

CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	Verde Azul Consult
Project Title:	Participatory process for conservation: Implementing a socio-ecological baseline in Mt. Chipirone, Mozambique
Date of Report:	29 / 06/ 2016
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CEPF Region: Mozambique

Strategic Direction: Implement a local community-level planning processes to mainstream biodiversity conservation that explicitly address causes of environmental degradation in and around Mt Chipirone.

Grant Amount: 19,988.88 USD

Project Dates: August 2016 – May 2017

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

-Local communities around the Mt. Chipirone: We engaged with two of the communities that depend on the natural resources of the mountain. These two communities, Sabelua and Nhacama were chosen given that these communities have the major area of agricultural fields in the mountain. In an initial phase, from the 250 families in these communities with agriculture in the mountain, we engage with 150 of them in total. But we only reach a constant participation of around 30 families.

-Local and regional authorities. Local authorities were actively participating during the whole process and actually supported significantly during all the consultation activities we carried out. Regional authorities (MITADER) were involved in a lesser extent, they authorized the project with knowledge of the Provincial Directorate of MITADER in Zambezia and responded positively to the request and did not interfere at any stage of the project.

The Milange administrator was informed of the objectives and goals of the project, he has expressed interest in involving the District Services for Economic Activities, however due to scheduling overlapping reasons this did not happen. We hope to have the support of them in the implementation phase of the project activities.

-During the first phase of the project it was found that the involvement of the National Peasants Union would not be a value to what was intended in this baseline. However in next stages of the project it will be very valuable.

Conservation Impacts

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

Importantly, this baselines will support to the CEPF ecosystem profile in such a way that will inform decisions of possible conservation directions, priorities, challenges and opportunities in Chipirone, other mountains in the region and possibly in Malawi. The baseline allowed to understand the particularities of Mt Chipirone regarding the dependence of the local communities to the natural resources in the mountain area and allowed us to devise conservation strategies that can be implemented supported by the community. These dependences of the community present very similar characteristics to other mountain regions in Mozambique and will contribute to better understand the social characteristics in these regions for future conservation projects.

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

Long-term impacts (overall objectives):

- *Biodiversity Conservation of the afro-montane biodiversity mountain Mt. Chipirone*
- *Contribute to the connectivity of the afro-montane ecosystem*
- *Support local community to engage in conservation activities.*
- *Promote sustainable livelihoods in the community.*
- *Promote conservation activities done by the community.*
- *Empower and organize the community*

The project established a strong connection between the field officer and the community, during this phase it was identified the main threats to the biodiversity and its drivers, so they became aware of the threats and about the possible actions to reduce them. They are now receptive to any support to help them reducing these threats and consequently in long term contribute to the conservation and connectivity of the Afro-montane biodiversity.

On the other hand, the projects evaluated and validated by the community, once implemented will encompass training activities and awareness workshops to support the community in conservation activities such as conservation agriculture and agroforestry systems, promoting alternative sustainable livelihoods in the community. The community are now aware about the possibility of creation of natural resources management committees which will give them support to get organized and empowered.

Short-term impacts (project objectives) against the actual progress:

- *By the 3rd month of the implementation of the project have a report with clear understanding of the relation between the community and biodiversity of the area.*

-We had a report not by the 3rd month of the implementation as planned, but on December 2015. The delay was due to the fact that the current person in the field started working with us in September, as the first person initially started the 8th of July, by the 3 August 7 days before heading to the field (Mt Chipirone) he quitted. So the timeframe considered in the implementation plan for participant observation and semi-structured interviews, had to be reduced to 1.5 months (initially 3 months).

- *Integrate all farmers (men & women) of the community into selected participatory processes by the 6th month.*

-The farmers of the community were integrated into selected participatory processes. Out of all the farmers from Sabelua and Nhacama with a field in the mountain area, 250 families, all together we involved around 150 families (60%) and we encountered that approximately 30 families (12%) were constantly participating during the whole process. The participants were mainly men, 85% the rest women. Local cultural customs and habits limited the participation of women.

- *Every two months there are meetings with local and regional authorities giving details of project progress.*

-Meetings took place with local and regional authorities giving details of project progress, although not every two months as expected due to our late arrival in the field. The first feedback meetings occurred first week of December. Still there had been already 2 meetings with local authorities. The project leader in the first trip (to recognize the area of Mt Chipirone) had an initial meeting in August 2015. The meetings were with local government authorities (District Administrator), Director of Agriculture and Economic Development. Additional meetings included local traditional authorities of the community (Sabelua) in Chipirone. Additionally on arrival of our field staff representative he presented the project, objectives, the plan of activities and made agreement on how and where to start with the activities Both district government authorities and traditional authorities in the community were informed. On the second period of activities we had the first progress meeting with local authorities in January, March and the closing meeting in May. During these meetings we always tried to explain the importance of the conservation of Mt Chipirone and the relevance to engage the community in the activities. We created reports of these meetings in portuguese which will be attached in the final baseline report. With district authorities specifically the District Administrator, we had one more meeting in February.

