully the knowledge gained in the Fellowship will assist more women to enter the workforce. Thanks also to Rebecca Hayden and Fiona Peek for their assistance at the beginning (and end) of this journey. The encouragement and support of fellow Fellows Netanela, Marlene, and Jo was also greatly appreciated.*

*Finally, I would like to thank all the women rangers and conservationists who took time out of saving their little patch of the world to talk with me.*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Indigenous ranger programs and Indigenous Protected Areas have proven to be very successful in Australia, however Indigenous women have not been equally represented in these programs, comprising just over 20% of the permanent workforce at last count. There is an increasing understanding globally that gender inclusion is vital to success in conservation, with NGOs and international aid organisations making gender equity a key reporting requirement. However, programs on-ground don't always have the expertise or knowledge of how to effectively implement gender inclusion.

In Australia, efforts to engage Indigenous women in ranger work are increasing, with women ranger forums and new initiatives to develop Indigenous women rangers' networks. The Northern Land Council employs a Women & Youth Engagement Coordinator to, in consultation with women rangers, support the development of a variety of policies and programs to increase the number of Indigenous women rangers. Women's employment has grown from 10% in 2015 to 40% in 2019, but more work is needed, particularly around retention and appointments of women to leadership roles.

This Fellowship provided an opportunity to visit countries successfully engaging Indigenous women as rangers and in land management to learn from their experiences. I was able to document transferable lessons to the Australian context, examining specialised policies and programs to increase employment of Indigenous women, methods to increase retention and promotion in a male dominated field, and new tools to assist women in managing family commitments and cultural considerations. It was also an opportunity to examine international evidence of the flow-on benefits achieved by employing Indigenous women as rangers.

During the Fellowship I conducted interviews with over 100 people from 35 organisations in 12 countries. Through participatory observation and a structured questionnaire women generously provided insights into their experiences.

Over the course of this Fellowship it has become clear that women around the world want to be rangers and work in a field which is universally valued, is seen as integral to their identities, and important to the future of their families and communities. It was also apparent that when Indigenous women were supported to participate in conservation it created benefits for individuals, their communities and broader society, the organisations they worked for, and resulted in positive environmental outcomes.

Around the world women faced similar barriers to becoming rangers: patriarchal societies, male-dominated workplaces, lack of access to education, childcare and family responsibilities, the impacts of colonisation, poor funding and facilities, and structural and organisational barriers such as lack of gender equity policies with few women in leadership or decision-making positions.

The strategies which groups in other countries employed to successfully address these barriers and increase the number of women employed in this field provide a starting point for us to look at how to better support women rangers in Australia. These findings will need to be adapted to the local context and it is essential that Indigenous women are actively involved in identifying the specific barriers which they face and developing culturally appropriate strategies which will work for them.

#### *Recommendations for Government/Policy Makers*

1. Gender mainstreaming KPI in Working on Country requirements - including quotas
2. Enabling organisations to appropriately and separately fund women ranger programs (as required)
3. Recognise part-time roles as integral to success of programs
4. Adequate, long-term funding
5. Acceptable facilities, infrastructure, and equipment
6. Schools and childcare facilities available in communities so rangers can work and live near their families

#### *Recommendations for Organisations*

1. Gender Policy developed in consultation with Indigenous women/rangers
2. Quotas set with minimum targets for women's employment
3. Position responsible for overseeing implementation and reporting on the policy
4. Gender Equity training for men in organisations to understand why it is important and what they can do
5. Gender Equity training in community, particularly targeting male partners to reduce domestic violence against rangers
6. Cultural Training
7. Raise awareness of women rangers in communities, so young women see strong role models and everyone knows these jobs are for women too
8. Recruit women into leadership and supervisory roles
9. Support Indigenous women rangers to move into leadership roles:
  - a. Build capacity (so can participate fully)
  - b. Put formal mentoring system in place
  - c. Provide regular opportunities for exchanges and women's forums
10. Provide quality training which is accessible to women
11. Flexible workplaces: flexible hours including part-time hours, which are adaptable and subject to change, and a child friendly environment with ability to include children in work activities
12. Recruit more than one woman so they are not working alone with a group of men
13. Women-only groups (or separate men's and women's groups) as required

## ITINERARY OF MEETINGS

<b>Nepal</b>			
Date	Location	Organisation	People Interviewed
23/10/18	Kathmandu	WWF & CARE Nepal	Sabrita Dhakal
25/10/18	Latipur	CARE Nepal	Indu Pants
25/10/18	Latipur	National Trust for Nature Conservation	Sarita Jnawali, Sikshya Adhikary Rana
31/10/18	Chitwan National Park	National Trust for Nature Conservation	Rishi Ram Subedi, Ram Kumar Aryal
29/10/18 & 30/10/18	Chitwan National Park	Mrigakunaa Anti-Poaching Unit, Nepal Dynamic Eco Tours	Doma Paudel, Shantosh Bhattarai
31/10/18	Chitwan National Park	Chetana Cheli Cooperative	Niru Tamang, Sarita Maya Praja, Buddi Maya Ghale
31/10/18	Chitwan National Park	Nepal National Park Service	Smritee Lama
1/11/18	Chitwan National Park	Kumroj Buffer Zone Community Forest User Group & Dari Community Homestay Committee	Partima Dari
2/11/18	Chitwan National Park	Mrigakunaa Anti-Poaching Unit	Sita Rival, Sita Rimal, Kopila Aryal, Manju Nepali
<b>India</b>			
Date	Location	Organisation	People Interviewed
28/11/18	Sasan Gir	Gir National Park	Dr Mohan Ram, Rujdip Zulu Sign, J.P. Putat, S.N. Shilu, S.D. Solemki, Rosina K., S. Aumemel, S.K. Puill, A.K. Babhor, P. Anusha, H. Kavyashree
<b>Ethiopia</b>			
Date	Location	Organisation	People Interviewed
20/12/18	Addis Ababa	Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority	Berhane Yosuf
<b>Kenya</b>			
Date	Location	Organisation	People Interviewed
14/1/19	Nairobi	African Wildlife Foundation	Charly Facheux
15/1/19	Nairobi	Kenya Wildlife Service	Anne Kahihia
22/1/19	Hells Gate National Park	Kenya Wildlife Service	Ann Ndege
28/1/19 & 30/1/19	Lewa Conservancy	Northern Rangeland Trust	Beatrice Lempaira, Samuel Lekimaroro, Sammy Leseita, Alice Damar, Robert McNeil
28/1/19	Isiolo	Sera Conservancy	Reuben Lendiria
29/1/19	Sera Wildlife Conservancy	Sera Conservancy	Veronicah Taita, Lena Lemerketo, Nicky Leexesh, Nasieku Lentaaya, Jaliza Lengope, Veronica Lenayasa, Doriana Ngasa, Veronica Loshede, Ann Loshede, Mercy Leporole, Salome Lemalasia

<b>Uganda</b>			
Date	Location	Organisation	People Interviewed
10/2/19	Mabamba Wetland	Mabamba Wetland Ecotourism Association	Irene Namubiru
11/2/19	Mpanga Forest	Uganda Women Birders Club	Judith Mirembe, Prossy Nanyombi
17/2/19	Bigodi	Harrier Tours	Harriet Kemigisha
<b>Rwanda</b>			
Date	Location	Organisation	People Interviewed
11/3/19	Kigali	Birdlife Internatioal	Maaike Manten
15/3/19	Kigali	Rwanda Wildlife Conservation Association	Olivier Nsengimana
<b>Zimbabwe</b>			
Date	Location	Organisation	People Interviewed
26/3/19	Mumbushi Pools, Mbire	African Wildlife Foundation	Collen Matema, Bella Nyamukure, Edith John, Stylet Mugomapanja, Brandina Matare, Chipo Chimutsiea, Mavis Mhako, Gatsi Chariuma
		Zimbabwe National Parks	Tracey Chiwieshe, Melody Magkienzu
27/3-30/3/19	Phundundu Wildlife Area	Akashinga Rangers	Nyaradzo Hoto, Thelma Chademana, Felistas Chileama, Melody Mucherwa, Abigail Makanyaire, Annah Matiachi, Mirirai James, Primrose Mazyru, Future Sibanola, Shadrack Midzy, Jason Friend
<b>South Africa</b>			
Date	Location	Organisation	People Interviewed
6/4/19	Balule Reserve	Black Mambas & Transfrontier Africa	Leitah Mkhabela, Cute Mhlongo, Nkateko Letti Mzimba and Lisa Trueman
<b>United States of America</b>			
Date	Location	Organisation	People Interviewed
23/4-28/4/19	Cottonwood Gulch, New Mexico	Southwest Conservation Corps, Ancestral Lands Program	Natasha Avery, Raina Vicotrino, Amberline Chapo, JoDee Zunie, Zada Miller, Shandiin Nez, Chas Robles
11/5/19	Navajo National Monument, Arizona	National Parks Service of America	Curlinda Blacksheep, Kelkiyana Yazzie, Lloyd Masayumptewa

<b>Canada</b>			
Date	Location	Organisation	People Interviewed
16/5/19	Telephone	Indigenous Leadership Initiative	Valerie Courtois
4/6/19	Vancouver	Coastal First Nations - Great Bear Initiative	Lara Hoshizaki, Bessie Brown, Johanna Helbig
14/6/19	Telephone	Qqs Projects Society and Heiltsuk Tribal Council	Jess Housty
18/6/19	Gitlaxt'aamiks	Nisga'a Lisims Government	Tracey McKay
26/6/19 & 3/7/19	Haines Junction	BC Parks & Champagne and Aishihik First Nations	Denise Hume, Annika Joe
12/7 – 19/7/19	Dawson City	Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in	Kirsten Scott, Natasha Ayoub, Alice McCulley, Jody Beaumont, Georgette McLeod
19/7/19	Dawson City	Kaminak Goldcorp	Kim Joseph, Ellen Sidney
<b>Cook Islands</b>			
Date	Location	Organisation	People Interviewed
14/8/19	Rarotonga	National Environment Service	Louisa Karika, Elizabeth Munro
<b>New Zealand</b>			
Date	Location	Organisation	People Interviewed
20/08 – 22/08/19	Kaitaia, North Island	Te Rarawa Iwi	Bronwyn Bauer-Hunt, Naomi Austen-Reid, Atarangi Muru, Jaroz Popata Sam Techlenburq, Waikarere Gregory
		Department of Conservation	Meirene Hardy-Birch

## INTRODUCTION

Indigenous ranger programs and Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) have proven to be very successful in Australia, employing over 2000 Indigenous people<sup>1</sup> who are caring for their traditional land and sea country, maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem health over large areas of the land for the benefit of all Australians. However, Indigenous women have not been equally represented in these programs, comprising just over 20% of the permanent workforce at last count<sup>2</sup>.

There is an increasing understanding globally that gender inclusion is vital to success in conservation, with NGOs and international aid organisations making gender equity a key reporting requirement. However, programs on-ground don't always have the expertise or knowledge of how to effectively implement gender inclusion.

There are many barriers to the employment of Indigenous women as rangers, but strong evidence that increasing their numbers benefits individual women, their communities, and their country<sup>3</sup>. While employment of women has not always been a priority, in Australia efforts to engage Indigenous women in ranger work are increasing, with women ranger forums and new initiatives to develop Indigenous women rangers' networks, such as the Strong Women for Healthy Country Network.

The Northern Land Council ([NLC](#)), which assists Aboriginal people to manage their country, supports 12 Indigenous ranger groups and three IPAs in the Top End of the Northern Territory. The NLC employs a Women & Youth Engagement Coordinator to support women rangers and, in consultation with them, to develop a variety of policies and programs to increase the number of Indigenous women employed in their Caring for Country program. Women's employment has grown from 10% in 2015 to 40% in 2019, but more work is needed, particularly around retention and appointments of women to senior ranger, coordinator, and other leadership roles.

This Fellowship provided an opportunity to visit other countries successfully engaging Indigenous women as rangers and in land management to learn from their experiences. The focus was to document transferable lessons to the Australian context, examining specialised policies and programs to increase employment of Indigenous women, methods to increase

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<sup>1</sup> National Indigenous Australians Agency: *Indigenous Rangers - Working on Country*, [www.niaa.gov.au/indigenous-affairs/evnironment/indigenous-rangers-working-country](http://www.niaa.gov.au/indigenous-affairs/evnironment/indigenous-rangers-working-country) website accessed November 2019.

<sup>2</sup> *Reporting back... 2014-15: How Indigenous Rangers and Indigenous Protected Areas programmes are working on country* (2016). Australian Department of Environment, Canberra.

<sup>3</sup> Weir, J, Stacey, C. and Youngetob, K. (2011) *The Benefits Associated with Caring for Country: Literature Review*, AIATSIS, Canberra.

retention and promotion in a male dominated field, and new tools to assist women in managing family commitments and cultural considerations. It was also an opportunity to document international evidence of the flow-on benefits achieved by employing Indigenous women as rangers.

During the Fellowship I interviewed 100 people from 35 organisations in 12 countries over the course of ten months. Through participatory observation and a structured questionnaire women generously provided insights into the barriers they face working as rangers and in conservation, the actions organisations and groups had taken to overcome these barriers, and what they would like to see in the future. Over the course of the discussions women also outlined how they, their communities, and the environment benefited by having them actively engaged in the protection of their land and wildlife.

A detailed site report from each program is provided in the Appendices. These recognise and reflect the input of the groups and acknowledge their contributions to this research. Each report sets out the critical success factors for the group, the key enablers of women's employment, and the key outcomes arising from this.

The results of these interviews are presented in the findings, including a discussion of the barriers faced by Indigenous women and the different strategies taken to address them. The benefits of women being empowered to participate in conservation are outlined and recommendations on how to assist women in this field are proposed.

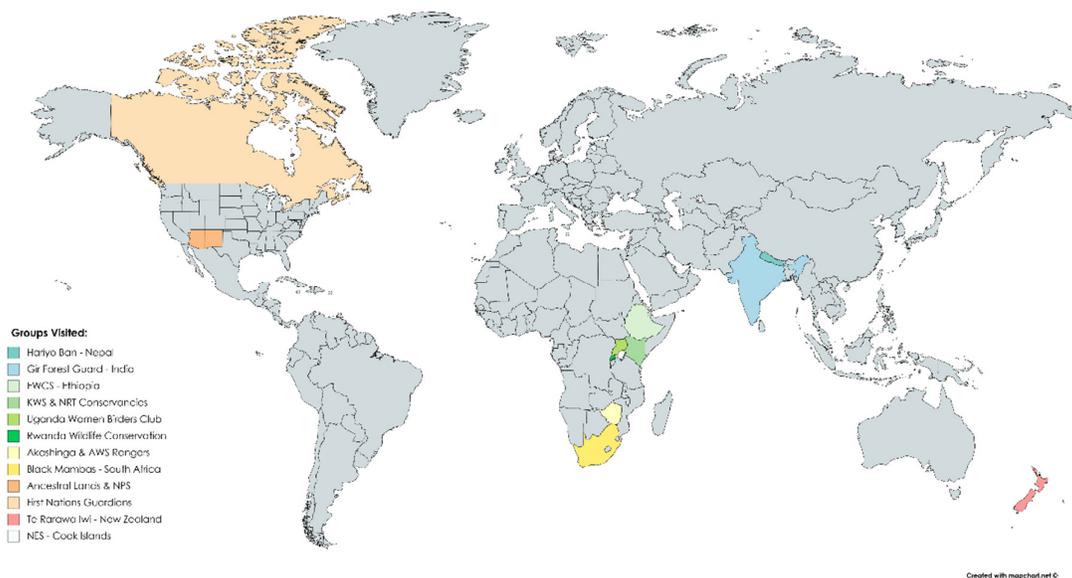
It is important to note that the programs visited were in different cultures with different histories of colonisation. Thematic learning is around context that is culturally informed, as nothing works in isolation from context. This report is an outsider's view of what has worked in contexts with similar structural barriers, and provides a toolkit for other people to start looking at ways to overcome them. Success in terms of the engagement of Indigenous women in ranger programs needs to be driven and led by Indigenous women rangers, ideally with program successes and learnings evaluated by Indigenous women. The findings of this project seek to identify a road map to decreasing barriers to that success.



*Gir Female Forest Guard, Sasan-Gir, India, November 2018*

## THE EXPERIENCE

During the Fellowship I met with 20 ranger and on-ground conservation programs, as well as the government and non-government organisations that support them. Interview group sizes varied from individuals to up to twelve women, and generally took between one to four hours. In some cases it was possible to spend a number of days with a group, while in others women had travelled from their various posts for the meeting and were only available for a few hours.



Interviews followed the same structure, beginning with a short video made by NLC women rangers, explaining why ranger work was important to them, why it is important to have women rangers, and introducing me and explaining my role. This was an excellent ice-breaker and encouraged women to talk about their experience and opened a dialogued to explore both their shared and different experiences.

