

CEPF Final Project Completion Report

Organization Legal Name:	Action for Environmental Sustainability
Project Title:	Misuku Hills Biodiversity Conservation
Grant Number:	64667
CEPF Region:	Eastern Afromontane
Strategic Direction:	2 Improve the protection and management of the KBA network throughout the hotspot.
Grant Amount:	\$123,100.00
Project Dates:	July 01, 2014 - March 31, 2017
Date of Report:	April 25, 2017

Implementation Partners

List each partner and explain how they were involved in the project

The project was implemented with a number of partners including who provided a wide range of support during the implementation of project activities. The Environmental Affairs Department, the Department of Forest, Department of Agriculture, Department of Tourism played a crucial role in the project by providing necessary information needed during the project implementation and providing technical support in the delivery of specific activities including monitoring and providing professional backstops to these activities.

The Misuku Bee Keepers Association (MBA), the Wilindi, Matipa and Mughese forest management Board and the forest block committees also played a very recommendable role in this project by helping in the mobilisation of the project targeted communities and community groups and by volunteering their time to provide support during the delivery of project activities.

The traditional authority (TA) Mwenemisuku and other chiefs on Misuku Hills also played a very important role in this project by supporting the project activities, promoting the best practices in the project and helping to raise awareness in their communities.

Conservation Impacts

Summarize the overall impact of your project, describing how your project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile

This project has had the following impacts;

Awareness on the value and importance of the Misuku Hills biodiversity area has been raised.

About 47 communities of Traditional Authority Mwenemisuku in Misuku Hills which are close to

Wilindi, Matipa and mughese forest reserves and whose livelihood is very much dependent to the forest reserves covering around 522 hectors inside the forest reserve and 622 hectors of customary land outside the forest reserve were targeted in the awareness. There have been a tremendous behavior change and high participation of community members in safeguarding the forest resources and engagement in conservation activities.

The forest management plan for Matipa forest reserve (944ha) has been created (pending approval) and some elements of the forest management plan are already being implemented. 25 groups of Village savings and loan assocaitons (Village Banks) have been established to promote conservation of the Wilindi, Matipa and Mughesse forest reserves, the village banks have also increased saving culture, among the forest dependent communities, provided an opportunity for business loans, entrepreneurship (most members have started small businesses such as animal production, groceries etc) and it has created jobs to more than 500 people with 60 percent being women. These targeted communities' covers around 480 hectors of forest areas inside the reserve and 533 hectors of customary land outside the forest reserve.

The groups were also trained in the production of the Chitetezo eco-stove which resulted into production and distribution of 250 stoves to the forest dependent communities around Misuku Hills and also resulted to reducing the use of wood by 40 % among the beneficiaries with 90% of adoption rate.

630 farmers from 41 villages around the Wilindi, Matipa and mughesse forest reserve have been trained in conservation agriculture, the trainings included, Maintenance of permanent or semi-permanent soil cover (using a previous crop residue or specifically growing a cover crop for this purpose); Minimum soil disturbance through tillage (just enough to get the seed into the ground) ; Regular crop rotations to help combat the various biotic constraints; Utilization of green manures/cover crops to produce the residue cover (e.g Cowpea /Vigna unguiculata, Fava bean etc); Discouraging burning of crop residues; Controlled/limited human and mechanical traffic over agricultural soils.This has promoted soil conservation and reduced agricultural invasion into the forest protect area.

Planned Long-term Impacts - 3+ years (as stated in the approved proposal)

Impact Description	Impact Summary
<p>In the long term, the project will ensure improved livelihood of community members and that biodiversity conservation receives a high priority in the management of the Wilindi-Matipa and Mughesse forest reserve resulting into 1444 hectors under improved management.</p>	<p>The Matipa forest management plan have been created and some of elements implemented covering 944 ha. Over 500 jobs have been created through 25 conversational village bank groups who are also conserving up to 480 ha on Misuku Hills, 630 farmers are practicing conservation agriculture and there have been increased behavior change among the 47 forest dependent communities of Misuku Hills due to increase increased awareness which has led to conservation of 522 ha inside the forest reserves and 622 ha out the forest reserves. Within the period of 5 Months 250 eco- stoves have been distributed on Misuku Hills which is saving up to 40% of wood as compared to the three stone open fires and there have been 90% adoption rate.</p>

Planned Short-term Impacts - 1 to 3 years (as stated in the approved proposal)

