

## CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

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| <b>Organization Legal Name:</b>              | Nature Rwanda  |
| <b>Project Title:</b>                        | Empowering youth while raising awareness for sustainable conservation of Gishwati KBA in Rwanda  |
| <b>Date of Report:</b>                       | January 23 <sup>rd</sup> 2018  |
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**CEPF Region:** Eastern Afromontane

**Strategic Direction:** 1. Mainstream biodiversity into wider development policies, plans and projects to deliver the co benefits of biodiversity conservation, improved local livelihoods and economic Development in priority corridors.

**Grant Amount:** 9,882 USD

**Project Dates:** March 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 – October 31<sup>st</sup> 2017

**Implementation Partners for this Project (please explain the level of involvement for each partner):** This project was implemented by Nature Rwanda in great collaboration with different partners; local NGO, University of Rwanda through Rwandan University Club for Biodiversity Conservation and the Center of Excellence in Biodiversity Conservation and Nature Resources management, private company and the Government of Rwanda. Hence, Nature Rwanda worked with the Forest of Hope Association during shooting in Gishwati KBA and screening within the community around Gishwati by helping in identifying the beneficiaries of CEPF projects to feed the documentary and testify during awareness raising campaigns and screening events. The University of Rwanda's Center of Excellence in Biodiversity conservation and Nature Resources Management contributed during the training for Rwandan University Club for Conservation of Biodiversity active members by preparing and organizing one sessions during the training in Huye district. Rwagasabo safari ltd, a private companies in tourism sector contributed also by organizing one session during the training around youth opportunities in conservation. In addition to that, Nature Rwanda collaborated with the Rwanda Development Board's conservation department for work permit in the newly formed Mukura-Gishwati National Park, and local authorities during our awareness raising campaigns in Rutsiro district.

### Conservation Impacts

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

Empowering youth while raising awareness for sustainable conservation of Gishwati KBA in Rwanda project, which strategy Direction from the CEPF Ecosystem Profile – 1. Mainstream biodiversity into wider development policies, plans and projects to deliver the cobenefits of biodiversity conservation, improved local livelihoods and economic development in priority corridors, contributed in local empowerment and documentation on conservation of Gishwati KBA while raising awareness.

This project contributed in documentation of CEPF's effort in conservation of Gishwati by gathering testimony from project beneficiaries, and raised awareness on conservation of this KBA within the region to more than 1,800 people mostly young people under 18 years old. Moreover, this project built the capacity of 50 young, passionate and dedicated conservationists from the University of Rwanda's Biology department and the Center of Excellence in Biodiversity Conservation and Nature resources management who are willing to build their environment career in Rwanda as future leaders and decision makers of tomorrow.

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

The main goal of this project was to empower youth while raising awareness for sustainable conservation of Gishwati KBA in Rwanda. The specific objectives of this project were (i) to facilitate logistical arrangements for the photographer in Rwanda, and (ii) dissemination of communication materials that will be provided by the photographer in Gishwati-Mukura region. And, the main expected results under this project were to mainstreaming the documentary produced by the photographer on local and National TV, to produce Conservation education Materials on Gishwati KBA, to engage local community in conservation of this KBA, and to change their behavior towards biodiversity.

Over the past seven months of implementation, the project has reached 360% (1,800) of its targeted direct beneficiaries during awareness raising campaigns in Northern part of the country and 106, 5% of its targets on social media campaign. Moreover, more than 500 conservation education and awareness raising materials were developed, translated in Kinyarwanda and distributed in schools, markets and on the street to raise awareness on conservation of Gishwati Forest. And about 50 young passionate conservationists and future leaders from the University of Rwanda and Nature Rwanda interneers benefited from a one day training organized in the framework of empowering young people in conservation for conservation of KBA using Gishwati as a case study. This report provides key highlights on achievements on every activity of the project.