In each case, the purpose and aim of the interview was explained, and participants were informed of the planned use of their answers and photographs before giving permission for these to be recorded. Interviews were conducted in an informal conversational style with narrative structured around key themes through standardised questions. Along with photographs, some groups also wanted to record video messages to women rangers in Australia and around the world, and have provided consent for these to be made available online.

## Locations

**The first country visited was Nepal.** The Hariyo Ban Project in Nepal is a conservation and social development project funded by USAid and run by a consortium of NGOs. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) are integral to the entire project; GESI is “mission critical” and included in all programs at all levels (Appendix 1).

In **India**, I visited the Gir Female Forest Guard in Gujarat (Appendix 2). In 2007 a 33% quota was created for the employment of women in the Gir Forest, creating the first female forest guard team in India. It was part of a broader strategy in Gujarat to engage and empower women. Ten years later, it is useful to identify what effect these quotas have had on the engagement of women in ranger work.

**The journey then moved to Africa.** In Ethiopia, the recently elected Ethiopian Parliament has a 50% representation of women, however there is no comparable quota for women to access federal ranger or scout positions. The Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA) does employ a Gender Officer, who talked about her role in the organisation and the engagement of women (Appendix 3).

In **Kenya**, I was able to visit a number of organisations. The first was a continent-wide NGO, the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) where I met with Charly Facheux, Vice President Conservation Strategy, Knowledge Management and Impact. The AWF supports conservation programs in Central and West Africa, and we discussed the changing roles of NGOs and community-based conservancies in enabling women to work as rangers in the region (Appendix 4).

The Kenyan Wildlife Service (KWS) developed a Gender Strategy in 2011 and has a target of 30% representation of women. However there are still few women in senior roles. I was able to meet with Anne Kahihia, the most senior uniformed women in the KWS, and with Ann Ndege, a Warden at Hells Gate National Park (Appendix 5). The need for women in leadership roles and the importance of strong women mentors were key messages.

The Northern Rangeland Trust (NRT) in northern Kenya supports Community Conservancies, which are run by community boards and have similarities to Australian IPAs (Appendix 6). They are in the process of recruiting a Gender Specialist to support an increase of women ranger numbers. The Sera Wildlife Conservancy has one of the highest proportions of women rangers, who are very proud of their jobs and the role they play in changing community attitudes about traditional women’s roles.

In **Uganda**, the strength that comes from women supporting other women was illustrated by the Uganda Women Birders Club, where experienced bird guides volunteer to mentor, train, and inspire other women to engage in a male-dominated field (Appendix 7).

The Birdlife International office based in **Rwanda** have gender mainstreaming requirements in all their grants for the region, and provide training and capacity building around gender issues (Appendix 8). One of the programs they support is the Rwanda Wildlife Conservation Association (RWCA). Their rangers work at Rugezi Marsh to protect Grey Crowned Cranes, where they have found that women were more genuinely committed than men and have recruited more women.

In **Zimbabwe**, the AWF supports Community Conservancies, and is working to increase the number of women rangers. In the Mbire district I met with five women scouts, each working in their own conservancies, as well as two National Parks rangers (Appendix 9). The women were isolated and working alone with men, and glad to have the opportunity to talk with each other and discuss the issues facing them.

Spending time with the Akashinga Rangers in Zimbabwe was one of the highlights of this journey (Appendix 10). This all-women anti-poaching unit avoids many of the barriers other women face working in a male dominated workplace. Developed to employ disadvantaged women, creating a women-friendly workplace was a priority, resulting in a program where the rangers have very few concerns or suggestions for improvement.

The Black Mambas anti-poaching unit based in Balule Reserve, **South Africa**, is another all-women ranger group (Appendix 11).

Opportunities for women to move into leadership roles are readily available, and women identified as having leadership potential are provided with skills and development training to enable them to do so.



*Akashinga Rangers: Felistas Chileamat, Future Sibanol, Annah Matiachi, Abigail Makanyaire, Penny Mules, Primrose Mazyru, and Melody Mucherwa, Zimbabwe, March 2019*

*“We encourage other women to be rangers, to protect our natural resources, and to be strong”*

*- Abigail Makanyaire*

**After Africa, the next stage of the journey was North America.** In the **United States**, I visited two groups. The first was in New Mexico, where the Southwest Conservation Corps' Ancestral Lands program engages young Native Americans in conservation projects (Appendix 12). I joined the Crew Leader Development Program where five young women crew leaders were supported into leadership roles.



*Curlinda Blacksheep & Kelkiyana Yazzie,  
Navajo National Monument, Arizona, May 2019*

In Arizona I met with two Navajo women rangers who work for the National Parks Service at the Navajo National Monument (Appendix 13). Sharing their heritage with visitors to the park and changing the stereotypical views often held about Native American culture was an important aspect of their work.

**Travelling north to Canada** I spoke with a number of organisations supporting the Indigenous Guardians network (Appendix 14). The Canadian Government has recently begun a pilot program for the National Indigenous Guardians Network, similar to the Australian Working on Country Indigenous ranger program, with First Nations groups funded to look after their traditional land.

The Indigenous Leadership Initiative (ILI) oversees Indigenous partnerships with the Government and is involved in setting up boards to stabilise the Guardians network and assisting working groups to think technically about things like gender balance. While most on-ground workers are still men, the majority of co-ordinators are First Nations women.

The Coastal Stewardship Network, a program of Coastal First Nations - Great Bear Initiative, supports nine Coastal Guardian Watchmen programs along the Pacific coast. Only around 10% of the on-ground workforce is female, although over half the groups have women managers and coordinators. One of the groups supported by the Coastal Stewardship Network is the Heiltsuk Guardian Watchmen. Jess Housty is Chair of the Lands Portfolio on the Heiltsuk Tribal Council and manages governance of land-based stewardship work.

*“Women doing stewardship roles tend to have a much more holistic perspective, and a long-term view of the work”*

*– Jess Housty*

**Travelling through British Columbia and the Yukon**, I met with a number of First Nations Governments who have responsibilities to manage resources on their traditional lands. While not all First Nations have guardians programs, they do undertake conservation work. Tracey McKay, Senior Lands Manager with the Nisga'a Lisims Government believes encouraging and supporting their youth to pursue education is key (Appendix 15).

Champagne and Aishihik First Nation (CAFN) co-manages the Tatshenshini-Alske Provincial Park with BC Parks (Appendix 16). Members of CAFN get preferred status for jobs, which helped both Annika Joe and Denise Hume gain employment as rangers.

In the Yukon, women from Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nations identified colonisation as creating many of the barriers Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in women face in accessing field-based conservation work (Appendix 17). Cultural degradation over time and the effects of residential schools mean young people have been unable to learn traditional skills they are meant to be brought up with, and similar cycles are ongoing.

**Leaving Canada and heading back towards Australia**, I stopped in the **Cook Islands** to meet with Louisa Karika and Elizabeth Munro, the Deputy Director, and the Project Manager at the National Environment Service (NES) in Rarotonga (Appendix 18). In the traditional land tenure system, women can inherit and own land, and many current traditional owners are women, who have been heavily involved in the declaration of marine reserves.



*Louisa Karika and Elizabeth Munro, Cook Islands, August 2019*

**The journey ended in New Zealand**, where three senior Indigenous women rangers from the NLC participated in an exchange with Maori women of the Te Rarawa Iwi as part of this Fellowship (Appendix 19).

This enabled Indigenous women to meet and share experiences and talk about the challenges they face, providing an opportunity to learn from and support each other.

All the women who participated in this study were incredibly generous in sharing their time and experiences, and did so in the hope that this information could be used to improve opportunities for women around the world, to enable more women to participate in a field which is universally valued, seen as integral to their identities, and important to the future of their families and communities. Detailed site reports from each group are provided in the Appendices, while the key findings are discussed in the following section.

## FINDINGS

While the barriers faced by Indigenous women varied with cultural context, there were strong similarities which, collated together, provide a clear picture of what Indigenous women face when trying to succeed as rangers. While some of these barriers – particularly around funding and the impacts of colonisation – also apply to men, they often affect women disproportionately.

Traditional social norms provide a structure in which men are enabled but which inhibit women from participating. For example, childcare and family responsibilities fall most heavily on women, and impede access to paid employment. Male dominated workplaces exclude women but provide an enabling environment for men seeking employment in this field.

There were also variations across continents; for instance impacts of colonisation were felt most strongly in North America and New Zealand, while access to education for girls was far more difficult in Africa and the Subcontinent.

The strategies groups in other countries employed to successfully address barriers provide a starting point for us to look at how to better support women rangers in Australia. Due to the varied nature of the many barriers, a range of strategies will be needed to address them and enable women to participate. Unfortunately not all barriers have easy solutions, and success is often the result of individual resilience and perseverance. On-going support and active management from organisations is necessary.



*All Women Ranger Group - the Black Mambas, Cute Mhlongo, Leitah Mkhabela, Nkateko Letti Mzimba, South Africa, April 2019*

Some critical success factors, such as quotas or all-women groups, were particularly effective wherever they were employed, but may not be possible everywhere due to financial or legislative restrictions. Other factors, such as the role of strong women mentors, were key in enabling participation and progression in nearly all cases and should be replicated.

These findings will need to be adapted to the local context. Consultation with Indigenous women is essential, to identify the specific barriers which they face, how these impact and on whom within a given community, and to develop culturally appropriate strategies which will work for them.

## Patriarchal Societies

Patriarchal societies and traditional roles of women were some of the biggest barriers concerning rangers. This problem was ubiquitous, and while generally embedded in traditional cultural values, the imposition of colonial norms serves to further impose male dominance in paid work, including in areas where traditional cultures had a matrilineal structure.

The dominance of men in decision making, and the expectation that a woman's role is to have children and look after the family, makes it difficult for women to access ranger jobs, which are still seen as a primarily male role. The scarcity of employment options for men also puts pressure on ranger jobs in particular.

Women have also traditionally been seen as weak and incapable, and therefore not given opportunities or respect when they have attempted to work. This was the experience of many of the women rangers interviewed.

Access to education has played a role in addressing these issues. In Sera Conservancy (Appendix 6), women reported that some husbands are not supportive of their jobs and pressure them to give up work, but attitudes are changing. Greater education means "people go to school and learn knowledge of the rights of women and girl children". More education of elders in the community about this would be useful, and the rangers could assist in providing this.

In Nepal (Appendix 1), the Hariyo Ban project recognised the engagement of men and boys is key in effectively accommodating women within conservation. "Attitudes of male leaders are often poor and they are unsupportive, not giving women the opportunity to perform their leadership roles".

A training module for male committee members was developed to change their behaviour, which is critically important to create an inclusive environment. Changing social norms is also necessary, with additional training for families of women members "to create husband and wife dialogue, so they can talk about her role and how women can go outside the home and do the work".

## Barriers

Women not empowered or valued  
Cultural norms - ranger work is seen as a men's job

Women expected to stay home and look after children

Family & social expectations

Lack of awareness – women don't know these jobs are possible for them

Unsupportive families

Women not educated

Child-marriages and FGM

Lack of access to birth control

Lack of confidence (women in those cultures don't speak up)

Jealousy from husbands (and wives of men rangers)

Jealousy from community members without jobs

Danger from poachers, tribal fighting, and wild animals - families fearful and reluctant for women to work

Patrolling with men caused jealousy from rangers' partners in many African groups. Having sufficient women working together helps with this, and in Mbire (Appendix 9) they are considering an all women patrol to avoid jealousy issues.

The Akashinga rangers (Appendix 10) have dealt with potential resentment from husbands that their wives spend so much time away by educating partners about the role and requirements of the job, and asking them to sign an affidavit confirming they understand and are happy for their wife to work.

As well as jealousy, families held deep concerns about both the women's abilities and their safety working with wild animals and poachers. In Gir Forest (Appendix 2), families initially felt pressure from society about sending women into the forest, but these views have changed as their successes as rangers are shared widely via extensive media coverage.

Ms Shilu says that as well as being seen as "heroes of the area" they are "an inspiration for our sisters" who now aspire to work as Forest Guards. This is reflected in the high number of women applying for positions.

In Nepal, the Hariyo Ban project supports "change makers" – strong women role models who persevere in male-dominated fields. For example, Doma Paudel came from a poor village, her family a victim of wildlife conflict. She was supported by the NTNC with training and skills development, and given opportunities to participate in the local Community-Based Anti-poaching Unit (CBAPU). She went on to become the first female Nature Guide in Chitwan, and owning her own tour company.

Her success has inspired other women, with nearly 100 women studying to pass the Nature Guide test in Chitwan this year. Doma also stood for President of her CBAPU and, despite opposition from some male members, was elected to become the first woman CBAPU president in Chitwan. Currently half the members of her unit are women – far more than others in Nepal.

## Critical Success Factors

Government support of equal rights & girls education (changing social norms)

Changing Community attitudes towards girls education and jobs over the years

Education of families, communities and husbands – about women's roles in conservation and the workplace - to change social norms

Raising Awareness through schools and social media about successful women rangers - girls can pursue these careers

Role Models – women who inspire others, and show younger women and their community that these jobs are for women

Change Agents – support strong women who fight for jobs despite the barriers

Family and community support to encourage them in their work

Formalised recognition/agreement from husbands to support wives working

Organisational role – shifting community attitudes towards women's engagement, reduction of community conflict (to make safer for women to work) GBV activisms

Strong role models and awareness raising are needed to expose communities to the success of women in this field and, particularly, to ensure young women know there is a career path for them. In Uganda the Women Birders Club (Appendix 7) provides mentoring and outreach to young women in universities, creating awareness of opportunities and providing successful examples to inspire others.

Many groups, including the Akashinga Rangers, the Black Mambas, and the Mbire conservation rangers, are proud of their roles in changing community attitudes. The Akashinga rangers were catcalled in their community, and the Black Mambas (Appendix 11) were laughed at: “People in your community tell you ‘you are not going to do it, you’re not worth it’ they undermine you”.

But community attitudes have changed “Our community learned not to underestimate women”. People see them as leaders in the community, seeing them in newspapers and on TV. From doubting their abilities, the view in the community has changed completely. Now, Akashinga rangers are always being asked “when is the next selection” - not just the women, but the fathers and brothers are asking this - they have accepted that the initiative has been a benefit: “they also see the women now versus when they were recruited - they have licences, education, confidence and they want to be a part of that”.

In the Cook Islands (Appendix 18), where it is mostly men applying for on-ground jobs, the NES try to ensure that when staff go out they send women too, so people have more exposure to women in those roles. More encouragement of women is needed so they know anyone can apply and would be treated equally: “women think they are not as good as they really are, whereas men think they can do anything”.



## Male Dominated Workplaces

Another barrier for women is that ranger workplaces are male-dominated, making it even harder for women to break in. Most leadership positions are filled by men, and women feel intimidated and not listened to. Sexism was a big issue, with men not respecting women or allowing them to undertake their roles because they don't think women can do the job effectively. Sexual harassment was also problematic and created workplaces in which women did not feel safe.

The Guardians programs in Canada (Appendix 14) acknowledged the difficulty a young woman faces to enter an established crew of six older men "even if they are lovely, welcoming people". Women who are interested have encountered sexism – for example male watchmen didn't trust their skills running boats or out in the field - and there have been issues around sexual harassment, which men saw as joking around but made women uncomfortable.

A need to develop a strong culture around sexual harassment was identified, and it would also help to have women in project management roles and doing the hiring.

The Ancestral Lands program (Appendix 12) is also male dominated and women made up less than 20% of crew leaders. However this year they have hired more women as program directors and coordinators, which has boosted women's confidence and created a safe space to talk with someone aware of their issues. The organisation has also acted to remove any participants who have been disrespectful towards female leaders.

Women feel "respect from the director and program coordinator" and efforts to create a safe workplace include educating male crew leaders about issues women face on the job, for example training on hygiene and menstruation and what is needed to manage that in remote bush camps. Hiring more women on crews means they work with other indigenous women in the field too, as in the past they supervised teams of men.

## Barriers

Male-dominated workplace: not listened to, intimidating

Sexism – lack of respect at work; men think women can't do the job and won't be effective

Sexual harassment

Gender based violence

Supervisors nearly all men

Few women in leadership roles and hard to progress

Lack of women role models

Women having to work harder than men

Some organisations have taken an alternate path to creating safe working spaces for women – creating all-women ranger groups. The Akashinga Rangers and the Black Mambas (Appendix 10 & 11) are two of the very few examples of women-only ranger groups. While having separate women’s ranger groups may not be possible or necessarily desirable, it means they avoid male dominated workplaces, sexist and unsupportive colleagues, jealousy, or sexual harassment.