Impact Description	Impact Summary
<p>People in Traditional Authority Mwenemisuku understands the importance of Wilindi-Matipa (and Mughese) forestry reserves and participate in its management.</p>	<p>Awareness on the value and importance of the Misuku Hills biodiversity area has been raised. About 47 communities of Traditional Authority Mwenemisusku in Misuku Hills which are close to Wilindi, Matipa and Mughese forest reserves and whose livelihood is very much dependent to the forest reserves covering around 522 hectares inside the forest reserve and 622 hectares of customary land outside the forest reserve were targeted in the awareness. There have been a tremendous behavior change and high participation of community members in safeguarding the forest resources and engagement in conservation activities.</p>
<p>Increased savings, micro-enterprises, job creation, sound conservation practices and general economic empowerment of 900 community members covering 1444 ha around Wilindi-Matipa (Mughese) forestry reserves.</p>	<p>25 groups of Village savings and loan associations (Village Banks) have been established to promote conservation of the Wilindi, Matipa and Mughese forest reserves, the village banks have also increased saving culture, among the forest dependent communities, provided an opportunity for business loans, entrepreneurship (most members have started small businesses such as animal production, groceries etc) and it has created jobs to more than 500 people with 60 percent being women. These targeted communities' covers around 480 hectares of forest areas inside the reserve and 533 hectares of customary land outside the forest reserve.</p>
<p>Completion and implementation of a forest Reserve Management plan.</p>	<p>The forest management plan for Matipa forest reserve (944ha) has been created (pending approval) and some elements of the forest management plan are already being implemented.</p>
<p>Increase number of farmers adopting best agriculture practices .</p>	<p>630 farmers from 41 villages around the Wilindi, Matipa and Mughese forest reserve have been trained and are engaged in conservation agriculture, the training's included, Maintenance of permanent or semi-permanent soil cover (using a previous crop residue or specifically growing a cover crop for this purpose); Minimum soil disturbance through tillage (just enough to get the seed into the ground) ; Regular crop rotations to help combat the various biotic constraints; Utilization of green manures/cover crops to produce the residue cover (e.g Cowpea /Vigna unguiculata, Fava bean etc); Discouraging burning of crop residues; Controlled/limited human and mechanical traffic over agricultural soils. This has promoted soil conservation and reduced agricultural invasion into the forest protect area.</p>

Build the capacity of Matipa forest block committees so that they are able to conduct their duties more efficiently in promoting conservation of 944 ha of forest protected area.	The Matipa forest (944 ha) block committees have been revamped and trained. The training's also included how to develop an effective forest patrolling plan, how to conduct weekly forest patrols and how to implement other elements of the forest management plan.
20 Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLAs) receives extra capacity building to engage in the business of producing and selling the most adopted biomass fuel efficient cooking stove (Chitetezo Mbaula) and reduce degradation of forest in protected areas and customary land.	The groups were also trained in the production of the Chitetezo eco-stove (biomass stove) which resulted into production and distribution of 250 stoves within a period of 5 Months to the forest dependent communities around Misuku Hills and also resulted to reducing the use of wood by 40 % among the beneficiaries with 90% of adoption rate.

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

The project have been a success as it has been able to deliver all the out-puts as planned on time and according to performance expectation, however, a few challenges that were experienced during the implementation of project activities may stand out as barierrrs in achieving short term or long term impact such as follows;

Staff turn over and lack of proper handovers at the Chitipa District Council specifically the department of forest and the department of agriculture may affect the process of continious monitoring of the project hence affecting achievement of both short term and long term project impacts.

Lack of adequate non governmental organisations who works in Misuku Hills and who will promote the best practices which have been established by this project may also be a challenge to achieving the project impacts Long term.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

The project was expected to have positive impacts on the indigenous people living in Misuku Hills, and these were embedded in the project design. Expected results include promotion of improved livelihoods, access to credit for the same and increased awareness of the benefits of conservation. There were no anticipated negative impacts from the project. The only ones imagined were due to unrealistic expectations of the participants regarding the level of increased income from livelihood activities, leading to disappointment and disengagement from future conservation and development efforts. When delivering the project, AFES made every effort to ensure stakeholders have no misconceptions about the project or its scope.