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***Output 1: Mainstreaming the documentary produced by the photographer on local and National TV***

*As in the project document, Nature Rwanda had to facilitate the photographer during his field work in Rwanda by identifying project beneficiary to interview and providing translation, and then mainstream the documentary produced by the photographer on local and National TV.*

- ❖ Nature Rwanda secured the work permit for the photographer as it was in the proposal. Desperate some delays, the photographer came to Rwanda and conducted his activity without any challenges or issue related to accessing the park to talking to CEPF project beneficiaries. Prior to his arrival in June 2017, Nature Rwanda provided an invitation letter to the photographer and facilitated during Visa application process. He successfully received a visa as it was in the proposal.
- ❖ Nature Rwanda in great collaboration with the Forest of Hope Association identified the community members who benefited from CEPF projects and they were interviewed by the photographer as it was in the proposal. Nature Rwanda worked with the photographer during field activities in Gishwati and provided translation during shooting and editing as it was in the proposal.
- ❖ Unfortunately, as for now, the screening events on National Television and local television didn't take place due to the low quality of the documentary provided. However, Nature Rwanda opted to use the materials produced by the photographer to produce a

documentary that was used during awareness raising campaigns in Rubavu district and training in Huye district. That documentary should be accessed on Nature Rwanda's YouTube channel by clicking [HERE](#).

### ***Output 2: Conservation education Materials on Gishwati KBA produced***

*Under this project, Nature Rwanda had to produce 500 conservation education materials and distribute them during awareness raising campaigns and training.*

- ❖ Nature Rwanda built on the work of the photographer and used the materials produced by the photographer to develop 500 conservation educational and awareness raising materials that were translated into Kinyarwanda and distributed to local community where the majority of people reached were students in primary and secondary schools who are under 18 years old and around 48% were female. In addition to those 500 flyers, six posters and two four banners were developed and donated to schools that hosted our campaigns.

### ***Output 3: Local Community engagement in conservation***

*During this project implementation, Nature Rwanda had to engage 500 community members in screening events and awareness raising campaigns by organizing three screening events in districts bordering Gishwati KBA and half day training for undergraduate students from University of Rwanda department of Biology and conservation who are active members of Rwandan University Club for Conservation of Biodiversity.*

- ❖ Nature Rwanda organized four awareness raising campaigns which were followed by screening the documentary produced by Nature Rwanda and distribution of education materials produced by Nature Rwanda using images and footage taken by the photographer.
- ❖ Nature Rwanda organized campaigns in schools closer to Gishwati KBA; Groupe Scolaire Nyabirasi on October 14th and a street campaign on 15th 2017 in the same sector to maximize the impact. A community campaign gathering students of Groupe Scolaire Bitenga and local community on October 20th and a street campaign on 21st 2017 were also organized. The campaign at Bitenga high school attracted 850 students and local community, the campaign at Nyabirasi High School attracted about 450 boarding students, and the two street-campaign attracted more than 400 people. In Nyabirasi, out of 450 students; 246 were girls and 244 were boys while at Bitenga, 464 were males and 386 females. For the streets campaign it is hard to estimate but for both schools 48% of people reached were females. In addition to that 40 University of Rwanda students were reached during screening. In total, the campaigns and training reached directly to more 1,800 (360%) people while in the proposal we were targeting 500 people only.
- ❖ Nature Rwanda organized a full day training, instead of a half day training as it was in the proposal, for Rwandan University Club for Conservation of Biodiversity – RUCCB Members on promoting youth centered-approaches to conservation and then screened the documentary. 35 students from University of Rwanda who are active member of RUCCB, Three interns from the Center of Excellence in Biodiversity Conservation and Nature Resources management, and six nature Rwanda staff participated in this one day interactive and intensive training. The training was opened by the guest of Honor Prof. Donat Nsabimana, the Head of Biology Department at the University of Rwanda who encouraged participants to take care of our environment and start innovating in addressing the current environmental challenges in his opening remarks. The executive Director of Nature Rwanda, Prudence Ndabasanze, introduced to the participants the purpose of the training which was followed by setting training expectations and pre-training knowledge