Developed to employ disadvantaged women, creating a female-friendly workplace was a priority resulting in programs where the rangers have very few concerns or suggestions for improvement.

Sexual harassment and unsupportive male managers led Harriet Kemigisha to leave her job as a ranger guide in Kibale National Park. She then went out on her own, becoming the first female bird guide in Uganda and starting her own company (Appendix 7). Harriet has a policy of employing women, and employs three female drivers as well as other female birding guides. She believes that with more women in leadership positions there will be less harassment.

The women at Sera Wildlife Conservancy (Appendix 6) would also like to see more women in leadership roles. They believe that many among their number possess strong leadership traits and were disappointed there were few women promoted into leadership positions. It is hard to speak up and represent women in front of men who don’t listen, and it would be easier to have a woman leader you can talk to.

For the Black Mambas, moving women into leadership roles was built into the process. Women are identified for leadership roles and provided with skills and development training.

Having women in leadership roles is key in developing more female-friendly workplaces, as well as mentoring other women and supporting their progression to higher positions

## Critical Success Factors

Organisational culture – ensure respect for women in organisation,

Provide safe, supported, unmolested workplace

Recruit more women - and more than one woman at a time so not working alone with men

All women groups

Recruit women in leadership roles (easier to communicate, provides more opportunities and reduces sexual harassment/sexism)

Quotas for women in leadership positions in organisations

Supporting emerging leaders (identify local leaders and train them)

Provide professional development for women

Mentors – formal mentoring program in place with women in leadership roles

Exchanges– provide opportunities for learning and sharing ideas

Develop support networks for women in conservation roles

The role played by strong women mentors was another critical success factor identified by every single group. In every group women identified strong women who had taken them under their wings and made a difference to their careers. They also identified their own willingness to “turn it around and do it for someone else”.

In the KWS (Appendix 5) Anne Kahihia had to persevere in a male-dominated profession and her subsequent leadership roles have allowed her to make a difference to other women in the organisation. For Ann Ndege, having the support of women mentors in KWS “extraordinary ladies who I always looked up to and they took my hand... they were always ready to help” was essential in her progression to warden. It was easier to communicate with women, and now she is in that position herself she can support women on her staff.

Where there are no women in positions of authority, women can be reluctant to raise any issues, because of a fear that if they do men will assume they cannot do the work, but “we are not saying we are not able to do the work, just that this is hard to do because of x or y or z”. If they mention a problem, they can be left to do the cleaning or the office work, leaving women feeling they always have to prove themselves.

Mbire rangers (Appendix 9) had not had any previous opportunity to talk with other women rangers and discuss these issues, and other opportunities for them to raise issues without men thinking they are weak or incapable would be useful. Ranger exchanges are one strategy for achieving this.

Exchanges have many benefits, enabling Indigenous women to meet and share experiences and talk about the challenges they face, providing an opportunity to learn from and support each other. Maori women (Appendix 19) identified that past exchange opportunities to travel and meet other women had contributed to their development by recognising, valuing, and supporting their contributions. NLC rangers who travelled to New Zealand appreciated the opportunity to develop leadership skills through representing their communities overseas, an important step in gaining confidence, and to connect, be inspired, and learn from other Indigenous women.

*Ranger Exchange: Meirene Hardy-Birch, Eslyn Wauchope, Sheila White, Bronwyn Bauer-Hunt, and Julie Roy, New Zealand, August 2019*



## Structural/Organisational Barriers

Organisations need to play a strong role to ensure that women are able to overcome barriers to employment, and to provide opportunities for them to be empowered to undertake ranger jobs. As well as understanding the issues facing women, decision makers have to be given the tools to actively change their organisational practices.

Quota systems were a very effective tool wherever they were applied, enabling women to move into positions and to do so alongside other women. This gave women a chance to prove their abilities, which resulted in both communities and male colleagues rethinking their views about the capabilities of women. Quotas were useful to engage women in leadership roles as well as on-ground ranger positions.

Gir Forest has had quotas for women for over a decade; the 33% quota created in 2007 resulted in the first female forest guard in India (Appendix 2). It was part of a broader strategy in Gujarat to engage and empower women. Ten years later, women at Gir National Park still make up 33% of the total rangers and forest guards.

When they started, women were treated with suspicion and expected to fail; “our male counterparts questioned how we would do our jobs... they are all thinking women were unfit... that we will be scared”. Over time, as the women have proven their abilities, the views of their male supervisors and counterparts has changed, with the Director respecting their abilities and encouraging women’s participation.

The KWS (Appendix 5) also has a target of 30% female representation and, since 2011, has a Gender Strategy with reporting obligations against their targets. Anne Kahihia is often the only woman in the room at senior meetings and thinks that if the strategy had been in place 20 years ago, more women would have been able to advance to senior roles.

## Barriers

No gender policy

Poor implementation of gender policy

Men on boards and in charge of recruitment

People in positions of power unaware or dismissive of issues facing women

Women not given tools to be able to do the job even if able to participate (low capacity due to lack of access to education)

Inability to prioritise employment of Indigenous women

Lack of suitable equipment for women to use - not gender sensitive (eg uniforms)

While Anna Kahihia believes the quota and the gender policy are excellent, they need to be better implemented to give women opportunities to move into leadership positions.

Gender equity requirements are important, however organisations may need assistance in developing and meeting them. In the Cook Islands (Appendix 18), the NES is meant to have gender action plans in their projects as part of donor requirements: “but we don’t know how to do that – we would like to see more women in these roles... but don’t know how to engage them in this space”.

Birdlife International (Appendix 8) include a gender mainstreaming element in their grants, and more recently included gender as a KPI in the funding framework. They assist grantees to meet these targets by helping them to do gender self-analysis at the start and end of the process, and provide a masterclass about gender issues with training and capacity building. They also run exchanges, bringing local organisations with low scores in the Gender Tracking Tool assessment to the highest scoring ones, providing peer to peer learning about gender.

Women are constrained by their responsibilities (childcare, resource collection, etc) which need to be considered to create an environment that allows women to be involved. Birdlife International also believes that it is necessary to convince people in positions of power in conservation that engaging women is important, in order to enable actions to help empower women.

The Hariyo Ban project (Appendix 1) is working to provide empirical evidence of the benefits of women in conservation, which they use to convince those who have difficulty accepting GESI as integral to biodiversity. They are able to do this through the employment of officers who are responsible for implementing and providing on-going assessment of the project.

Having people with the responsibility to implement, monitor, and report on policies is essential if they are to succeed. This is recognised by international aid agencies; a USAid grant agreement with the NRT (Appendix 6) requires them to employ a

## Critical Success Factors

Gender Policy (including quotas)

Gender Officer – to implement policies and monitor quotas

Quotas – minimum quotas for women in ranger positions

Gender Equity quotas on boards/committees (role models and community change)

Grants with gender mainstreaming elements (gender as a KPI)

Empowerment of women in community/ on boards – provide knowledge and skills

Provide responsibility-based leadership training

Gender equity training for men on boards and committees

Male Champions – men in positions of power who enable and encourage women

Local employment prioritised

Co-management of parks

Tailor new technology to include women

Gender Specialist to develop and formalise policies to promote the employment of women. Ethiopia's Gender Officer (Appendix 3) reports on staff gender levels and provides training about gender development issues and equality to all staff.

Educating staff about gender equity issues ensures that everyone understands the barriers and is able to support women to overcome them. Hariyo Ban have made partner organisations accountable for GESI, with the expectation they would develop Action Plans at the institution level. Gender equity training was provided to men within their organisations, including how to work with and support women. Male gender equity champions were identified at the institutional level, and provided with training to conduct community actions.

While community conservancy boards in Kenya are predominantly made up of men, the NRT encourage communities to include women. They also target male board members through a governance program which includes training on the importance of women in leadership roles and women's rights.



*Beatrice Lempaira, Northern Rangeland Trust  
Kenya, 2019*

Having women in leadership positions is especially helpful. Women on boards act as role models, giving their communities the chance to see women in positions of authority, and are more likely to support the employment of women as rangers. Six years of having a woman Chairperson at Sera Conservancy (Appendix 6) contributed to the relatively high number of women rangers employed there. The women there say that having women on the board to whom they can talk about their issues is very useful.

When women are represented not just at the grassroots but at all levels, it creates equity. In New Zealand (Appendix 19), for example, when the Minister of Conservation was also the Minister of Women it created greater opportunities as more women were recommended to boards and in governance roles.

Ensuring women in leadership roles have knowledge of their roles and the capacity to meet their responsibilities is essential, but support may need to be provided to ensure they can. In Nepal the legal provision of quotas has been an incredibly strong tool in engaging local women in leadership roles, but there are challenges “men had been handling the finances and suddenly women were given responsibility. The women sign things and they are penalised because they didn't have the knowledge or literacy”.

To address this, Hariyo Ban developed the Responsibility Based Training Model, which identifies the responsibilities of specific roles and conducts targeted training based on those responsibilities. Leadership, legal rights and awareness, and literacy training are also provided.

Other useful policies to enable engagement of Indigenous women include pathways programs for education within ranger programs, and co-management and local hiring policies for National Parks to enable traditional owners to access jobs. Recruitment policies can also raise awareness that ranger jobs are for women – in Kenya KWS (Appendix 5) adverts for ranger positions include requirements for women applicants and state that “women are encouraged to apply”.

Across Africa, the AWF (Appendix 4) also include a sentence “Encourage the application of women” in all their job advertisements - and they encourage partner organisations to do the same. If women meet the minimum requirements they will get the job. In the NRT women are encouraged to apply for ranger positions and in new conservancies they ensure women are employed at the start. Women are also prioritised for internship opportunities.



*Anne Kahihia (top) and Ann Ndege (below), Kenyan Wildlife Service, Kenya, January 2019*

*“Women have to put in extra, they have to work harder than other people. They have work and the responsibilities of home, families, and children and need to add extra hours to do the job right”*

*- Anne Kahihia*

## Lack of Access to Education

A number of factors contribute to the lack of access girls have to education. In some regions this is a result of social norms that don't prioritise girls' education, in others it is early marriages, or teen pregnancies, child-care responsibilities, or poverty which mean they are unable to pursue their education.

In Ethiopia (Appendix 3), for example, many girls in rural areas are forced into early marriages, while female genital mutilation (FGM) and early pregnancy often mean they have to stop attending school. While early marriages are decreasing, high levels of family poverty also contribute to the lack of opportunity for girls' education, which has not traditionally been seen as important as boys'.

Governments play a large role in changing this - in Kenya the Government's campaign to stop early marriages and ensure girls go to school by putting pressure on their families and chiefs is working, and Anne Kahihia (Appendix 5) believes that education is no longer the barrier for women in Kenya it used to be: "The more educated a society is, the more open minded and aware of the rights of women it is".

The NRT (Appendix 6) also supports local school infrastructure in northern Kenya, and is trying to build classrooms and dorms particularly for pastoral nomadic girls. They also partner with the Samburu Girls Foundation which advocates for child rights against FGM and rescues girls from early marriages to educate them.

In Canada, First Nations governments are addressing the education issue, as having to leave community and family to pursue education is one of the main things holding women back (Appendix 15). Racism is encountered outside community, especially within urban societies and institutions, so going away for a university degree is hard.

## Barriers

Education not seen as important for girls in some cultures

Difficult to attend school due to early marriage, teen pregnancy

Difficult to attend school due to poverty

Hard to leave home and community to pursue further education

The CAFN (Appendix 16) helps fund tuition, which Tatshenshini-Alske Provincial Park women rangers credit with making it possible for them to attend college and focus on getting the education required for the role. Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in (Appendix 17) also has education support in place, through Cultural Education Liaison Workers and financial support which includes both tuition and a living stipend for post-secondary training.

Heiltsuk First Nation and Qqs (Appendix 14) developed a Supporting Emerging Aboriginal Stewards initiative - science and leadership learning enrichment at the schools. Partnerships with non-profit organisations sees students hired for research and monitoring, giving them paid work experience and supporting them to stay in school.

Other programs have countered the lack of education by creating alternative pathways. In Ethiopia the EWCA (Appendix 3) employs few women at professional levels, and less than 30% of women have a degree, however they support entry level staff to further their education while employed so they can progress to other roles within the organisation.

In the USA, Parks' criteria are 2-4 years of college education plus 1 to 2 years of on the job experience, which is hard to achieve (Appendix 13). To gain experience people need to volunteer, and poverty makes it very hard to work for free. A student employment pathways program which combines paid work with college attendance enabled both Curlinda Blacksheep and Kelkiyana Yazzie to become rangers at the Navajo National Monument.

In remote communities where there is a high unemployment rate, with few jobs available at entry level and a small pool of people to apply for higher level jobs, the challenge is to create entry level jobs and provide meaningful employment pathways through training and access to education.

## Critical Success Factors

Support girls staying in school

Literacy training for women in communities

Local education opportunities so don't have to leave community

Funding and scholarships for Indigenous women to get post-secondary educations

Traineeships for Indigenous women to get into ranger programs

Flexible roles – beginner roles with lower education requirements giving priority to local, indigenous, disadvantaged women

Quality training to ensure capable and confident

Accessible training to ensure women can attend

Support entry-level staff to pursue further education

Having seen the success of the women forest guards at Gir, the Wildlife Division at Sasan-Gir (Appendix 2) has set a 50% reservation for local women for Eco-guide job openings, positions with no educational requirements. 25 women have just begun working as eco-guides.

In Zimbabwe the Akashinga program (Appendix 10) was funded to target disadvantaged women in the local community, so there were no educational requirements. In Zimbabwe, without an education “you are not a real person”, and most of the rangers had been forced to drop out of school because of poverty, early marriage, or pregnancy. Their Personal Development Branch assists women to complete their schooling. Women are supported to study for their O levels, with a tutor funded by the program, while one is now undertaking a university degree in ecology.

Rangers are also supported in getting drivers licences - which along with training gives them greater confidence and professionalism to be able to carry out their duties – another key message from groups.



*Mbire District Community Conservation Rangers (L-R) Bella Nyamakure, Penny Mules, Edith John, Stylet Mugomapanja, Brandina Matare, Chipso Chimutsiea, and Mavis Mhako, Zimbabwe, March 2019*

Providing quality training to women plays a key role in creating capable and confident rangers. In Mbire (Appendix 9), rangers were initially trained through the Rural District Council, but the AWF now sends them to the college where national park rangers train, increasing their confidence in their knowledge and abilities. It also changed the communities' attitudes about women's abilities: “when we went for training and came back, people looked at us differently, because they were surprised we could do it, and get our certificates”.

Ensuring training is accessible to women also needs to be addressed. The Coastal Stewardship Network (Appendix 14) reports that enrolments in the Stewardship Technician Training Program's third cohort achieved gender parity this year. Training was moved closer to home and in two week chunks over two years to make it easier for women with childcare responsibilities to participate.

## Childcare Responsibilities

Childcare and family responsibilities fall most heavily on women, and was raised as one of the major issues in every group consulted. The expectation that women hold the responsibility for looking after children – and the lack of other options for childcare in communities – means that women are often unable to participate in the workforce.

In many cases (India, South Africa, Zimbabwe), supportive husbands, parents, and extended families meant women could work. In Sera Wildlife Conservancy (Appendix 6), the remote posting with no nearby school means school-age children have to live with family in town. However nine of the women rangers working on the conservancy have babies living with them as they need to breastfeed. With no day-care or family support they sometimes they have to bring the babies to work with them.

While a child-friendly workplace is important, day-care or a school on the conservancy would be incredibly helpful. In Canada, the CAFN-run youth centre has just opened a day care centre which will increase women's ability to work (Appendix 16).

In remote national parks around Kenya (Appendix 5) the number of women rangers is much lower than in more developed areas, as women with families need to work somewhere where their children can go to school. KWS directors are making more efforts to ensure families aren't disadvantaged by postings, and some parks are also providing transport to school for rangers' children.

The AWF (Appendix 4) see women's engagement as vital, and in East Africa, job opportunities at community reservations mean women can work where they live. Conservancies with communities wholly within the park have the highest rate of women's engagement because of this. AWF are also providing access to education for ranger's children, locating camps near schools or, in a project called Classroom Africa, building schools near camps.

## Barriers

Family commitments – having to care for their children and families

Having to work and still do all the traditional roles expected of them at home

Difficulty accessing training (with childcare responsibilities)

Remote postings – not being able to live with children and husbands

Needing to move away to gain promotions (from family support)

Remote locations without schools make it difficult to access for their children

Burn out – demands of job and family and community (because you are seen as successful)

Other programs are taking a different approach. In Rwanda (Appendix 8), the RWCA's rangers are organised as a cooperative, so rangers own the program and arrange their rota of patrols themselves. It is flexible and not full-time and, because they organise the patrols themselves, women can work at a time that suits them and still fulfil their responsibilities caring for children.