Project Components and Products/Deliverables

Describe the results from each product/deliverable:

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
1	Awareness is raised among community members of Traditional authority Mwenemisuku and 1960 community members understand, appreciate and authentically participate in biodiversity conservation of the forestry reserve.	1.1	Design of awareness campaign, including key message and target audience.	Awareness campaign including key message and target audience were successfully identified and different medias were developed including printed T.shirts with key messages that promotes the conservation of Misuku Hills, posters, news letters and open air campaigns using the Public address system, traditional dances with conservation music and traditional poems were used.
1	Awareness is raised among community members of Traditional authority Mwenemisuku and 1960 community members understand, appreciate and authentically participate in biodiversity conservation of the forestry reserve.	1.2	Report on implementation of campaign, including copies or pictures of awareness materials.	The awareness campaigns were successfully done, copies of photos for some of these events (containing photos that captures, T.Shirts, dances etc) have been shared through Dropbox and also captured in the shared Misuku project report
1	Awareness is raised among community	1.3	Report on monitoring of effectiveness	The report has been embedded in the Misuku-project report attached

	members of Traditional authority Mwenemisuku and 1960 community members understand, appreciate and authentically participate in biodiversity conservation of the forestry reserve.		of campaign.	
2	Establishment of communal saving systems for micro-loans to support sound conservation practices.	2.1	Feasibility study on village-level savings and loan system	This was conducted successfully and 41 communities were identified, 20 village-level savings and loan groups were established and trained.
2	Establishment of communal saving systems for micro-loans to support sound conservation practices.	2.2	Report on establishment of savings and loan system, recruitment of participants, and training in use of the system.	20 Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLAs) were established from 41 communities. Also see attached Village saving and loan Association guide used and the Misuku_project Report for more details.
2	Establishment of communal saving systems for micro-loans to support sound conservation practices.	2.3	Final report on the operation of the savings and loan system	The village savings and loan association training manual attached at the end of this report explains how the village savings and loans associations/ village bank groups were identified and what form of training was provided. The attached Misuku project report on Summary section also have quantitative details on the performance on these established associations.
2	Establishment of communal saving systems for micro-loans to support sound conservation practices.	2.4	Report on the number of fuel efficient cooking stoves produced, cooking stove efficiency, rate	5 Village Banks groups were trained in the production of Chitetezo eco-stove, these groups are providing trainings to the remaining 20 groups that were established in this project. Also see the Misuku Project report for more information on the up to date number of stoves produced and sold, rate of adoption, photos etc

			of adoption and number of stoves sold.	
3	Completion and implementation of the forest reserve Management plan (including its embedded biodiversity management plan).	3.1	Wilindi-Matipa biodiversity survey.	The survey was conducted and a report has been produced (please see the summary attachments).
3	Completion and implementation of the forest reserve Management plan (including its embedded biodiversity management plan).	3.2	Forest reserve management plan workshop sessions convened, draft produced, approved and implemented.	The management plans sessions were convened, the Village forest management committees were revamped and further a forest management plan was produced (see the attached "Creating a Village forest management committee and a management plan" guide which explains the approaches used). The final compilation of all community agreements for the Matipa forest management plan were done by the department of forest and its pending for approval by the Director of forestry in the ministry of natural resources energy and mining. However, some of the elements of the forest management plan are being implemented.
4	Communities are trained on best intensive agricultural practices and Specific conservation skills are adopted and practiced among the targeted 800 farmers around 1444 hectares around the forest reserve of wilindi,matipa and Mughese.	4.1	Organisation of community into farmer's groups/clubs of 50 members is done targeting 800 farmers.	About 630 farmers from 41 villages around the Wilindi, Matipa and mughesse forest reserve have been mobilized into farmer's clubs/groups and trained on best agriculture practices with emphasis on conservation farming. The training materials were organised to fit the field training's for the indigenous farmers around wilindi, matipa and mughesse forest reserves. The field training's used the hands on training model and a demonstration farm has been established and adaption has been effective and is continually being monitored. Also see the Misuku-project Report
4	Communities are trained on best intensive	4.2	Training materials.	The training reports/training guides have been attached at the end of this report and also it has been captured in the Misuku project report which have already been

	agricultural practices and Specific conservation skills are adopted and practiced among the targeted 800 farmers around 1444 hectors around the forest reserve of wilindi,matipa and Mughese.			submitted.
4	Communities are trained on best intensive agricultural practices and Specific conservation skills are adopted and practiced among the targeted 800 farmers around 1444 hectors around the forest reserve of wilindi,matipa and Mughese.	4.3	Field training's are conducted, completed and a report produced.	These training's have been successfully done and reports and/or training materials used and reports on its approached are attached to this report.
4	Communities are trained on best intensive agricultural practices and Specific conservation skills are adopted and practiced among the targeted 800 farmers around 1444 hectors around the forest reserve of	4.4	Report on farmers exchange learning program.	The farmers exchange learning has been conducted and the information on these sessions were compiled.