- *Secure 20,000 dls funding for implementing follow up projects by the 5th month.*

-We could not mobilize any money for implementing follow up projects by the 5th. However we had been in contact with some funding organizations and produced funding proposals. 1) Locally we have had meetings with Biofund and FUNAB, initially they mention a possibility of funding. Unfortunately none of them have

been finalized. With FUNAB we sent a formal funding proposal responding to a call for proposals of Environmental Micro-projects we have not had a response. 2) We have had also the possibility to present the project to the local advisor of the Global Green Grant Fund, the regional board was considering our project for funding (grants are small 5000 usd), but it has not been finalized also b. 3) a Small Grant Programme of UNDP/GEF was also evaluating our project for possible funding. 4) We applied for the Conservation Leadership Programme and for CFH Foundation and WWF Russell E. Train Education for Nature (reforestation). During December and January we were active with contacting possible funders and producing proposals. We advance as a team (Simoni, Bernabe and Ruben) to a third stage in CLP unfortunately we did not received the funding. For most of the organizations we contacted and created proposal the limiting factor was that VA is a private for profit organization, most funding available is targeted to NGO and CBO.

- *Evaluate and validate at least 5 different projects in collaboration with the community and relevant stakeholders (gov, ngos) by the 6th and 7th month of the implementation.*
 - There were at least 3 different projects (not 5 as expected) evaluated and validated in collaboration with the community and relevant stakeholders (gov, ngos) by the 6th and 7th month of the implementation. The community was able to propose 3 different projects for implementation. All of them related to natural resources management and with a possible positive impact on the conservation of Mt. Chipirone.
- *During the 8th month an initial proposal to implement a selected project in Mt Chipirone related to biodiversity conservation and the integration of the community is made.*
 - A proposal was produced and sent to CEPF to continue the activities and the projects. The main aspects of the proposal are the implementation of conservation agriculture and agroforestry systems project.

Project outputs/results against the actual results:

- *Interviews made with key informants*

In total we had around 100 interviews and informal conversations during the whole process, these interviews informed all our by-weekly reports.
- *Consultative processes made*
 - The participatory processes included focal groups, participatory mapping of resources and public consultations. In total we made 20 focal groups during December and January, 17 participatory mapping processes, 2 seasonal diagram processes, and finally 2 public consultations.
- *Feedback meetings conducted*
 - We had two initial important meetings in 2015: the presentation of the project for authorization by local authorities and the kickoff meeting. We had 3 more feedback meetings with local community leaders in 2016 (January, March and May). Similarly, we had a meeting with government administrator (this person was new in the position) we presented and explained the project.
- *Donors contacted for funding*
 - Approximately we approached around 15 possible funding organizations including: CLP-Conservation Leadership Programme, CFH- Conservation, Food, and Health Foundation, Biofund- Fundação para Conservação da Biodiversidade, FUNAB- Ciclo de financiamento de projectos ambientais, WWF Russell E. Train Education for Nature (EFN) Reforestation Grant, GEF Small Grants Programme/UNDP, Global Green Grants Fund, FINAGRO and The Minga Foundation.
- *Projects evaluated and validated for implementation*
 - We developed a report and included in the final baseline report the identification by the community of 3 projects of relevance. We developed the projects specifying the problem, justification of the project, general objectives, specific objectives, activities and possible indicators.
- *A proposal made to implement a conservation project in the area.*
 - A formal proposal with the most popular project was sent to CEPF

Please provide the following information where relevant:

Hectares Protected: does not apply
Species Conserved: does not apply
Corridors Created: does not apply

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

Success:

-By the end of the project we were able to support the community to develop alternative projects that impact positively their livelihoods and the conservation of natural resources. They realized the importance to protect the limited resources in the mountain and we realized that developing livelihoods supporting their wellbeing are essential.

- The acceptance of the field officer allowed to continue with the participant observation process and the public consultations. We were able to summon to the processes more than half of the families with an agricultural field in the mountain area and in a constant basis more than 30 families were actively participating.

- We encountered that we are able to implement an initial stage of conservation project in some areas and some members of the community.