For groups everywhere, child and elder care were a challenge, and employers who provide time off and the flexibility to cover missed hours later are essential in managing family commitments.

Supportive employers are key in ensuring women are able to fully participate. Both flexible hours, and the ability to adapt those hours as needed to suit both the nature of the work as well as the women's needs, was critical. On-going flexibility will be needed as situations around childcare and family commitments change.

Child-friendly workplaces are also necessary. Innu communities lack sufficient childcare options, but they try wherever possible to integrate families into work (Appendix 14). For land-based activities and training they are encouraged to bring their families with them. Children witness learning, which increases the value of education in a community that doesn't value it much. The aim is an "integration of family into the process of training and education".

For the NRT (Appendix 6) providing access to family planning is also important: "women can't do anything if they are turned into baby machines". They also work closely with the Samburu Girls Foundation which rescues girls from early marriages.

The pressures of childcare and work on women also needs to be considered. Women from the Te Rarawa Iwi (Appendix 19) and Canadian Guardians networks (Appendix 14) identified burnout as a common issues faced by women in communities where they are seen as capable and therefore asked to contribute more. Organisations need to recognise and account for the extra work they do to ensure successful women are able to continue to perform to high standards.

## Critical Success Factors

Childcare provided in community

Child-friendly workplaces

Flexible working hours – around day-care, and on-going flexibility

Flexible postings – in office if need to breastfeed or to locations with access to family support or to schools for children

Family Planning – so women aren't baby machines

Education available to ranger's children – build bases near schools, or schools near bases

Family support with childcare

Recognition of extra burden/work women carry

## Colonisation

North America and New Zealand, which have similar histories of colonisation to Australia, are where the impacts of colonisation on women rangers were felt most heavily.

Cultural degradation over time and the effects of residential schools mean young people have been unable to learn traditional skills they are meant to be brought up with, and similar cycles are ongoing (Appendix 17). Jody Beaumont, Traditional Knowledge Specialist, says this has caused a broader disconnect from land for many people, which has created fear: “there are some Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in citizens who have developed a fear of the river and they spread this fear to others, they put it on women, that you should have all this knowledge before it’s safe to go anywhere, which scares them from the jobs”.

Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in is combating this in a number of ways. Firstly, self-government and the ability to self-determine has contributed to citizens overcoming some of the trauma of the past. The Dänojà Zho Cultural Centre and land-based culture camps teach children traditional knowledge. To increase women’s confidence they run a Women in Hunting program in winter, exploring women’s roles and to gain all the skills male hunters would gain.

They also deliver a Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in 101 cultural course at high school, including “information about the dark times before self-government, residential schools, and past challenges”. The course is also provided as cross-cultural training for newcomers so they understand the Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in - where they started, the issues they faced, and where they are at now.

However more community building and reconciliation is needed: “for so long people were silenced and it takes time for a community to recover from the lateral violence”. Young women have to deal with social issues such as family breakdown, domestic violence, and addiction before they feel like they can contribute “the challenge is how you can get them to the work place”.

## Barriers

Disconnection from land creates fear

Loss of skills, knowledge, language

Pressure of thinking you should have knowledge because you are indigenous

Colonisation’s impact on women, trauma and community dysfunction

Language – expected to operate in English

White male-dominated workplaces

Conflict between tribal role vs servant of the crown (applying laws of colonisers)

Poverty - marginalised communities too poor to participate, can’t volunteer and miss opportunities

Racism – harder to pursue education, gain employment

Imposition of coloniser’s patriarchal society

Georgette also tries to provide a positive setting at work and is a support person for young women to talk to.

Also in Canada, the responsibility to mentor and teach others is part of Nisga'a culture (Appendix 15). Under the treaty, consulting firms working for the Nisga'a Lisims Government are required to follow this culture and support people learning. As a result Nisga'a Lisims Government employs many women in a variety of leadership roles and a Nisga'a woman has just been employed as their first Nisga'a biologist.

In America, Canada, and New Zealand, racism and its effect on women's abilities to access opportunities were of concern, along with inhibiting factors such as the predominance of white male co-ordinators. Women often feel intimidated, under-valued and constantly needing to prove themselves.

In New Zealand (Appendix 19), the Te Rarawa women reflected on the need for intrinsic recognition of the value of indigenous knowledge and the ability to use cultural knowledge to manage lands.

*"Indigenous women need to be the decision makers and not have to explain themselves over and over... Organisations need to recognise that traditional knowledge is not translatable - people need to take it for granted that they know what they are talking about"*  
- Sam Techlenburq

To succeed, women need support from their community in their role, however in both New Zealand and Canada women felt reluctance to enforce colonial rules, especially on fellow community members. Employers may need to find ways to help women manage that conflict.

There is also the issue of working predominantly in English, rather than their own language which women may be (or want to be) more fluent in. In Zimbabwe (Appendix 10), women have the option of conducting the interview process to become an Akashinga ranger in either English or Shona.

## Critical Success Factors

Cultural maintenance and rebuilding – to increase confidence, traditional knowledge, pride

Cultural Training – for outsiders and within so everyone knows their history

Cultural camps for women to learn traditional knowledge and skills

Ability to speak own language in interviews

Explicitly valuing traditional knowledge

Self-government and reclaiming power

## Poor Funding & Facilities

Lack of funding has implications for programs, facilities, and positions. Programs are threatened by lack of funding security.

The Black Mambas (Appendix 11), for example, have had to reduce their staff because of funding cuts, while the Hariyo Ban project in Nepal (Appendix 1) reports that secure, long-term funding is an essential component of their success.

Funding shortfalls also make it difficult to provide acceptable services for rangers, with a lack of housing and poor facilities, and no consideration of what would make them more suitable for women. The AWF (Appendix 4) acknowledges that “women want to work but are not provided with the services that make that possible”.

Postings that are remote and lack facilities such as water or toilets make it difficult for women to manage menstruation. Organisations like the NRT (Appendix 6) are aware that ranger positions are made more accessible to women by improving facilities and security, and provide power, water, and houses so rangers no longer have to live for weeks in tents with no amenities.

In Mbire (Appendix 9) the program is keen to increase participation of women, but there is limited funding. Lack of resources (uniforms, rations, ammunition) are problematic, as is insufficient and irregular pay. In some districts money comes only every six months, and rangers can't afford to buy things like sanitary pads, having to improvise with cloth scraps which cause extreme discomfort when on week-long foot patrol.

When groups are adequately funded, they are able to provide suitable accommodation and supplies – for example, the Akashinga rangers' rations include sanitary pads (Appendix 10).

While many funding issues apply equally to men, the impacts are greater for women because of the roles they are also expected to play at home. Lack of vehicles and exhaustion make it hard to also do chores such as such as cooking dinner and housework.

## Barriers

Lack of adequate facilities for hygiene

Lack of housing or suitable accommodation

Unreliable or short term funding for programs

Lack of ranger positions

Low and irregular pay

## Critical Success Factors

Programs funded in the longer term

Programs specifically for women in conservation

Provision of adequate, regular pay and appropriate rations

Provision of facilities – ensure water, toilets available for hygiene

## Benefits

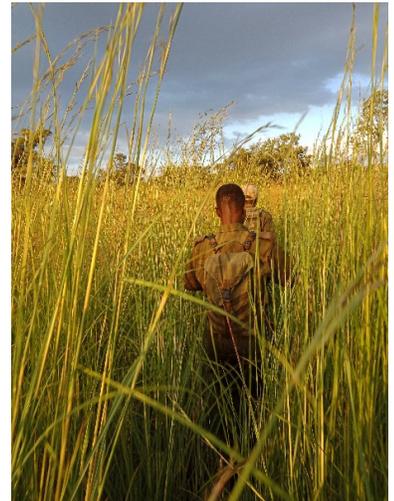
The critical success factors discussed above enable more women to participate in conservation, which creates benefits for individuals, communities, organisations, and the environment. Some of these benefits stem from specific things women rangers do which are different from men, for example, as resource gatherers having a more intimate knowledge of species and seasonal change, or in the Australia context, women looking after country differently. Otherwise, they are an integral aspect of being women (closer relationships with children and teaching them about conservation), or stem from increased gender equity in communities.

It is essential to examine why women's engagement is important, as structural barriers need to be overcome by people in positions of power who are often unconvinced of the necessity to address these issues. However, it is also worth acknowledging that increasing women in the workforce could potentially erode traditional male roles, which may not be an uncontroversial good.

The following benefits were not quantitatively assessed, but identified by women rangers and staff at the organisations visited. Once again, benefits varied somewhat from country to country. However overall they were consistent, with benefits flowing to individuals, their communities and broader society, the organisations they worked for, and resulted in positive environmental outcomes.

### Individual Benefits

- A job that you love; a worthwhile, meaningful job
- Pride in themselves and their work, self-confidence
- Ability to protect their land and culture, reclaiming their land, for their ancestors
- Financial security – ability to provide for family, financial empowerment
- Improved status – an important person in their community
- Health and wellbeing
- Opportunities – travel, skills, career opportunities



*Akashinga Rangers on Patrol, Zimbabwe, March 2019*

## Organisational Benefits

- Women are better at the job (create relationships, good communicators, etc)
- Harder workers, better work ethic
- Less corrupt
- Nurturing – improved work environment, less conflict
- Think differently – more balanced, broader, holistic, analytical, longer-term, strategic
- Good at intelligence work and keeping secrets
- Reduced sexual harassment
- Women often more literate (where access to education is not a barrier)

## Environmental Benefits

- Improved conservation outcomes – reduced encroachment/impacts on resources
- Education – better communicators and closer to their children, educate their children and family in conservation
- Reducing Conflict – better community relations, less aggressive
- Nurturers, empathetic, protective of animals
- More dependent on ecosystems therefore they need to manage it
- Better decisions because also informed by women's views, knowledge, and needs
- Indigenous women know their landscape and are more familiar with environmental changes

## Social Benefits

- Equality and social justice – women having the same opportunities as men
- Changing Social Norms, women's abilities recognised, accepted, and respected
- Role Models for young women
- Increases the value communities place on education
- Contribution to community and social programs, able to support and help others

*“Benefits are huge. If you train a woman you are training the whole world. She will teach the children about conservation”*

*– Prossy Nanyombi*

## Conclusions

During the course of this Fellowship it became clear that women around the world want to become rangers, but face numerous barriers to do so. There are many reasons why supporting them to do so is important, with benefits flowing to more than just individuals. Various programs have found ways to increase the number of women employed in these fields, and while these are a product of their cultural context, their methods can be used to develop ideas and strategies for Australia.

Indigenous women need to be actively involved in setting up systems which address the specific issues they face in their communities and cultures. This report seeks to identify a road map to decreasing barriers to success, and sets out steps which can be taken to improve the recruitment and retention of Indigenous women rangers, which should be developed in consultation with Indigenous women.



*Women Rangers at Sera Wildlife Conservancy, Kenya, January 2019*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the importance of increasing numbers of Indigenous women rangers, there are a number of practical steps which should be taken to enable and empower women. This section provides practical recommendations for policy makers at the government level, as well as actions that are within the scope of individual organisations. It is essential that these strategies are developed and implemented in consultation with Indigenous women rangers.

### Government/Policy Makers

1. Gender mainstreaming KPI in Working on Country (WoC) requirements
  - Quota systems in place in WoC funding with minimum targets for women
2. Enabling organisations to appropriately and separately fund women ranger programs (as required)
3. Recognise part-time roles as integral to the success of programs
4. Adequate, long-term funding
5. Acceptable facilities, infrastructure, and equipment
  - making sure basic sanitation needs are met, sufficient vehicles provided to account for avoidance relationship and enable women rangers to travel, etc
6. Schools and childcare facilities available in communities so rangers can work and live near their families



*Chitwan National Park, Nepal, October 2018*

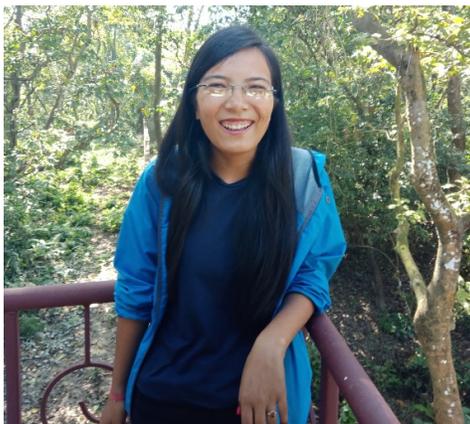
## Organisational

1. Gender Policy developed in consultation with Indigenous women/rangers
2. Quotas set with minimum targets for women's employment
3. Identified position responsible for overseeing implementation of the policy and on-going assessment and reporting
4. Gender Equity training for men in organisations to understand why it is important, what the barriers are, and what they can do
5. Gender Equity training in community, particularly targeting male partners to reduce domestic violence against rangers
6. Cultural Training
7. Raise awareness of women rangers in communities, so young women see strong role models and everyone knows these jobs are for women too
8. Recruit women into leadership and supervisory roles
9. Support Indigenous women rangers to move into leadership roles
  - Build capacity (so can fully participate)
  - Put formal mentoring system in place
  - Provide regular opportunities for exchanges and women's forums
10. Provide quality training which is accessible to women
11. Flexible workplaces
  - hours to be flexible, including making part-time hours available which are adaptable and subject to change
  - child friendly environment and ability to include children in work activities
12. Recruit more than one woman so they are not working alone with a group of men
13. Women-only groups (or separate men's and women's groups) as required

## Dissemination & Sharing

I look forward to sharing what I have learned from these inspiring women. The findings of this Fellowship will be integrated into the review of the NLC's Women's Employment Strategy, and the report will be shared with other Land Councils and independent ranger groups around the Northern Territory and Australia. The National Indigenous Australians Agency, the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance, the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation, and other organisations involved in Indigenous land rights will also be provided with copies of the report, along with NGOs working with and funding ranger activities, such as Bush Heritage and the WWF.

More broadly, results of this Fellowship will be presented at the TNRM Conference in Darwin in November 2019 and at the 2020 Strong Women for Healthy Country Network forum. Articles in the Land Rights News and other publications will also follow.



*Top Left: Ancestral Lands Crew Leader Training, Cottonwood Gulch, New Mexico, April 2019  
Top Centre: Women Rangers, Sera Wildlife Conservancy, Kenya, January 2019  
Top Right: Kim Joseph, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nations, Dawson City, Canada, July 2019  
Bottom Left: Smritee Lama, Ranger, Chitwan National Park, Nepal, October 2018  
Bottom Centre: Annika Joe, Tatshenshini-Alske Provincial Park ranger, Canada, July 2019  
Bottom Right: Judith Mirembe and Prossy Nanyombi, Uganda Women Birders Club, Uganda, February 2019*

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: The Hariyo Ban Project - Nepal

Nepal has a strong patriarchal culture, and women have traditionally been marginalised and disempowered, although this is slowly changing. In 2015, the Nepalese Government adopted a constitution which sets aside 33% of parliamentary seats for women. In addition, the Civil Service Act was amended in 2007 to reserve 45% of vacant posts for excluded groups, with 33% of these allocated to women<sup>4</sup>. Programs funded by large international donors also explicitly require gender mainstreaming as a reportable KPI.

Since 2015 there has been a requirement that one in four rangers hired by National Parks must be women. In Chitwan National Park there are now 4 women rangers (22%), and nearly a dozen women working as game scouts. One woman who has taken advantage of the new policy to follow a career in conservation is Smritee Lama, who says the quotas played a large role in her ability to become a ranger in such a male dominated field.

Smritee hopes to inspire other women, but recognises that the biggest barrier is education. Three years at university is required to become a ranger which comes at a significant cost and is unattainable to women in marginalised communities where girls' access to education is already limited. In reality, women from poor, low-caste, and indigenous groups in Nepal are still not able to access employment as rangers.

#### **Hariyo Ban**

The Hariyo Ban Project is a conservation and social development project funded by USAid and run by a consortium of NGOs including the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) the National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), and CARE International<sup>5</sup>. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) is integral to the entire project: according to Sabrita Dhakal, GESI Coordinator, it is “mission critical” and included in all programs at all levels.

Quotas have been used with great success. CARE Nepal's Community Learning and Action Committees boards have a legal requirement for a minimum of two women in leadership roles while the NTNC, responsible for setting up Community Forests and Buffer Zone Management Committees, requires 33% representation of women in these groups. Although the legal provision of quotas has been an incredibly strong tool in engaging local

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<sup>4</sup> *Overview of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Nepal (2010 Asian Development Bank, Philippines*

<sup>5</sup> *Acharya, D. (2016) Working Together for Forests and People: An assessment of the effectiveness of the Hariyo Ban Program consortium. WWF Nepal, Kathmandu, Nepal*

women in leadership roles, Indu Pant, GESI Advisor with CARE Nepal, says there are challenges “men had been handling the finances and suddenly women were given responsibility. The women sign things and they are penalised because they didn't have the knowledge or literacy”.