	wilindi,matipa and Mughese.			
4	Communities are trained on best intensive agricultural practices and Specific conservation skills are adopted and practiced among the targeted 800 farmers around 1444 hectors around the forest reserve of wilindi,matipa and Mughese.	4.5	A baseline study to determine Wilindi-matipa (Mughese) conservation actions.	Successfully conducted and the study results helped in shaping the desired training for the forest management
4	Communities are trained on best intensive agricultural practices and Specific conservation skills are adopted and practiced among the targeted 800 farmers around 1444 hectors around the forest reserve of wilindi,matipa and Mughese.	4.6	Training sessions for community forest management structures.	It was successfully implemented and one of the related training guide has been attached at the end of this report
4	Communities are trained on best intensive agricultural practices and Specific conservation skills are adopted and	4.7	Community wide information education campaigns on relevant conservation practices are completed and	This activity was conducted successfully; the information education campaigns targeted 47 communities on Misuku hills covering covering around 522 hectors inside the forest reserve and 622 hectors of customary land outside the forest. Detailed names of communities reached can be found in the attached Misuku project report already submitted.

	practiced among the targeted 800 farmers around 1444 hectors around the forest reserve of wilindi,matipa and Mughese.		a report produced.	
5	compliance with CEPF social safeguards policies.	5.1	Local community leaders and provincial authorities approve of the project implementation prior to field work commencing.	A formal approval was granted by Local community leaders and provincial authorities (made of a body called District Executive committee) for the project implementation prior to field work commencing. MoU were signed by all involved chiefs approving the project to be implemented and authenticating their engagement and support to the project.
5	compliance with CEPF social safeguards policies.	5.2	Compliance with social assessment monitored and reported.	Compliance with the social assessment was continually monitored and reported, details in the safeguard-social assessment document have been shared to CEPF.
6	Capacity Development of AfES monitored	6.1	CSTT Completed at the end of the project.	CSTT has been completed and a report shared to CEPF

Please describe and submit any tools, products, or methodologies that resulted from this project or contributed to the results.

Developing Village Natural Resources Management Committee (VNRMC) and Forest Management Plan Manual, Village Savings (Village Bank) Training Guide used in this project and Biodiversity survey report.

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:

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

- Project Implementation (*aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/shortcomings*)
- Describe any other lessons learned relevant to the conservation community

During the implementation of this project the following lessons have been learnt;

Prior to this project, very little efforts by stakeholders including the government of Malawi and other stakeholders to promote conservation and investments on Misuku Hills and to bring awareness of this key biodiversity area to the public.

There have been an increased awareness in our organisation, to the government and other partners that were engaged in the implementation of this project of the importance of the eastern afro-montane biodiversity hotspot and agent need for conservation.

The CEPF approach has proved to us as a conservation organisation on the possibility and efficiency of collaborative efforts with different conservationist and sharing lessons on best practices across the eastern afro-montane biodiversity hotspot.

Sustainability / Replication

Summarize the success or challenges in ensuring the project will be sustained or replicated, including any unplanned activities that are likely to result in increased sustainability or replicability.

The project have been a success as it has been able to deliver all the out-puts as planned on time and according to performance expectation. The availability of the government department, the forest block committees, the Village Natural Resources Management Committee, the Misuku Bee keepers Association and other stakeholders that supported the implementation of this project will ensure that it is sustained and replicated. The current increased interest of stakeholders in promoting the conservation of Misuku Hills will also help to ensure that it is sustained and replicable.

On the other hand, the following conditions which have been a challenge during the project implementation may affect the sustainability and replicability of this project, this include Staff turn over and lack of proper handovers at the Chitipa District Council specifically the department of forest and the department of agriculture and inadequate number of non governmental organisations who are working in Misuku Hills.

Safeguards

If not listed as a separate Project Component and described above, summarize the implementation of any required action related to social, environmental, or pest management safeguards

This has been part of the project component and the report has been attached accordingly.

Additional Comments/Recommendations

Use this space to provide any further comments or recommendations in relation to your project or CEPF

Additional Funding

Provide details of any additional funding that supported this project and any funding secured for the project, organization, or the region, as a result of CEPF investment

Total additional funding (US\$)

Type of funding

Please provide a breakdown of additional funding (counterpart funding and in-kind) by source, categorizing each contribution into one of the following categories:

- A Project Co-Financing (other donors or your organization contribute to the direct costs of this 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 funded project)*
- C Regional/Portfolio Leveraging (other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project)*

Information Sharing and CEPF Policy

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

1. Please include your full contact details (Name, Organization, Mailing address, Telephone number, E-mail address) below

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