assessment session led by Solange Uwera, the Director of Communications and Dissemination at Nature Rwanda. After that short introduction, participants jumped into three main sessions of the day before screening the documentary. The first session led by Jean Claude Dusabimana, Nature Rwanda's program manager focused on youth centered-approaches to conservation. It was followed by the second session led by Prof. Beth Kaplin, the Ag of Center of Excellence in biodiversity conservation and Nature Resources management and senior Lecturer at the University of Rwanda that focused on the youth innovation in biodiversity for sustainable development. The third session, to set the room for the documentary, focused on the role of youth in sustainable tourism and biodiversity conservation and it was led by Placide Serge Uwiringiyimana, Chief Executive officer of Rwagasabo Safaris LTD. And, the day was concluded by screening the documentary produced by Nature Rwanda. Prior to giving certificates, the post- training assessment shows great improvement in discussed topic. It is worth noting that each session was divided into three main parts; a short presentation of less than 20 minutes, followed by 40 minutes for groups discussion under different theme, 30 minutes for presentations and feedback and 5 minutes for wrap up and the way forward. This methodology was appreciated by all the participants and facilitators and Nature Rwanda has adopted it for its training modules.

- ❖ During campaigns, apart screening the documentary and distributing conservation education materials, Nature Rwanda staff, invited guests and students discussed and shared their thoughts on the importance of Gishwati forest for sustainable development for their community and the country in general as it is the source of goods and services that enable life. The focus of our conservation campaigns was around the role that young people and local community can play in conservation of this Gishwati KBA. Through drama, songs and cartoons, students demonstrated the role of this unique ecosystem for them, their families and the community in general. The forest guides who are working with the Forest of Hope Association were invited as well to share on the importance of conserving Gishwati while giving testimonies and sharing on the effort of CEPF in conservation of Gishwati KBA which led to the creation of the fourth National Park in the country. Participants were motivated and inspired by the testimony of people who are working with the Forest of Hope association.

#### ***Output 4: Behavior changed towards biodiversity***

*Under this project, Nature Rwanda had to engage 1,000 people on social media to discuss on conservation on Gishwati KBA while raising awareness on its conservation using materials produced by the photographer.*

- ❖ On our Facebook page and Twitter account, Nature Rwanda reached 1,063 youth on social media; by reaching to 983 followers on Nature Rwanda's [Facebook page](#) and 80 on [Twitter account](#) (106, 3% of the target). In our social campaign, one long blog article was published on Nature Rwanda's website entitle "Building communities where human being live in the harmony with nature." And Nature Rwanda has been tweeting weekly about this project from September and October. This campaign was among successful only campaign due to the feedback we have got from our audience either direct post, direct message and phone conversation. The youth, reached during this campaign, are more interested in conservation now and they are aware of the importance of Key Biodiversity Areas in development of the country. Thus, Nature Rwanda's social media accounts have been and continue to be an open platform for young environmentalists to share idea, discuss and provide guidance on how young people should be engaged in biodiversity conservation and Nature resources management in Rwanda. There are also platform to discuss global concerns and cross cutting issues such as climate change and biodiversity loss to list a few.

***Please provide the following information where relevant:***

**Hectares Protected: N/A**  
**Species Conserved: N/A**  
**Corridors Created: N/A**

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

This project, aimed at Empowering youth while raising awareness for sustainable conservation of Gishwati KBA in Rwanda, was a success; Nature Rwanda multiplied more than three times the number of direct participants, produced more than 500 conservation education and awareness raising materials and produced a documentary on CEPF's effort in Conservation of Gishwati KBA, now the fourth National Park, that is available on Nature Rwanda's YouTube channel to list a few.

A great collaboration between Nature Rwanda and the Forest of Hope Association, the Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Nature Resources management, Rwandan University Club for Conservation of Biodiversity and Rwagasabo safaris ltd proved that conservation actors have to collaborate and work together to maximize impact in the community where they are serving while complementing each other.

However, as a new and youth run and led organization, Nature Rwanda faced challenges due to limited resources being human and financial during the implementation of this project. To address them, Nature Rwanda choose to concentrate its efforts in one district instead of three but increased the number of campaigns from three to four so that it can have tangible impact with in the community served. Nature Rwanda offered two internship to undergraduates students from the University of Rwanda, biology and conservation department to support the project team.

***Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?***

The first unexpected positive impact of this project is the ongoing discussion to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between Nature Rwanda and Rwanda Development Board. After fruitful discussion with the department of Tourism and conservation, it was recommend to come up with a MoU between both entities as we are all working to achieve the same mission and the collaboration between partners can only ensure its success.

The second unexpected positive impact was to discover different talents and passion among Nature Rwanda team; Nature Rwanda staff managed to produce a documentary on CEPF's effort in conservation of Gishwati without external support using footage provided by the photographer. In the future, as part of our mission, Nature Rwanda will be producing documentaries for education and awareness raising purpose that reflect local realities while contributing in documentation of the indigenous knowledge in conservation.

## Lessons Learned

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

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

The lesson Nature Rwanda learnt during designing phase was to work closely with project beneficiaries and valuing their thoughts as they are the ones who contribute a lot in success of the project by owning it.

The other thing to consider during designing phase is to think about the accessibility and availability of targeted beneficiaries so that both activities should be budgeted accordingly while bearing in mind that thing can change during the implementation and therefore setting an alternative plan. .

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

Budgeting for field activities and mostly for campaign is not an easy things to do special for a young organization with limited resources both human and financial. Sometime, you realize that most of your activities were under estimated or you need addition costs that can have an impact on the success of the project.

While planning for awareness raising projects, it is always good to take into consideration different other factors that can influence your field activities; the weather and availability of audience are key point to taken into consideration while planning as well while designing the project. Therefore, in the future, our awareness raising campaign shall take place during summer time (End May early September) to maximize the attendance while ensuring the accessibility for the project team to the project site.

### ***Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:***

Young people, mostly in rural area of the country are willing to work hard while contributing to the conservation of biodiversity despite the limited knowledge and skills they have in that field. Therefore, empowering them will open their eyes and set room for them to create and come up with new idea. To illustrate this, during the training at the University of Rwanda, four new project proposal were developed by Rwandan University Club for conservation of biodiversity that are tackling some of the issues they are facing in the community where they come from such as deforestation and wetlands misuse. One project idea on the conservation of Rwasave wetland was developed during this training and the team is working on fund raising.

The second thing that we learnt during our awareness raising campaigns and screening, was that for the community and most those in rural area, using locally made materials, is relevant rather than using for example the documentary that was produced somewhere in Europe for example. Thus, for successful awareness raising campaigns and trainings, it is relevant to use locally produced materials so that they can reflect their knowledge and understanding for farther engagement.

Nature Rwanda learnt that local community are the key stakeholders in conservation of fragile ecosystem like Key Biodiversity areas as their daily environmental decisions are the ones that

determined the conservation of those ecosystems. Therefore, they have to be engaged at early stage so that it can increase accountability and ownership while multiplying impact. This was experience during the testimony shared by community members who are working with the Forest of Hope association in conservation of Gishwati KBA during documentary shooting and screening events in Rutsiro district.

**ADDITIONAL FUNDING**

***Provide details of any additional donors who supported this project and any funding secured for the project as a result of the CEPF grant or success of the project.***

| <b>Donor</b>                                | <b>Type of Funding*</b> | <b>Amount</b> | <b>Notes</b>  |
|---|-------------------------|---------------|---|
| The Rufford Foundation                      | B                       | £4,800        | This project is being implemented at Akanyaru IBA and aims to empower women through cooperative socially and economically for conservation of this IBA in danger  |
| Melinda Gray Ardia Environmental Foundation | B                       | \$2559        | This project is aligned with Nature Rwanda’s outdoor program for kids; most of activities will consist in taking primary school students to interact with nature. |

***\*Additional funding should be reported using the following categories:***

- A** *Project co-financing (Other donors contribute to the direct costs of this CEPF project)*
- B** *Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF project.)*
- C** *Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

**Sustainability/Replicability**

***Summarize the success or challenge in achieving planned sustainability or replicability of project components or results.***

The dissemination of conservation education materials in the community and schools around Gishwati and capacity building for under graduate students from the University of Rwanda as future leaders and decision makers of tomorrow led to the sustainability of this project; people reached are now aware of the role they can play in conservation of this KBA. Moreover, they know how they can use goods and services provided by that ecosystem in sustainable way.