To address this, they developed the Responsibility Based Training Model, which identifies the responsibilities of specific roles and conducts targeted training based on these responsibilities. Leadership, legal rights and awareness, and literacy training are also provided. By providing training and empowering women to fulfil these roles, they have been able to attain other leadership positions in their communities and local governments.

It was also recognised that the engagement of men and boys is key in effectively accommodating women within conservation. Attitudes of male leaders are often poor and they are unsupportive, not giving women the opportunity to perform their leadership roles. A separate training module for male committee members was developed to change their behaviour, which is critically important to creating an inclusive environment. Changing social norms is also necessary, with additional training for families of women members “to create husband and wife dialogue, so they can talk about her role and how women can go outside the home and do the work for that role”.

NRM institutions were made accountable for GESI, with the expectation they would develop Action Plans at the institution level. Gender equity training was provided to men within their organisations, including how to work with and support women. Male gender equity champions were identified at the institutional level, and provided with training to conduct small models of community actions, which were then scaled up to the institution level.

The issue of Gender Based Violence (GBV) is also problematic in the forestry sector, but receives little recognition. This is not limited to domestic violence within the home, but includes violence against women in forests and at work, a large barrier to women's participation. To achieve required levels of women in leadership, tackling GBV is essential, and a GBV committee has been developed at Hariyo Ban to begin addressing this.

Another key move has been supporting what they call “change makers” – strong women role models who persevere in male-dominated fields. Doma Paudel is a good example. Coming from a poor village, her family a victim of wildlife conflict, she was supported by the NTNC and the local Buffer Zone Committee with training and skills development, and given opportunities to participate in the local Community-based Anti-poaching Unit (CBAPU).

Doma went on to become the first female Nature Guide in Chitwan, and now owns her own tour company. Her success has inspired other women, with nearly 100 studying to pass the Nature Guide test in Chitwan this year. Doma also stood for President of her CBAPU, despite opposition from some male members, and was elected to become the first woman CBAPU president in Chitwan. Currently half the members of her unit are women – far more than others in Nepal. She encourages other women to join “by educating women, they will educate their families”.

The success of these programs has been aided by having long-term funding and a targeted policy in place. People are employed to implement and provide on-going assessment of the project. By providing empirical evidence of the benefits of women in conservation they are able to convince those who have difficulty accepting GESI as integral to biodiversity.



*Mrigakunaa Community-based Anti-poaching Unit members (L-R) Manju Nepali, Sita Rimal, Kopila Aryal, and Sita Rijal, Chitwan National Park, November 2018*

*Excellent conservation outcomes have been achieved at Chitwan National Park through involving women and providing alternative livelihoods. Alternative livelihoods reduce poaching because there is less dependence on game meat, and less deforestation from firewood collection, as well as reducing human/wildlife conflict because women need to spend less time in the forest.*

### **Critical Success Factors**

Organisational Policy - GESI Action Plan

Legal provisions - minimum quotas for women's participation

Quotas for women in leadership roles

Responsibility based leadership training

Literacy, training and skills development

Women Change Makers supported

Male Champions created

GESI training for men within organisations

Education of husbands and families - to change social norms

Engage youth to change social norms

Strong women role models

Catalyst role of NGOs - training and empowerment

GBV Committee within NRM groups

GESI at all levels of organisations

Demonstrated value of GESI to biodiversity

On-going evaluation against targets

Long-term funding of projects

Support from family

Promoting local knowledge.

Alternative livelihood training and opportunities

### **Outcomes**

Women empowered and moving into other community leadership roles

Changing social norms

Women able to speak up and participate in other areas

Conservation benefits - women better rangers

Financial independence for women

Provides pathways to other jobs and opportunities

Social status improved

Women support other women and their communities

Education of society about conservation as women communicate information to their families

Reduced human-animal conflict

Alternate livelihoods reduces reliance on forest resources

## Appendix 2: Gir Female Forest Guard - India

India is another traditionally patriarchal society. Some states have had quotas for women in conservation for over a decade. In 2007 a 33% quota was created for the employment of women in the Gir Forest, creating the first female forest guard team in India. It was part of a broader strategy in Gujarat to engage and empower women. Ten years later, it is useful to identify what effect these quotas have had on the engagement of women in ranger work.

The women at Gir National Park still make up 33% of the total rangers and forest guards today. When they started 8 and 9 years ago respectively, Ms Shilu and Ms Putat, were treated with suspicion and expected to fail; “the main intention of our male counterparts was to question how we would do our jobs... the men are all thinking women were unfit, that we would not do night patrolling, that we will be scared”.

Over time, as the women have proved their abilities, the views of their male supervisors and counterparts has changed, with Deputy Conservator of Forests, Dr Mohan Ram saying, “women in the field are handling situations well... women participation should be increased”.

Ms Putat believes things have changed because “we have broken all the illusions of men”. Now women are seen as “working equally to the men and being highly efficient” and this has had a major impact on the attitudes of the men they work with. Women are very efficient, less likely to be corrupt than men, and are more responsible and focused on the work, without “the men’s habit of going here and there”.

As well as night patrols and lion counts, they are now also given the opportunity to interact with villages in sensitive areas where there is high potential of human/wild conflict. They are utilised for this role because they “don’t have the aggression... [they] don’t speak arrogantly, so the villagers are more polite to women, they have a good relationship and communicate with peace and harmony”.

This has reduced conflict in surrounding communities. Other positive community impacts include changing societal attitudes about women’s abilities. When they began there were deep concerns from families and the community about both the women’s abilities and their safety within the forest. These views have changed, with extensive media coverage both within and outside India (eg documentary *Lion Queens of India*), contributing to this.

Ms Shilu’s family, who initially felt pressure from society about sending her into the forest now “are feeling very proud” and boast of their daughters achievements. As well as being seen as “heroes of the area” they are “an inspiration for our sisters” and younger generations

now aspire to work as Forest Guards. This is reflected in the high number of women applying for forest guard positions.

However, education requirements are high - Year 12 for Forest Guards and Foresters, a BSc for Ranger Forest Officer, and a BSc and a two-year Forestry Diploma for an official position such as Assistant Conservator of Forest. This is a large barrier for local women, as girls' access to ongoing education has been limited in the past.

Having seen the success of the women guards at Gir, the Wildlife Division at Sasan-Gir has taken a further step to empower rural women and set a 50% reservation for local women for Eco-guide job openings, positions with no educational requirements. 25 women (14%) have just begun working as eco-guides in Gir Forest and the Gir Interpretation Zone.

The reservation for women was designed so women would become "independent, financially stable, empowered, socially and economically stable". This quota system has been very successful, with forest guards enjoying economic independence and also with upliftment, self-improvement and self-satisfaction the job provides them with. It has enabled women who would not otherwise have an opportunity to access conservation work, and by successfully undertaking those roles they have changed societal and workplace perceptions of women's abilities, as well as contributing to conservation and community relations.

### **Critical Success Factors**

- Reservations – 33% quotas for women
- Organisational support
- Change Agents - committed women
- Supportive families – providing childcare so women can work
- Male Champions – setting up new opportunities for women
- Opportunities for women with less education

### **Outcomes**

- Changing community attitudes
- Role Models in community
- Fitness – villagers exercise to meet requirements for recruitment
- Better relationships with villages and less conflict
- Good workers, less corrupt, better work ethic
- Economic Independence
- A meaningful job

## Appendix 3: Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority - Ethiopia

The recently elected Ethiopian Parliament has a 50% representation of women; however there is no comparable quota for women to access federal ranger or scout positions.

Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA) Gender Officer, Berhane Yosef, says there has been an increase from 1% to 8% in the number of women working as rangers and scouts over the last eight years – a current total of 41 women working as rangers in Ethiopia.

There are no active recruitment policies for women, but the Gender Officer contributes by providing training about gender development issues and equality to all staff, and reports on staff gender levels. The EWCA employs few women at professional levels, and less than 30% of women have a degree. However the EWCA does support entry level staff (such as secretaries) to further their education and progress to better roles within the organisation.

The minimum requirement for rangers is grade ten. Girls in rural areas are forced into early marriages, while female genital mutilation (FGM) and early pregnancy (often resulting in fistulas) mean they have to stop attending school. While early marriages are decreasing, high levels of family poverty also contribute to the lack of opportunity for girls' education, which has not traditionally been seen as important as boys'.

Women rangers are role models, who, with the same language and similar backgrounds to women in communities, can teach about contraception, assertiveness, gender mainstreaming, and how to work on societal change, as well as about conservation.

National Park postings are remote and lack facilities (no water or toilets make it difficult for women to manage menstruation), accommodation, and access to education for their children. This remains a huge barrier, as Ethiopian mothers take the majority of childcare responsibilities. There is also serious danger from poachers and inter-tribal warfare, with many Ethiopian rangers losing their lives over the last decade.

### Key Success Factors

- Change Agents - strong women
- Gender Officer to monitor and report
- Gender equity training for men
- Education support for entry-level staff
- Slow societal change
- Provision of family planning and contraception education

### Outcomes

- Role Models for community
- Societal change
- Educate community (talk same language - contraception/conservation)

## Appendix 4: African Wildlife Foundation – Central & West Africa

Charly Facheux is the Vice President Conservation Strategy, Knowledge Management and Impact for the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF). While women make up over 20% of rangers in East Africa, this falls to 10% in Central and West Africa. Unsettled political situations and general unrest make it difficult to fund acceptable services for rangers. There is a lack of housing and poor facilities with no consideration of what would make them more suitable for women: “women want to work but are not provided with the services that make that possible”. Nor is there access to education for their children.

Ranger work is still seen as a men’s job although the shift to community conservation over the last 20 years is changing that. Women are key in engaging with issues such as community encroachment on reserves. Discussion and negotiation are tools of conservation - and women do it better. For women “conservation is not just a job, it’s a way of life”.

The AWF see women’s engagement as vital, and have a number of policies to promote it. In East Africa, job opportunities at community reservations mean women can work where they live. Conservancies with communities wholly within the park have the highest rate of women’s engagement, and if women have the minimum requirements they will get the job. In all their job advertisements throughout Africa - and they encourage partner organisations to do the same - they include a sentence “Encourage the Application of Women”.

AWF is also providing access to education for ranger’s children, locating camps near schools or, in a project called Classroom Africa, building schools near camps. More awareness is needed about women who have been working in conservation - their success stories need to be shared so women know “you can have a good career in conservation”.

### **Critical Success Factors**

- Community Conservation - shift in funders and community attitudes
- Community Scout positions - women can live at home with their family
- Employ locals – women get jobs if have minimum requirements
- Classroom Africa - Providing education access for their children
- Adverts "Encourage the Application of Women"
- Women role models – share stories
- Male Champions

### **Outcomes**

- Increased gender equity
- Women always bring the conservation message back home
- Discussion & negotiation are part of the tools of conservation - women do it better

## Appendix 5: Kenya Wildlife Service - Kenya

Anne Kahihia, Senior Assistant Director in Charge of Community Relations and Outreach, is the most senior uniformed woman in the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS). Anne started as an assistant warden in 1987 with only 10-15 other women in the KWS. While things have changed significantly over the last 32 years, there are still very few women in senior roles.

The Kenyan Government's 2010 constitution requires the mainstreaming of women, and the public service must implement affirmative action to ensure men are not in more than two thirds of all positions. In 2011 the KWS developed a Gender Strategy and has an obligation to report to the government on how they are meeting their targets of 30% female representation. Anne believes that if the strategy had been in place when she started - and properly implemented - more women would have been able to advance in the KWS to senior roles. While Anne has enjoyed good collegiate support, she is often the only woman in the room at senior meetings.

Anne's determination and strength helped her to persevere in a male-dominated profession and her leadership roles have allowed her to make a difference to other women in the field. Having women in leadership roles is key in developing more women-friendly workplaces, as well as mentoring other women and supporting their progression to higher positions.

One woman who has benefited from this is Ann Ndege, the Warden in Charge of Education and Tourism at Hells Gate National Park. Ann started as a ranger in 1992 when women were still rare in the KWS. She worked her way up the ladder, having the support of women mentors in KWS "extraordinary ladies who I always looked up to and they took my hand... they were always ready to help". It was easier to communicate with women, whereas male supervisors didn't understand issues, such as when children are sick. Now she is in that position herself, she can support women on her staff.

While Anne Kahihia believes the quota and the gender policy are excellent, they need to be better implemented to give women opportunities to move into leadership positions. Women are also disadvantaged in recruitment, as they "pick four people in an area and only one women and three men - they never pick two women, which means that woman is working by herself". More men apply for positions, however adverts for ranger positions do include requirements for women applicants and state that "women are encouraged to apply".

Both women believe that the improved education system has been significant, and is no longer the barrier for women in Kenya it used to be. The Government's campaign to stop early marriages and ensure girls go to school by putting pressure on their families and chiefs

is working. The more educated a society is, the more open minded and aware of the rights of women it is “people don’t say this work is for men or women anymore”.

When Ann Ndege started “the community was sceptical and amazed to see a woman in uniform with a gun. This has now changed - because there are women rangers, police officers... it is seen all over now”. In Hells Gate National Park women now make up 39% of the rangers in the field, and 33% of uniformed wardens.

However in other national parks, the numbers of women are much lower. More remote postings are still difficult for women with families, with the pressures of caring for children. Women need to work somewhere where their children can go to school, so they can’t be posted to remote areas where most national parks are. However, directors are making more efforts to ensure families aren’t disadvantaged by postings, and some parks are also providing transport to school for rangers’ children.

#### **Critical Success Factors**

- Gender strategy - 30% women
- Change Agent - strong woman
- Support from women mentors
- Women in senior positions in the organisation
- Women role models
- Women encouraged to apply in adverts
- Maternity needs considered – light duty
- Location posting considered for women with children or working spouses
- School transport for ranger's kids
- Attitudes of men in senior positions changing
- Changing community attitudes
- Access to education for girls

#### **Outcomes**

- Women able to provide for their families
- Women relate well to the wildlife, close to nature
- Women can communicate their knowledge better
- Women are the ones who engage with land and wildlife (firewood/water collection) so most affected by changes

*“Whenever I get a woman coming to me, I get confident, because she is confident in me”*

*– Ann Ndege*

## Appendix 6: Northern Rangeland Trust & Sera Wildlife Conservancy - Kenya

In Northern Kenya, many people live traditional nomadic and pastoral lives, within a strongly patriarchal culture. Unlike other parts of Kenya, access to education is still difficult in remote communities, especially for pastoral nomadic families. Practices such as FGM and early marriages for girls remain common, which further limit girls' access to education.

The dominance of men in decision making, and the expectation that a woman's role is to have children and look after the family, has made it more difficult for women in Northern Kenya to access ranger jobs, which are still seen as a primarily male role. Given the history of conflict (cattle rustling, tribal warfare and poachers) the area has suffered in the past, it is also seen as dangerous and unsuitable for women.

This conflict has greatly decreased, in part due to the work of the Community Conservancies and the Northern Rangeland Trust (NRT). The majority of land protected for conservation in Northern Kenya is through Community Conservancies, which share similarities with Indigenous Protected Areas in Australia.

While the NRT is an equal opportunity employer, it does not currently have quotas or any official policies to promote the employment of women. Those decisions are specific to each conservancy and their community boards - which are made up predominantly of men. However, the NRT recognises the importance of the involvement of women, and the number of women being elected to boards and employed as rangers has been steadily increasing. The NRT is in the process of employing a Gender Specialist (a requirement of a USAid Grant Agreement) and putting official policies in places.

Meanwhile, they encourage communities to include women, and target male board members through a Leadership & Management governance program which includes training on the importance of women in leadership roles, women's rights (to be involved with all activities) and women's roles. There are now at least 3 women represented on all boards, and given a broad knowledge of their roles and rights, to ensure they are able to participate. Women on boards act as role models, giving their communities the chance to see women in positions of authority, and are more likely to support the employment of women as rangers.

The NRT also supports local school infrastructure and is trying to build classrooms and dorms particularly for pastoral nomadic girls, and provide some family planning: "women can't do anything if they are turned into baby machines". They also work closely with the

Samburu Girls Foundation which advocates for girl child rights against FGM and rescues girls from early marriages to educate them.

Ranger positions are made more accessible to women by improving facilities and security. Power, water, and houses have been provided so rangers no longer have to live for weeks in tents with no amenities. Women are encouraged to apply for ranger positions and in new conservancies they ensure women are employed at the start. Women are also prioritised for internship opportunities at NRT. These practices are being led by male champions within the organisation, and will hopefully be put into future policies to ensure their continuation.