We were able to implement a successful first step towards the conservation of Mt Chipirone, support the community in engaging in conservation activities, and promote livelihoods activities that impact positively both conservation of the natural resources and creation of sustainable livelihood alternatives.

Challenges:

- The strong dependence of the community on the resources in the mountain area made very difficult to persuade the community on the need to implement conservation strategies to protect the biodiversity on the first months. They look for a tradeoff that is tangible and somehow short term. Still during the time we were present in the community we always discuss informally and during the consultation processes the importance of conservation for their benefit.

- A challenges presented at the initial stage of the project was to integrate community members in participatory processes and ensure the acceptance and involvement of some members of the community in the project. One of the factors that contributed negatively was the country's current political and military instability making it difficult to gain the trust of some people. This is due to the fact that there are many military forces around the country in disguise, which made that the field officer was confused with a military guerrilla. Fortunately by the influence of local authorities which were already aware of the project, the situation was regularized and the community accepted the field officer.

- The integration of women also was a challenge during the whole process due to cultural aspects that restrict women's participation in social events and of collective interest. Although most of the women that are not part of a family nucleus, because they are widows of single mothers, do not have much dependence of the resources of Mt Chipirone.

- Sometimes communication was also a challenge during participatory meetings the field officer had to spend more time to make sure he was interpreting the information correctly.

- The period of implementation was a challenge because it matched with the time of establishment of farms. This resulted in low engagement at the beginning of the process. Heavy rain during the last consultations, made it difficult to reach areas in the communities.

- Another major challenge was to obtain funding to implement follow-up projects due to the fact that we are a private for profit organization. We tried to clarify that the project was part of our non-for-profit projects but it was not accepted.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

Yes at the beginning of the project we hired a field officer but just one week before he was supposed to go the field he quitted, therefore our project got a 3 months delay. Once the second field officer was hired we

trained him and involved him in the project as fast as possible. After this the project was conducted mostly as expected.

Regarding funding we expected to obtain funding during way before the first year so we could plan on next steps. Similarly we needed to hire additional staff locally to support and involve more people and other communities in the process but the logistics to do this would be expensive.

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 way we designed the project, as a participatory process and with participant observation, was elemental to obtain the leaders and communities approval; still we think the process could have been shorter or we could also have considered the creation of conservation committees or cooperatives. We probably could have also included conservation awareness and natural resources importance campaigns.

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

Understanding the local culture through participant observation was elemental to obtain greater support and interest from the community. We had to understand the different education levels, social position, gender aspects.

By being constantly present in the community the field officer gained trust from the community and with the passing of the days it improved lots. He was able to understand the living challenges and needs on day to day basis allowing to better support the design of the conservation projects. Similarly we were able to understand that we had to implement our activities when they community was available after work or on days they did not work in the field.

Due to the delay we had at the beginning we had more activities done during the rainy season which stopped many time the possibility to do a consultation process.

Local authorities were a key stakeholder that since we arrived to the area, they understood and were positive about the project. We took advantage of the local authorities' knowledge and influence to convene and engage more people on the process.

The creation of constant reports during the process was elemental for the project leader to revise the work, give advice and implement activities positively and better each time.

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.

During the first year of the implementation of the project we approach around 15 different organizations. Out of these we created 4 funding proposal. Unfortunately, all organizations that we applied for funding and the ones contacted did not accepted because they all required us to be an NGO or CBO.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
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Verde Azul Consult	Co-funding	\$18,620.00	Contribution in level of effort Director (\$9,000), Project leader (\$9,280); and Telecommunications (\$340.00)

***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.

For the sustainability of the project we encountered important challenges. For most of the organizations we contacted and the created proposal we most of the times received a negative answers. The limiting factor was that VA is a private for profit organization and most funding available is targeted of NGO and CBO. Even that we explained that the project was part of the not-for-profit projects of the organization we did not received positive answers. The immediate solution for this is that we support the creation of conservation committees to apply for funding on their behalf.

There is a high possibility of replicability of the baseline and we consider a very important step before implementing any conservation strategy in other priority areas of the Afromontane biodiversity corridor in Mozambique and other countries. The methodology used presented to be successful with the engagement of the community.

Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.

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

Long term securing of funding is elemental to start seeing positive outcomes in the region. At least a period of 4 to 5 years have to be assured so that more hectares and families in the community are involved.

Parallel to the implementation of the projects, awareness campaign and environmental education projects are of great importance to be implemented so that future conservation projects are better accepted and understood.

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.

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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.	No		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?	No		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.	No		
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	No		
5. If your project promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, how many local communities accrued tangible socioeconomic benefits? Please complete Table 1 below.	No		

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