In fact, this project connected local community, mostly young people with nature so that now they understand the importance of environment in their daily life and as future leaders and decision makers of tomorrow, growing with that love for nature will influence ensure its conservation while engaging parents, family and community leading to multiplying the impact.

Thus, Nature Rwanda is committed to connecting young people with nature, documenting indigenous knowledge, and building capacity of Rwandans using materials that reflect the local realities. This will increase ownership among local community as key stakeholders in ensuring conservation of KBAs in Rwanda. Therefore, as a dedicated organization, Nature Rwanda will continue to work with development partners to develop programs that will document other Key Biodiversity Areas in Rwanda so that materials produced can be used in primary and secondary schools and university through environmental clubs to empower young generation while holding them accountable as future leaders of the country.

***Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.***

The unplanned achievement was the production of the documentary we used in the campaigns. This proved that Nature Rwanda staff have the capacity to produce even other documentaries at different KBA and also contribute in documentation of indigenous knowledge across the country. Thus, Nature Rwanda is going to work with development partners and local NGOs in documenting their effort in conservation of specific sites.

### **Safeguard Policy Assessment**

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

N/A

### **Additional Comments/Recommendations**

Nature Rwanda recommend the replication of this project to other KBAs in Rwanda. During the implementation of this project, Nature Rwanda have realized that people are not aware of the roles they can play in conservation of biodiversity while they have the will and the courage to contribute. Therefore, using materials that reflect their knowledge, encouraged them to join the effort and this will have a positive impact as community members play an important role in conservation of biodiversity. Hence, they need to be empowered using local materials.

### **Information Sharing and CEPF Policy**

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned, and results. Final project completion reports are made available on our Web site, [www.cepf.net](http://www.cepf.net), and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

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**\*\*\*please complete the tables on the following pages\*\*\***

## Performance Tracking Report Addendum

| Project Results   | Is this question relevant? | If yes, provide your numerical response for results achieved for project from inception of CEPF support to date | Describe the principal results achieved during project period (Attach annexes if necessary)   |
|---|----------------------------|---|---|
| 1. Did your project strengthen management of a protected area guided by a sustainable management plan? Please indicate number of hectares improved.   | N/A                        |   | Please also include name of the protected area(s). If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one. |
| 2. How many hectares of new and/or expanded protected areas did your project help establish through a legal declaration or community agreement?   | N/A                        |   | Please also include name of the protected area. If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.    |
| 3. Did your project strengthen biodiversity conservation and/or natural resources management inside a key biodiversity area identified in the CEPF ecosystem profile? If so, please indicate how many hectares. | N/A                        |   |   |
| 4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.                                    | N/A                        |   |   |
| 5. If your project promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, how many local communities accrued tangible socioeconomic benefits? Please complete Table 1 below.  | N/A                        |   |   |

**If you answered yes to question 5, please complete the following table.**



**Annex: Some Pictures taken during the project implementation**



**Photo:** Group discussion during RUCCB Training in Huye district, Nature Rwanda, 2017



**Photo:** Prof Beth Kaplin presenting during the training, Nature Rwanda, 2017



**Photo:** students at Group Scolaire Bitenga were happy to watch the movie produced on Gishwati, Nature Rwanda, 2017.



**Photo:** During street campaigns, the majority were youth willing to know more about the importance of Gishwati, Nature Rwanda, 2017



**Photo:** Screening the documentary at Group Scolaire Bitenga, Nature Rwanda, 2017



**Photo:** Jean Claude, Nature Rwanda's program manager distributing education materials at Group Scolaire Nyabirasi, Nature Rwanda, 2017.

More picture on Campaign, click [HERE](#) and More pictures on Training, click [HERE](#)