In 2017 there were 753 Rangers employed in the 35 NRT supported conservancies, and 49 of these rangers were women. While this represents only 6.5% of all rangers employed, it is a strong improvement from just one or two women a few years ago, and numbers continue to climb.

## Sera Wildlife Conservancy

Sera Wildlife Conservancy has one of the highest numbers of women employed as rangers of the NRT conservancies. Of 81 rangers at Sera, 13 are women, making up 16% of the ranger force. The General Manager and Chief Warden have made an effort to recruit women, while six years of having a woman Chairperson of the conservancy also contributed. The rangers say that having women on the board they can talk to about their issues is very useful.

However, the major issue facing women is family responsibilities. No school in the Conservancy means their children have to live with family in town. Also challenging is that nine of the women rangers living on the conservancy are caring for babies and young children, with no support or childcare. "It is very difficult when you come to work early in the morning, sometimes you have to bring them to the office with you, while you are working". Day care or a school on the conservancy would be incredibly helpful.

Some husbands are less supportive of their jobs and pressure women to give up work, but attitudes are changing. The community is seeing women work and doing a good job, and greater education means "people go to school and learn knowledge of the rights of women and girl children". More education of elders in the community about this would be useful, and the rangers would be prepared to help with that.

Unlike the KWS, where paramilitary training and patrol work are the same for both men and women, the majority of women rangers working in NRT Conservancies are employed as

gate keepers or radio operators. The men rangers see this as light-duties and can be resentful. The women at Sera feel sidelined when there are meetings, which they do not attend, and they do not feel listened to when they raise issues.

The women were unanimous in being very proud to be rangers at Sera, of being Samburu women protecting their wildlife and providing for their families, but they believe that many among their number possess strong leadership traits and were disappointed there were few women promoted into leadership positions; it is hard to speak up and represent women in front of men who don't listen and it would be easier to have a women leader who you can talk to.

### **Critical Success Factors**

- Reduction of conflict – safer workplaces
- Equal opportunity employer – gender policy to be developed
- Gender Specialist to be employed
- Male champions within organisation
- Change Agents – women who persevere
- Increasing the number of women on Boards
- Training for women on Boards
- Education for men on Boards about role of women
- Access to education for girls (and boys - change mindsets)
- Continuous engagement with communities, for cultural change
- Insist laws are followed
- Actively encourage women to apply
- Female role model
- Separate meetings for women
- Improve facilities (water, power, amenities)
- Women able to bring children to work
- Family planning

### **Outcomes**

- A job you can take pride in
- A purpose and experience
- Equal access to employment for everyone
- Economic independence and ability to support their families
- Better work ethic
- Improved information gathering and intelligence work
- Improved education of children and family about conservation
- Changing community attitudes - more respect for women
- Empowered women = empowered community
- Most issues for land security affects women directly (water/grazing/etc), and they need to be at the forefront of addressing these issues

## Appendix 7: Uganda Women Birders Club - Uganda

Harriet Kemigisha left her job as a ranger guide in Kibale National Park due to sexual harassment and unsupportive male managers. She went on to become the first women bird guide in Uganda, and worked as a freelance guide until she started her own company.

Harriet has a policy of employing women, and employs three female drivers as well as other women birding guides. Harriet believes that with more women in leadership positions there would be less harassment.

Harriet has been an inspiration to many young women birders and was a founding member of the Uganda Women Birders Club. This club was set up in 2013 by Judith Mirembe (Chair) and Prossy Nanyombi (Vice-Chair), both bird guides, to help train other women. The club now has 50 members and over 15 women working as bird guides.

Along with training, the Club provides binoculars and bird books. The Club has in-house capacity to train their members, and sponsors within the club contribute money to do so. They provide mentoring and outreach to young women in universities, creating awareness of opportunities, providing successful examples (inspiring other women), capacity building, and providing a platform for jobs - the Club gives women trainees references and recommends their members as guides.



Irene Namubiru, Mabamba Wetland, Uganda, February 2019

*“We need an enabling environment where women are not seen as weaker – we need people to believe in us!”*

*- Judith Mirembe*

Such support is essential, as women in Uganda face difficult social hurdles to become engaged in such a male dominated occupation. Women are pressured to marry, and husbands may not support them working, as women are expected to look after the children. Women have been traditionally been seen as weak and incapable, and therefore not given opportunities by male tour operators, and not respected by male drivers and tour guides.

Tourism is the biggest earner in Uganda and “women should be able to contribute and participate in this”. The benefits of women being involved in conservation are also huge “If you train a woman you are training the whole world. She will teach the children about conservation” Prossy adds “changing mindset is not easy, but we can change it by example”.

### **Critical Success Factors**

- Government promotion of women's rights
- Equal representation of women in Government
- Government supported training and equipment
- Changing community attitudes over time
- Male Champions - give opportunities and support to women
- Women in leadership roles
- Mentoring - women supporting other women
- Group supporting itself - stronger voice together
- Role Models - other women inspiring them
- Capacity building and training
- Outreach to tell girls in schools and university about opportunities
- Social media to share stories
- Supportive families
- Access to a good education
- Tourist happy to see women working

### **Outcomes**

- Access to income for women
- Able to support family
- Respect from community
- Change mindsets about women
- Enjoyable activity
- Opportunities - to meet people, travel, learn new skills
- Train woman, train the whole world
- Educate children/community about conservation

## Appendix 8: Birdlife International - Rwanda

Maaïke Manten is the Head of Birdlife International Kigali Office and the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund Eastern Afromontane Regional Implementation Team Unit Coordinator. Their main role is grant making to local communities in the Eastern Afromontane biodiversity hotspots to undertake conservation projects. Like many other international NGOs and aid agencies, all their grants include a “gender mainstreaming” element, and more recently include gender as a KPI in the funding framework.

To achieve this they assist grantees to do gender self-analysis at the start and end of the process, and a masterclass about gender issues with training and capacity building. They also run exchanges, bringing local organisations with low scores in the Gender Tracking Tool assessment to the highest scoring ones, providing peer to peer learning about gender.

They also supported a large forum of women conservation workers from different countries to meet and talk about these issues, which enabled women to exchange and focus their ideas. Quotas have been used to get women on committees, but without the knowledge to carry out their roles. As with CARE Nepal, they have responded by providing practical training, including knowledge of roles and policy, public speaking, and leadership.

A large concern is that men in positions of power in conservation still need convincing that engaging women is important. This is necessary in order to enable actions which would help empower women. Women are constrained by their responsibilities (childcare, resource collection) which need to be considered to create an environment that allows women to be involved.

Apart from broader social justice issues such as financial independence, there are environmental benefits. Effectiveness is increased if women are more engaged in decision-making because they take decisions based on different types of objectives. Women are more concerned about the longer term (the welfare of their children/grandchildren and conservation of natural resources) rather than short-term financial gains. Women tend to be well networked within the community and more cooperative, working well collaboratively.

### Rwanda Wildlife Conservation Association

One of the programs supported by Birdlife International is the Rwanda Wildlife Conservation Association (RWCA). Founded in 2015 by Olivier Nsengimana to protect endangered Grey Crowned Cranes, their rangers work at Rugezi Marsh to reduce poaching and educate the local community. Initially only 2 of the 15 rangers were women, but they found that women

were more genuinely committed than men - less corrupt and more honest - and the RWCA realised that for the program to succeed, they needed more women.

Because women have more responsibility for caring for children it can be hard to commit enough time to work as a ranger. However, being a cooperative means the rangers own the program and choose who goes on patrol. It is flexible and not full-time, and because they organise the rota of patrols themselves, women can work at a time that suits them.

Women rangers show others in the village that women are capable - they are role models because many women still think 'that's not our job' when it comes to rangers. "It is good to see at big meetings in villages where women stand up and talk". Many women applied during the second round, and five of the ten rangers recruited were women; now 28% of rangers are women. It sends a message to the whole community that conservation is for ALL of us.

### **Critical Success Factors**

Gender equality in Government at 30%

Grants with Gender Mainstreaming as KPI

Gender tracking tool - monitor numbers

Gender policy and someone to implement

Quotas for women on boards

Practical training and capacity building for women leaders

Create enabling environments

Male champions at work

Men for Women - local men supporting women

Exchanges - peer to peer learning

Empower and fund women groups

Conservation scholarships for women

Promote female role models

More recognition of the work women do

Flexible hours

### **Outcomes**

Women most dependent on ecosystem services and most aware of changes

Broader social justice and gender equity

Generally work harder, get more done, don't drink as much

Women take decisions based on different types of objectives - focus on longer term not financial gains

More cooperative and collaborative and very well networked

Financial empowerment of women decreases chance of DV

Women more genuinely committed

Less corruption and more honest

Role models for other women

Message that conservation is for all of us

Education of children and communities

## Appendix 9: AWF & Mbire District Community Rangers - Zimbabwe

Conservation areas in Mbire District employ community conservation game rangers. These positions are funded through trophy hunting, which provides up to 70% of income in districts. A community committee is in charge of each area, and a government policy pushes for 50% women representation on these boards.

The AWF supports these programs and is in the process of developing an official policy regarding the employment of women. In the meantime they encourage community committees to employ women as rangers - currently only 7% of rangers are women. The five women rangers are each the only woman working in her group.

Anti-poaching activities and dealing with human/wildlife conflict are the main focus of community rangers. Women work to provide for their families, for the conservation and protection of wildlife, and to support their communities - both from human/wildlife conflict and to ensure income for the district from trophy hunting: "We get foreign currency for hunting to uplift communities so it is important work we are doing"

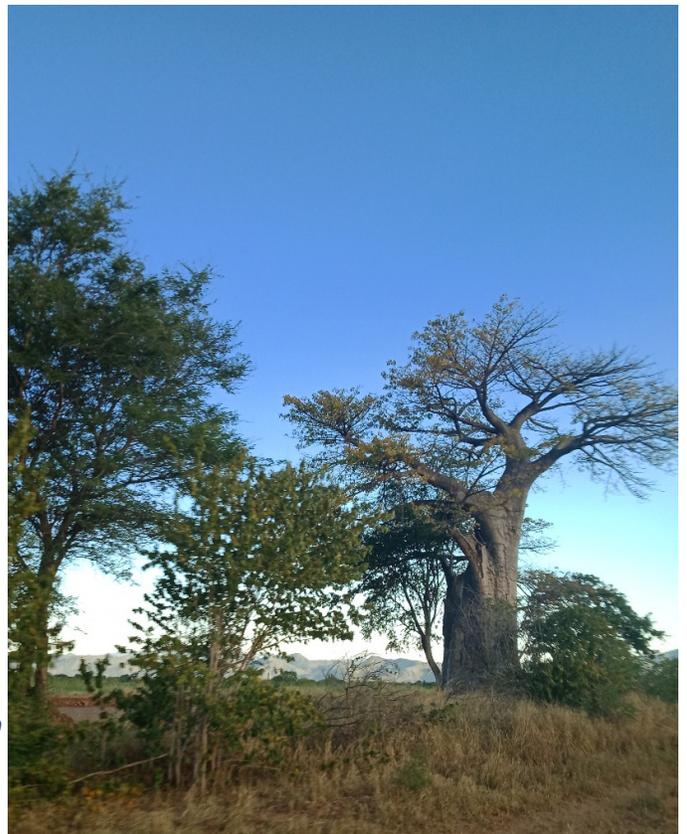
The program is keen to increase participation of women, but there is limited funding. Lack of resources (uniforms, rations, ammunition) are problematic, as is insufficient and irregular pay. In some districts the money comes only every six months, depending on the number and timing of trophy hunts, and it is very hard for women to sustain themselves until they are paid again. Rangers can't afford to buy things like sanitary pads when they are on patrol, having to improvise with cloth scraps which cause extreme discomfort walking 20km a day on patrol in 35C heat.

While many of the issues they raise apply equally to men, the impacts are greater for women because of the roles they are also expected to play at home. For example without vehicles sometimes it is nightfall before they get home, which affects their ability to undertake all the women's chores they are also expected to perform such as cooking dinner and housework.

*"Let us be brave, be courageous and do the work so we can uplift our communities"*

*- Edith John*

*Mbire District, Zimbabwe, March 2019*



Patrolling with men can cause jealousy from rangers' partners. The AWF, in discussion with female rangers, has been considering a women-only patrol, in order to avoid conflict and jealousy issues. A trial run with the National Parks women rangers is planned.

Initially rangers were trained through the Rural District Council, but the AWF now sends them to the college where national park rangers train, increasing their confidence in their knowledge and abilities. It also changed the communities' attitudes about women's abilities: "when we went for training and came back, people looked at us differently, because they were surprised we could do it, and get our certificates".

Community attitudes are also changing as people see women rangers looking after them and their livestock "at first the community used to undermine our potential as women to get out and do the job but now that has changed". Conflict with the community has also reduced, as women listen better to victims of wildlife conflict, and interactions are less tense. There has also been a reduction in sexual harassment (and sexual harassment claims), as female fish poachers can now be searched by women rangers.

Rangers are reluctant to raise these issues within their groups, because if they do men assume they cannot do the work, but "we are not saying we are not able to do the work, just that this is hard to do because of x or y or z". If they mention a problem, they can be left to do the cleaning or the office work, leaving women feeling they always have to prove themselves. This was the first opportunity they had had to talk with other women rangers, and other opportunities for them to raise issues without men thinking they are weak or incapable, would be useful.

### **Critical Success Factors**

Quality training – recognition, competence and confidence  
Changing Community Attitudes  
Women role models  
Women-only patrols

### **Outcomes**

Economic independence  
Supporting their families  
Conservation of wildlife  
Supporting and protecting their communities  
Education of community

## Appendix 10: Akashinga Rangers – Zimbabwe

The Akashinga Rangers are one of the few examples of a women-only ranger group in Africa. Although having separate women's ranger groups may not be possible or desirable, it means there are many barriers they do not face - or not to the same degree - as women integrating into a group of men. There is not a male dominated workplace, sexist and unsupportive colleagues, jealousy, lack of women in leadership, or sexual harassment.

The Akashinga Rangers began in 2017. Currently there are 27 women, 16 rangers and 11 scouts (community liaison officers) and plans for a second intake. Developed to employ disadvantaged women, creating a women-friendly workplace was a priority resulting in a program where the rangers have very few concerns or suggestions for improvement.

Financed by the International Anti-Poaching Foundation, they are well-funded compared to other local groups (for example sanitary pads are part of the rations provided to the rangers for patrol). However, many of the cultural barriers, such as community expectations, remain. Culturally, women should be shy and not speak up. Initially they fought against disbelief – a university lecturer stopped a talk about the program because “it couldn't possibly be true”. This disbelief was shared by the community and poachers “a woman, catch us? That will be the day!” But an infamous poacher was caught and “they respect us now, and we are no longer getting catcalls”

Warrant Officer Shadrack Midzy admits at the beginning it was a challenge, because he had never trained women before and because the women were scared of the animals “Now they don't fear them. Now they are there to protect them”. He says “if you give them the chance they can do this and are just as effective as men”.

Because women are in camp or out on patrol with other women, jealousy is not the issue it is in other ranger groups, although there can still be resentment from husbands that their wives spend so much time away. An initiative to ensure women who want to work are not pressured to stay home involves partners being educated about the role and the requirements of the job, and asked by the warrant officer and senior sergeant to sign an affidavit confirming their understanding and that they are happy for their wife to work.

This program was funded to target disadvantaged women in the local community, so there were no educational requirements. In Zimbabwe, without an education “you are not a real person”, and most of the rangers had been forced to drop out of school because of poverty, early marriage, or children. Although O levels and English are desirable, they are not necessary, and the interview process can be done in either English or Shona.

An excellent innovation is the Personal Development Branch, which encourages and assists women to complete their schooling and education. Women are supported to study for their O levels, with a tutor funded by the program, while one is undertaking a university degree in ecology. Rangers are also supported in getting drivers licences - something they never even dreamed of having which along with training gives them greater confidence.

The women are all very proud of the work they undertake and of being Akashinga rangers. They are protecting wildlife for future generations, but it has also changed their lives “We manage to bring our children to school and support our families so this job is very important to us”. In the community they are always asking “when is the next selection” - not just the women, but the fathers and brothers are asking this - they have accepted that the initiative has been a benefit: “they also see the women now versus when they were recruited - they have licences, education, confidence and they want to be a part of that”.

### **Critical Success Factors**

An all women group  
Education of husbands/signing affidavits  
Build family acceptance of women's jobs - extra eyes and ears in the community  
Changing community attitudes  
Personal Development Branch - support on-going education  
Quality training and development  
Provision of good pay and rations  
On-going dialogue about needs  
Roster - 2 on 1 week off  
Priority to local disadvantaged women  
Interview can be conducted in either English or Shona  
Working as a team – supporting each other

### **Outcomes**

Equality – increased gender equity  
Changed lives and status – increased confidence and social standing  
Pride in themselves and their work  
Financially empowered - can provide for family and buy land  
Women use minimal force - less conflict  
Better relationship with community  
People are less resistant to messages from women  
Education of community in conservation  
Women are better at getting things done  
Protecting animals for next generations  
Poaching reduced  
Becoming role models and changing community attitudes

## Appendix 11: Black Mambas - South Africa

The Black Mambas are another all-women group, based in Balule Reserve, adjacent to Kruger National Park in South Africa. The Black Mambas are anti-poaching field rangers and the “eyes and ears” on the reserve. Their work patrolling the area has greatly reduced poaching. When they started they were removing 80 snares a day, now it is only 4 or 5 “there is a big difference, people see we are here”.

The program started in 2013 with just six field rangers, with additional recruitment in 2014 and 2016 bringing the total to 30 women. Unfortunately, their contract as environmental monitors ended in 2019 and has not been renewed, so only 11 rangers are working until more funding can be found.

The Black Mambas have a focus on crime-prevention and community education, making an effort to move away from the militaristic “shoot to kill” stance. They are unarmed “if you have a gun, they have to shoot you” and because poachers are often ex-army and highly trained “he’s going to be better at shooting than me!” Since deployment, no one has been hurt.

The women identified the need to face poachers - and wild animals - as their biggest challenge. “Your first time when you think “I’ll work in the reserve with poachers” - men with weapons - you think are you strong enough?” However, the training they received gave them the confidence and professionalism to be able to carry out their duties.

Another challenge was “people in your community tell you “you are not going to do it, you’re not worth it” they undermine you. Marching in Hoedspruit when we first graduated and got our uniforms, the men laughed at us”. But community attitudes have changed “Our community learned not to underestimate women”. People recognise them, “you are a leader in the community” seeing them in newspapers and on TV. From doubting their abilities, the view in community has changed completely.

The plan was always for mambas to manage mambas - moving women into leadership roles was built into the process. Women are identified for leadership roles and provided with skills and development training. When they started there were only men supervisors, now they have women supervisors, which makes it easier.

Working with other women means there is also no resentment from husbands - who are supportive of their wives working as rangers, despite the long periods away from home, “nowadays we have modern husbands”. They patrol for 21 days and then have 10 days at home, so are still able to bond with their children. Large families, and especially supportive mothers, means there are always people happy to look after their children.

The program was started to increase awareness of the conservation issues by providing employment for women in neighbouring communities, so education levels weren't a requirement of recruitment. This gave opportunities to women who could not afford to finish school. Community education is another key part of the role, with the Bush Babies program in 11 local primary schools, involving over 1000 children: "they will grow up with the knowledge of how important wildlife is". There is a strong focus on increasing attendance, with contributions to resources for classes and students and providing strong female role models for local children

### **Critical Success Factors**

- All Women Group
- Quality training – giving recognition, competence and confidence
- Having women in supervisor roles
- Developing rangers' skills and promoting them to positions of authority
- Supportive husbands and family – looking after children
- 3 weeks on 10 days off - can bond with kids
- No education requirements for recruitment
- Changing community attitudes over time

### **Outcomes**

- Equality - not just jobs for men
- Financial independence
- Role models in community
- Recognised as a leader in the community
- Community attitudes changing further
- Education of children and elders in conservation
- Support schools with resources
- Skills development
- Pride in work and a worthwhile job
- Respect from men when women work
- Women are better at intelligence
- Non-confrontational/less violence
- Very protective of animals

*"If not for the Black Mambas we wouldn't have grown the way we have. It changed us a lot and we are very proud of defending wildlife"*

*- Leitah Mkhabela*

## Appendix 12: Southwest Conservation Corps Ancestral Lands Program - USA

The Ancestral Lands program engages young Native Americans in conservation projects on Native Lands, with an added cultural component which includes using traditional languages during project work. There are five women Crew Leaders and Assistant Crew Leaders from Zuni Pueblo, Acoma Pueblo and Navajo Nations, and they attended the Crew Leader Development Program in New Mexico in April 2019.

Chas Robles, Program Director, explained that program staff developed strategic gender equality goals: for women to represent 50% of the staff, and to identify, nurture, and support women into leadership positions. The women crew leaders at the training really appreciated this support “they saw leadership skills in us and are striving to give us opportunities and encouragement” (Tash). The organisation has also acted to remove any participants who have been disrespectful towards female leaders.

Women feel “respect from the director and program coordinator” and felt no tension working with male crew members. Efforts to create a safe workplace include educating male crew leaders about issues women face on the job, for example training on hygiene and menstruation and what is needed to manage that in remote bush camps.



*Ancestral Lands Crew Leader Training (L-R) JoDee Zunice, Natasha Avery, Zada Miller, Amberline Chapo, and Raina Victorino, Cottonwood Gulch, New Mexico, April 2019*

*“We all come from strong women and will preserve that and pass it on” – Natasha Avery*

Nevertheless, the workplace is male dominated and women made up less than 20% of crew leaders. Male supervisors can also be intimidating and women can feel listened to less. This year more women have been hired as program directors and coordinators, which has boosted their confidence and created a safe space to talk with someone aware of their issues. Hiring more women on crews means they work with other indigenous women in the field too, as in the past they supervised teams of men.

The lack of women applicants was put down primarily to the community not being aware these roles exist and are available to women, and more effort is needed to share stories on social media. They also feel that there is a lack of respect from their elderly people, with women told "that's a man's job, you can't do it" and women should be doing housework, and looking after the kids". There is also limited access to transport, and family and childcare commitments disproportionately affect women in their communities.

But they believe that they are contributing to changing community attitudes. There are lots of male roles in the community but Raina thinks "it's good to see female role models, especially women crew leaders, moving up the ranks". Tash agrees: "younger girls look up to us, they see not only men can do it, also women". They both appreciated the help women mentors gave them, and want to give the same support to other young women.

The women value the program and their roles, for the past and for their ancestors as much as the future "going back to the sites where most of our ancestors lived, seeing where they were and how they lived and restore them, so they're not forgotten" is an important part of the role. Amber concludes "This is just one more way of reclaiming our land back".

### **Critical Success Factors**

- Women employed in management and leadership roles
- Women role models to look up to
- Women mentors
- Being able to work with other indigenous women – not only men
- Organisational support for women to progress into leadership roles
- Respect from director and program coordinator and crew
- Access to education
- Supportive family – encourage participation, assist with transport and childcare

### **Outcomes**

- Able to restore lands and preserve culture
- Being role models to younger women and changing community attitudes
- Opportunities to connect with other Native Americans
- One more way of reclaiming our land back
- Opportunity to avoid destructive behaviour in community

## Appendix 13: Navajo National Monument National Parks Service - USA

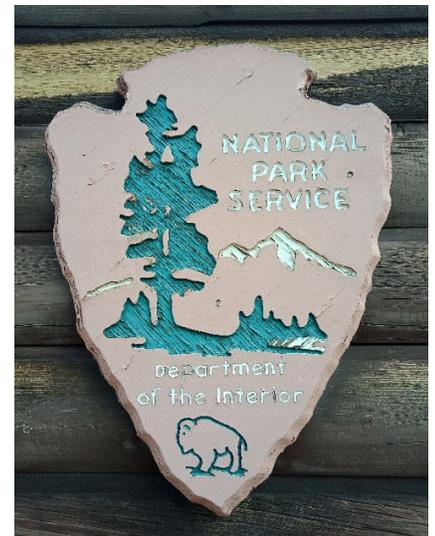
The National Parks Service has a diversity strategy, but there is no ability to preference women or Native American traditional owners, even for seasonal work. However, the Navajo National Monument does have a local hiring policy which, because it is remotely located and near an Indian reservation, enables more Native Americans to obtain positions.

Curlinda Blacksheep has worked at the Navajo National Monument for 21 years. Curlinda came through a student employment program and was hired by a female park administrator who was very supportive. The traditional culture of her family meant that achieving the required education level was difficult, as her elders saw her in the role of wife and mother, and were not understanding of her pursuing an education beyond high school.

Education is a barrier to entering Parks because many local Native American women don't pursue education after high school - for financial reasons, teen pregnancy, and because they don't want to move away from home and family. Parks' criteria are 2-4 years of college education plus 1 to 2 years of on the job experience, which is hard to achieve. People need to volunteer to get experience, and poverty makes it very hard to work for free. For rural women it is also challenging to get to the park or afford transportation.

For Curlinda, there were also difficulties of working in a male dominated space. She was told that "you're just a pretty face, that's why you're being put into that position" and faced on-going harassment. Curlinda believes that being a woman has also hindered her ability to access promotions.

The local hiring policy also limits anyone hired through it from advancing; to gain promotion they have to move to other parks. People need to leave their families to access those opportunities, and Native American women especially need to stay close to home and take care of relatives and family.



Navajo National Monument,  
Arizona, May 2019

*"Believe in what you do, adding to a greater cause that is important, not just for you, but the community and environment"*

*– Curlinda Blacksheep*

Curlinda did leave to pursue leadership roles, and her return to the Navajo National Monument was welcomed by the Native American staff. Past head rangers were mostly non-native white men with lots of rules and gave minimal support to local minority staff. Because of their matrilineal culture, staff felt happy working for a female boss. Curlinda also believes that women bring an inclusive, nurturing and cohesive environment to the workplace.

Changing social norms meant Kelkiyana, who began in 2016 as a seasonal ranger, has had a much easier time. With Curlinda as a mentor she has not felt discriminated against, nor had to work in a male-dominated workplace. Kelkiyana also used the education pathways program and has been supported in her education and career development.

Benefits from having Native American women in these roles include being seen as a community leader, and a role model to other younger women, which both women value. Kelkiyana also finds that sharing their heritage with people and changing the stereotypical views that visitors to the park often hold about Native American culture is also a very important aspect of their work.

### **Critical Success Factors**

Pathways program – education and access to employment for students

Local hiring policy

2000 diversity memo to get more women

Women mentors - very supportive and help start your career

Supportive families

Change makers - strong women pioneers

Other Native Americans working so culturally safe

Organisational support: protection of equality and rights

More family friendly policy

Matrilineal so respect for females in leadership positions in community

### **Outcomes**

Financial independence

Changing perceptions on value of education for girls and roles of women

Inclusive, nurturing, cohesive work environment

Seen as a community leader - role model to other young women

Education about conservation for young people

Doing a job worth doing - for your community and environment

Sharing heritage and changing stereotypical views

## Appendix 14: National Indigenous Guardians Network - Canada

The Canadian Government has recently begun a pilot program for the National Indigenous Guardians Network, similar to the Australian Caring for Country Indigenous ranger program, with First Nations groups employed to look after their traditional land. There are 40 groups in the federal pilot programs, although some of the individual Guardians groups have already been running for decades.

### Indigenous Leadership Initiative

The Indigenous Leadership Initiative (ILI) oversees Indigenous partnerships with the Government and is involved in setting up boards to stabilise the network, plan, and formalise funding. Valerie Courtois is the Director of the ILI, and her role includes assisting working groups to think technically about things like gender balance, and the role of youth/elders.

Valerie notes that generally most on-ground guardians are men - not because of lack of interest from women, but due to the reality of cultural roles in First Nations, many of which are patriarchal, with an automatic assumption that the deployment of people on the land is for men. However, unlike other programs around the world, around 70% of Guardian program coordinators are women.

Coordinators require qualifications and First Nation women tend to do better at school “18-27 is the age where our young men struggle more than our women – dropping out of school, substance abuse, and are not as employable”. Women the same age finish high school, have children and larger family responsibility, and are more employable.

Valerie was the Coordinator of Environment and of the Guardians program for her Nation. In Innu culture women lead the development and maintenance of camps, and Valerie believes women have more insight into the dynamics of seasons and change over time, “so as we think about eco-system management becoming more nuanced, women are more observant” and therefore more suited for these roles.

In a patriarchal society with clearly defined gender roles, women telling older men what to do need to balance respect for elders alongside the responsibility of being a coordinator. Their approach is nuanced, as they have to be sensitive to group dynamics, making it easier for women to detect and prevent problems. She also believes women are naturally coordinators in families, managers of resources, and tend to have the required breadth of expertise.

It is important to have women in coordinator roles as they also assist others in First Nation governments to consider and include women's views, which creates better decisions. They are important role models in their communities: "young women don't know that most programs are coordinated by a woman and that is something they can aspire to".

However, 85-90% of women coordinators have burned out at some point in their job. They are often 25-35 years old and mothers and – being in senior management roles - they tend to be recognised as community leaders as well, which means more pressure. Their burnout affects the sustainability of the whole program.

At this stage there are no mentoring systems or any formal programs in place to support coordinators. Nor are there any gender policies, as the ultimate authority for each Nation rests with the Nation themselves: "it is for them to decide what is appropriate for them".

Guardians should be a representation of our society, and more women are needed "as society develops, gender roles are changing and there is a need to recognise that reality". It also needs to be recognised that guardians won't be guardians for life, but the role will contribute to career mobility opportunities, and it is important women can access that too.

For women, childcare is always an issue. In Innu communities there are not enough childcare options, but they try wherever possible to integrate families into work. For land based activities (especially longer term postings) they are encouraged to bring their families with them. Training is provided in two week units in a bush camp, and Guardians bring their families. Children witness them learning, which increases the value of education in a community that doesn't value it much, post-residential schooling. The aim is an "integration of family into the process of training and education"

Valerie considers it a mark of success when kids and grandkids of Guardians say "I want to do that when I grow up" and, significantly, there is no gender difference in that. Young women also seem more plugged in to activist roles; at the last Gathering the youth group was 80% women. Social media and opportunities like Gatherings also help engage women.

*"Women tend to be recognised as community leaders as well, which means more pressure. Their burnout affects the sustainability of the whole program"*

- Valerie Courtois

## Coastal Stewardship Network: Coastal First Nations - Great Bear Initiative

The Coastal Stewardship Network, a program of Coastal First Nations - Great Bear Initiative supports Coastal Guardian Watchmen programs along the Pacific coast by sharing information and experiences. There are nine Guardian Watchmen programs, and they have large and diversified stewardship roles. The majority of positions are seasonal, and only around 10% of the on-ground workforce is female, although over half the managers and coordinators are women.

There is no gender policy, and setting targets or quotas isn't easy because while there is a commitment to work together at the regional level, each program is managed by individual First Nations. Setting up and funding the groups has been the over-riding priority and there have been no conversations about women's involvement. All but one of the Stewardship Directors are men, which may have contributed to this lack of consideration.

Young women are still not aware these roles are for them because Guardians are predominantly male. Women who are interested have encountered sexism, and it can be difficult for a single woman to enter an established crew of six older men "even if they are lovely, welcoming people".

Generationally, there are changes in attitudes - younger people are more used to equality, with more friendships between the genders. Enrolments in the Stewardship Technician Training Program are encouraging and the third cohort, who just finished the program, achieved gender parity. Training was moved closer to home and in two week chunks over two years to make it easier for women with childcare responsibilities to participate.

There are more women in coordinator roles: "women in community are usually the ones who go to university, and they got jobs predominantly in education or health – to look after their community. Guardian coordinator roles are another way of taking care of their community". Women have the skill sets that suit coordination, but unfortunately these are the same traits that lead them to being given responsibility for everything - which leads to burnout.

Colonialism and its impact on women has been very negative. Some cultures were matriarchal societies, and with the early Indian act, women couldn't run for council, so this is women reclaiming their power. It is also important that if people have another range of opportunities to connect them back to their land, that the choices are as broad for women as they are for men. If they have a desire to steward their land, a woman should feel just as empowered to do it as if she were a man.

## Heiltsuk First Nation Guardian Watchmen

The Heiltsuk Guardian Watchmen are members of the Coastal Stewardship Network, and work to manage natural resources, protect traditional lands, and maintain cultural values. Jess Housty, elected to Heiltsuk Tribal Council when she was 24, is Chair of the Lands Portfolio, and manages governance of land based stewardship work. She is also the Communications Director of Qqs, a non-profit organisation focused on getting youth and families on the land. Traditionally they are a matrilineal society, so women have credibility in leadership roles.

The majority of staff at the Tribal Council and the majority of Councillors are women, so there is also visibility. However, Heiltsuk Coastal Watchmen Guardians are primarily men. Women employed as guardians haven't stayed in the long term. There was sexism – for example male watchmen didn't trust their skills running boats or out in the field - and there have been issues around sexual harassment, which men saw as joking around but made women uncomfortable.

There is no policy for gender equity in the program, and they need to develop a strong culture around sexual harassment. It would also help to have women in project management roles and doing the hiring. Knowledge of the Guardians program is not a barrier. Women know it's an option and have undertaken the stewardship technicians training but not necessarily taken work with the program, rather doing seasonal fieldwork for scientists or more administrative stewardship works. Some women with experience and training do apply for fisheries jobs but there is a reluctance to enforce colonial rules, especially on fellow community members.

There are the usual childcare barriers. Women are often in leadership roles - partly because they are educated, but it is also easier for women with families to be in the office and not out in the field. There is also a high unemployment rate in a small, remote community with few jobs available at entry level and a small pool of people to apply for higher level jobs, so the challenge is to create entry level jobs, and build people up.

Qqs is involved in the Supporting Emerging Aboriginal Stewards (SEAS) initiative in Bella Bella - science and leadership learning enrichment at the schools. Partnerships with non-profit organisations sees students hired for research and monitoring. There is close to gender parity in the SEAS program, and in the Leadership Resilience Program they run for students in high school, which provides skills based training around leadership roles, what's expected, and how to manage demands on your time.

### Critical Success Factors

Gender roles are changing

Women tend to do better at school and pursue university educations

Easier for women to detect/prevent problems as sensitive to group dynamics

Women naturally coordinators of family and managers of resources and have skill set for organisational roles

Ability to bring children to training and participate in land-based activities

Gender parity in Stewardship Training program once made accessible to women

Training - delivered closer to home and in shorter chunks

Matrilineal societies - women have authority too

Having women in leadership positions

Women on boards and councils and staff – as role models

SEAS - learning enrichment in schools

Leadership resilience program in schools

Women working in office not out in field

Women's insight into landscape change

Younger women engaged with activism

Knowing you are representing your community

### Outcomes

Gender equity - women having the same opportunities as men

Utilisation of women's knowledge for landscape management

Ability to include women's knowledge and needs

Nuanced management of groups

Stepping stone - guardians won't be guardians for life, can progress from there

Role models for younger women, raise awareness they can do it too

Increases communities value of education

Women reclaiming their power post colonisation

Another way of taking care of their community

Holistic perspective and long-term view

Women more analytical use abstract concepts

*"In land stewardship, it is male dominated, and outside the community it is white male dominated. This can be a threat to your confidence; you need to think "whose opinion is valuable and important? Who gives you your sense of duty, of self-worth, your mandate? Who are you accountable to? It's my family and my community, not the white middle-aged men in the room with you"*

- Jess Housty

## Appendix 15: Nisga'a Lisims Government - Canada

The Nisga'a Treaty was signed in 2000 and the Nisga'a Lisims Government has responsibilities for natural resource management on Nisga'a lands. They do not have a Guardians program, but undertake other work to care for their traditional lands. Tracey McKay, Senior Lands Manager, started her career with Nisga'a fisheries and wildlife as a fisheries technician. The Nisga'a matrilineal culture means there are fewer historical barriers for women to be involved, and 70% of staff are women. Women traditionally have a strong voice, and are known to be teachers of culture, land, and resource use.

Qualifications are needed to progress and, as elsewhere, having to leave community to pursue education is a factor holding some women back. Previous to the 1990s, outside the community, especially within urban societies and institutions, obtaining an education as a minority was noticed and stressful. In some cases, after a person completes their education, communities are faced with loss of membership due to lack of employment in communities.

Nisga'a Employment Skills Training program has opened a lot of doors and minds. Young people and women now face less community pressure to stay, and are more able to pursue their education. A Mentorship program at the Nisga'a Lisims Government also allows youth to shadow experienced workers and introduces them to work.

The responsibility to mentor and teach others is part of Nisga'a culture. Under the treaty, consulting firms working for the Nisga'a Nation are required to follow this culture and support people learning. As a result Nisga'a Lisims Government employs many women in a variety of leadership roles and a Nisga'a woman has just been employed as their first Nisga'a biologist.

### Critical Success Factors

Matrilineal culture so not difficult for women to be involved

70% of staff/board is women

Mentorship from strong women

Women encourage & support each other

NEST - training program

Finding a work/life/community balance

Youth mentor program at work

### Outcomes

Women have strong voice and are teachers of culture, land resources

Strong women role models, not male dominated

Women take care of the community

Nurturers, care for the environment

Think of all points of view, find a balance

## Appendix 16: Champagne and Aishihik First Nations & BC Parks - Canada

Both Annika Joe and Denise Hume are Champagne and Aishihik First Nation (CAFN) and work as rangers at the Tatshenshini-Alske Provincial Park. It is co-managed by CAFN and BC Parks, and members of CAFN get preferred status for jobs. CAFN also helps fund tuition, which both women credit with making it possible for them to attend college and focus on getting the education required for the role.



*Ranger Denise Hume  
Canada, June 2019*

They both value having other female park rangers to work with, although there have always been women in leadership roles and supportive male managers. One issue is the lack of consideration of women's needs on the job – female friendly facilities are needed, particularly when out on the boat all day with men with no toilet options.

Initially it was an intimidating field to try and enter, because of the stereotype that ranger work is male dominated. However there has been a big shift in the last few years, as more effort is being made encouraging young women to go into the profession and attitudes are changing as they see women succeeding. Community support has been important, and elders are happy to see young people getting back in the wilderness. Their familiarity with the area helps too as they know the people, the land, and the issues facing the environment.

The CAFN-run youth centre has just opened a day care centre which will increase women's ability to work. They also have a pretty kid-friendly office, so more women can undertake conservation roles. Annika believes that many women are capable; they just need more self-confidence and a push to return to education.

### **Critical Success Factors**

- Co-management so CAFNs preferred for ranger jobs
- Not male dominated, women in leadership roles
- Not the only CAFN woman in workplace
- Women role models
- Increasing awareness ranger jobs are for women
- Culture camps - get kids on country
- Change in community attitudes - traditional elders more accepting of women working

### **Outcomes**

- Women should have same opportunities as men to protect their land
- Value being out on the land, and very motivated to protect it
- Proud to put on uniform every day
- Changed lives and lifestyles
- Women have different views, think differently and see different things
- Women nurture more
- Community proud and elders happy

## Appendix 17: Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in - Canada

The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation finalised the Agreement acknowledging rights and titles to their lands and self-government in 1993. Georgette McLeod, Language Administrator, believes self-government and the ability to self-determine contributes to Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in people overcoming some of the trauma of the past. Many of the barriers Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in women face in accessing field-based conservation work are a result of colonisation. Cultural degradation over time and the effects of residential schools mean young people have been unable to learn traditional skills they are meant to be brought up with, and similar cycles are ongoing.

Jody Beaumont, Traditional Knowledge Specialist, says this has caused a broader disconnect from land for many people, which has created fear: “there are some Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in citizens who have developed a fear of the river and they spread this fear to others, they put in on women, that you should have all this knowledge before it's safe to go anywhere, which scares them from the jobs”.

Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in is combating this in a number of ways. Land-based culture camps teach children traditional knowledge, and the Dänojà Zho Cultural Centre, an employment and training ground for citizens, allows students to build confidence as they gain traditional knowledge. The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in 101 cultural course is offered regularly, and also delivered at the local high school. It includes “information about the dark times before self-government, residential schools, and past challenges”. It also provides cross-cultural training for newcomers so they understand the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in - where they started, the issues they faced, and where they are at now.

However, more community building and reconciliation is needed because “for so long people were silenced and it takes time for a community to recover from the lateral violence”. Young women often have to deal with social issues such as family breakdown, domestic violence, and drinking and drug addiction before they feel like they can contribute “the challenge is how you can get them to the work place”. Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in women are willing to share their experiences with domestic violence with students, and provide information about what help they can get and tools to manage it. Georgette also tries to provide a positive setting at work, be a support person to talk to, and acts as an example for young women to work towards.

Women in this community also run into the mentality that men have to be leaders and the voice of authority, but that is not always the case. The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government has

had lots of female leadership; past chiefs have been women, and the current chief is a woman. But there are few Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in women working in field roles. Women assume that men will take these positions, and often they receive no applications from women for stewardship roles. Despite there being many capable women who are hunters, and have the skills, they just don't apply.

To increase women's confidence they run a Women in Hunting program in winter, exploring women's roles, to gain all the skills male hunters would gain. "A woman can say 'I don't know how to... and another woman can show her, it creates more comfortable skills building opportunities. It's harder to ask a man, and women are better communicators and so better teachers".

Women supporting other women is key. For Georgette, there were "always strong women, women elders who didn't hesitate to tell me things, they let you know what you need to know". Women mentors who take younger women under their wings have made a difference: "someone did that for me, so I turn it around and do it for someone else".

Education is another barrier. Post-secondary is required for many roles, and women are often not comfortable moving away. Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in has education support in place, through Cultural Education Liaison Workers in the local schools and financial support for post-secondary training which includes both tuition and a living stipend. The Yukon Government is also trying to increase the employment of First Nations people under the First Nations Training Corps program, which provides employment opportunities to First Nations even if they don't meet all the requirements, and they are then provided with training to meet the full requirements.

Tombstone Territorial Park offers this, as well as ranger positions designated for Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in people. Both Alice McCulley, Fish & Wildlife Projects Coordinator, and Kim Joseph, Environmental Monitor, began their careers there. It was a female-friendly workplace, and the availability of training increased opportunities to move on to better roles.

*"Enjoy being on the land - you own it, you own yourself"*  
– Kim Joseph

*Tombstone Territorial Park  
Canada, July 2019*



Tombstone has staff housing and was also quite flexible about childcare; women were able to take older children out with them in school holidays because they can look after themselves. Child and elder care are always a challenge, and employers who provide time off and the flexibility to cover missed hours later are essential in managing family commitments. Organisations need to change their culture and open doors for women and labour laws/job agreements need to be updated to fit the reality of the job and women's lives.

For Kim, the role opened a lot of doors, giving her access to education and many life experiences. She was able to represent Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in at the circumpolar agriculture conference in Iceland, and believes it is essential for women to participate in this area.

Georgette agrees "women want to improve the social aspect and make more effort to figure out their culture. They can voice what works well for the community. Men can make straight forward linear perspective, women can give a wider, broader, rounder view. Our Government couldn't make decisions without that women's voice - it's always been there, just not always in the forefront.

### **Critical Success Factors**

Self-determination - gave confidence  
Many female role models and women in positions of authority – the current Chief is a woman  
Strong women mentors  
Availability of training  
Yukon FN Training Corps program  
Cultural maintenance and rebuilding  
Gaining traditional knowledge from elders  
Cultural Centre – training in traditional knowledge  
TH 101 – cross-cultural and cultural training  
Try to create a positive workplace  
Acting as an example for young women in the workplace  
Provide a positive setting and role models  
TH's financial support for education  
Women more likely to get education  
Equal opportunity from Yukon Gov

### **Outcomes**

Women make up half the population, need a representative workforce  
Important for girls to see women in these roles (know it's available to them too)  
Women sensitive communicators and effective teachers  
Women give wider, broader, round view  
Women focus on culture and give back to community, want to improve social aspect  
Always needs to be a woman's voice to balance out the men  
A job you really like  
Opportunities wouldn't otherwise have; travel, representing community

## Appendix 18: National Environment Service - Cook Islands

The Deputy Director, and the Project Manager at the National Environment Service (NES) of the Cook Islands of Rarotonga are both women. Louisa Karika and Elizabeth Munro believe that on Rarotonga it is not hard for women to work in environmental roles, or to move into senior management roles. In the traditional land tenure system, women can inherit and own land, and many current traditional owners are women, who have been heavily involved in the declaration of marine reserves: “they are the ones who go for that, the protection of species”.

Women dominate in organisation and task oriented roles, so there are many women project coordinators. However on-ground positions, such as environment officer and rangers, are mostly men, especially in the outer islands. Women tend to shy away from roles with the potential to be confrontational, and the majority of the NES compliance division is men.

In the outer islands it is mostly men applying for on-ground jobs. NES organise meetings with women groups in outer islands, as women are more comfortable speaking up when only other women are present, and in some cultures they need to be separate. When staff go out they send women too, so people have more exposure to women in those roles. More encouragement of women is needed so they know anyone can apply and would be treated equally: “women think they are not as good as they really are, whereas men think they can do anything”.

The NES is meant to have gender action plans in their projects as part of donor requirements “but we don’t know how to do that - we need help in terms of how and what to do – we would like to see more women in these roles...but don’t know how to engage them in this space”. Women need to be engaged because they look after family, and take that concept into the environment, they protect it better: “women are more passionate - they think “what are my kids going to eat and drink”.

### Critical Success Factors

- Women excel at organisational roles
- Women-only meetings on outer islands
- Women in many leadership positions
- Opportunities for leadership for women

### Outcomes

- Women look after family and take that into the environment; caring, empathetic
- Women think about their children's futures
- Locals know the land and the people

## Appendix 19: Te Rarawa Iwi – New Zealand

The Te Rarawa Iwi looks after the social, environmental, cultural and economic interests of its people in far north New Zealand. They undertake a number of environmental projects, protecting wetlands, dune systems, forests, and coastal areas. Te Rarawa women are employed in policy, as trustees, and volunteers, maintaining their country and culture.

With grant funding from the Northern Territory Government, three senior Indigenous women rangers from the NLC were able to participate in an exchange with Maori women of the Te Rarawa Iwi and Meirene Hardy-Birch (Department of Conservation) as part of this Churchill Fellowship. This enabled Indigenous women to meet and share experiences and talk about the challenges they face, providing an opportunity to learn from and support each other.

Many of the challenges faced in Te Rarawa were very similar to those in the Northern Territory, including loss of traditional knowledge, childcare and family commitments, and the burnout faced by women in communities where they are seen as capable and therefore asked to contribute more. Organisations need to recognise and account for the extra work they do to ensure successful women are able to continue to perform to high standards.

Racism and its effect on women's abilities to access opportunities was discussed, along with inhibiting factors such as the predominance of white male co-ordinators. Women often feel intimidated, under-valued and constantly needing to prove themselves. The Te Rarawa women reflected on the need for intrinsic recognition of the value of indigenous knowledge and the ability to use cultural knowledge to manage lands. "Indigenous women need to be the decision makers and not have to explain themselves over and over... organisations need to recognise that traditional knowledge is not translatable - people need to take it for granted that they know what they are talking about".



Having women in leadership positions is especially helpful. For example, when the Minister of Conservation was also the Minister of Women it created greater opportunities as more women were referred to be involved on boards and in governance roles. When women are represented not just at the grassroots but at all levels, it creates equity.

*Bronwyn Bauer-Hunt and Eslyn Wauchope  
New Zealand, August 2019*

Supportive employers are the key in ensuring women are able to fully participate. Flexible hours, and the ability to adapt those hours as needed, to suit both the nature of the work as well as the women's needs, was critical. Employers need to be aware that on-going flexibility will be needed as situations around childcare and family commitments change.

To succeed, women need support from their community in their role, however, conflict arose from needing to hold family and community to the laws of the crown, rather than traditional laws. Employers may need to find ways to help women manage that conflict.

Maori women identified past exchange opportunities to travel and meet other women had contributed to their development by recognising, valuing, and supporting their contributions. They were given an opportunity to develop leadership skills through representing their communities overseas, an important step in gaining confidence. This exchange with NLC rangers enable them to connect, be inspired, and learn from other Indigenous women who are also working to protect their country and maintain their culture.

The Te Rarawa women believe that conservation is a natural fit for women, and part of their role in teaching their children and grandchildren. As mothers, women can have different conversations and weave together a community. Women are strategic, good coordinators, and form relationships with people in other organisations to create better outcomes.

### **Critical Success Factors**

- Support from family and community
- Ability to work with other women (not male-dominated)
- Flexible work hours (fit for purpose for both employers and employees)
- On-going flexibility
- Exchanges to programs overseas
- Support network for women
- Mentoring from women
- Skills training in admin, reports, finances
- Change at governance level and at the grassroots

### **Outcomes**

- Conservation natural fit for women - nurturers
- Educating children and grandchildren
- Women are strategic & good coordinators
- Women are good at forming relationships
- Co-design approach
- Women can have different conversations, weave together a community
- Indigenous women know their country and their people, can facilitate conversations

## Abbreviations

AWF	African Wildlife Foundation
BC	British Columbia
BSc	Bachelor of Science
CAFN	Champagne and Aishihik First Nations
CBAPU	Community-Based Anti-Poaching Unit
EWCA	Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GESI	Gender Equity & Social Inclusion
ILI	Indigenous Leadership Initiative
IPA	Indigenous Protected Area
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
KWS	Kenya Wildlife Service
NES	National Environment Service
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NLC	Northern Land Council
NRT	Northern Rangeland Trust
NTNC	National Trust for Nature Conservation
RWCA	Rwanda Wildlife Conservation Association
SEAS	Supporting Emerging Aboriginal Stewards
SWCC	Southwest Conservation Corps
TNRM	Territory Natural Resource Management
WoC	Working on Country
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature