

## Final Evaluation Report

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Your Details	
Full Name	Gloria Kendi Borona
Project Title	Re-chiselling the three-legged African stool: Applying indigenous knowledge in conservation
Application ID	27144-2
Grant Amount	5,000
Email Address	kendigloria@yahoo.com
Date of this Report	26/01/2021

**1. Indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.**

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
Sustained educational activities at the community level				We have conducted workshops on the eastern and western side of the forest. In both cases, the film produced in my previous project/doctoral research was used as an entry point in engaging in discussions about caring for the land and for each other.
Tree planting				We have planted 10,000 trees on the eastern side of the forest.
Community mobilization				We continue to work with two community groups on both sides of the forest on dialogues about ecological restoration activities and building more robust relationships within the community.
Film production				Film has been produced. It can be viewed via this link: A Canopy of hope: The legacy of Wangari Maathai. <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gx0vhqBYo0I&amp;t=2s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gx0vhqBYo0I&amp;t=2s</a>

**2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.**

We had aimed to have the trees planted on the western side of the forest during the rainy season at the end of the year. These trees were to be planted on the slopes of the forested landscape, where there is quite a lot of degradation. Unfortunately, the rains were very heavy and it was not safe to engage in tree planting on the slopes because of the risk of landslides. Landslides and mudslides were happening in several other regions in Kenya, and it was agreed that we postpone the tree planting on that side of the forest. We had planned to keep observing the weather changes and have planned to plant the trees during the other rain season in April 2021.

We have to align the tree planting activities with the rainy season to ensure higher chances of survival for tree seedlings. It is not practical to water the trees planted high up in the slopes of the mountain through any other method. By April 2020 COVID-19 was present in Kenya and this came with heavy restrictions of movements and gatherings of people across the country. During this COVID-19 period, community members who we had worked with on the east informed me that most

of the trees that we planted in eastern side had been destroyed by landslides. We decided to replant these trees instead of going ahead with planting on the western side as planned.

### **3. Briefly describe the three most important outcomes of your project.**

One major outcome of this project is sustained community engagement. There are active community groups in the forest, who are actively engaged in ecological restoration activities and other social-cultural engagements. On the eastern side of the forest, the community group is actively mobilising community members and engaging in cultural revitalisation activities. They are, for example, systematically educating each other on the Mau Mau rebellion, which was engaged in the struggle for land justice and freedom in the 1960s. At the core of their mobilisation is an examination of how they can draw of their history to better protect their landscapes and interests. They are, for example, engaged in a discussion on establishing an eco-lodge and community centre, which will help them generate revenue and also to continue the cultural revitalization project. There is a general consensus at the community level that the youth need to be steeped in the cultures of their people to curb many of the emerging social issues. The relevance of this for ecological restoration is that in these cultures you find very positive synergies about environmental care as encoded in their indigenous knowledge systems. Thus, this mobilisation should be read as a critical component in creating a more wholesome society.

When we discussed the idea of producing another film, it was suggested that the film should be based on how the thought of Nobel Laureate Wangari Maathai has influenced/inspired youth from different parts of the country as opposed to those that come from that ecosystem alone. It was felt that will be a richer film that reflects the face of Kenya and that honours the legacy of Wangari Maathai in a more comprehensive manner. That film has now been produced and I believe, is an excellent output of this project.

The film showcases the work of four young Kenyans working in the environmental space but in diverse landscapes or approaches.

#### Film synopsis

This film documents the work of four African/Kenyan conservationists in diverse spaces: conservation photography, hiking, food and seed sovereignty and community-based conservation. The film showcases how their work interlinks with the ideas and philosophies of Prof. Wangari Maathai. They articulate their passion for conservation and their hopes and desires in contributing to conservation practices that are oriented to the needs and aspirations of African peoples. They are working to build what Prof. Wangari Maathai referred to as "A canopy of hope".

The proposal to work with young people from different parts of the country has increased the time frame of film production. It takes longer because we have to identify suitable people to film, work on logistics, etc. Further, the existence of COVID has been a significant hurdle to overcome.

**4. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project.**

As describes above, this is a community-driven project. It is communities who supply trees and identify suitable places to plant them. It is they who ensure that the trees survive. In the end, it is they who benefit from the ensuing ecological benefits. The act of tree planting is also not just an ecological restoration activity, but also a knowledge mobilisation project. Communities are engaged in propagating tree seedlings – they have to collect seeds from the forest, treat them according to the requirements for particular species, grow seedlings, then transplant them as appropriate. Thus, the act of tree planting keeps this knowledge system alive. In addition, tree planting helps bring communities together to work towards a common goal.

**5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

Yes, I am committed to keep the relationship with this community alive and support their respective projects as they unfold.

**6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?**

The film produced from this project will be one way of disseminating the work we have engaged in.

**7. Timescale: Over what period was the grant used? How does this compare to the anticipated or actual length of the project?**

Over a year. We were not been able to wrap up all the activities within the year, due to unavoidable circumstances. We appreciate that Rufford understands that a variety of factors can influence the implementation of the project.

**8. Budget: Provide a breakdown of budgeted versus actual expenditure and the reasons for any differences. All figures should be in £ sterling, indicating the local exchange rate used. It is important that you retain the management accounts and all paid invoices relating to the project for at least 2 years as these may be required for inspection at our discretion.**

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Accommodation	308	300	-8	
Research assistant costs	378	400	+22	
Communication	37	40	+3	
Transport	447	400	-47	
Film	600	700	+100	The budget increased because

				of the need to access Kenyans from different parts of the country
Joint community workshop	619	600	19	
Tree planting	1865	1900	-35	
Community workshop West	373	223	-150	
Community workshop East	373	223	-150	
Currency exchange and transfer costs		300	+300	I incurred costs in cash transfer, because the funds had to be channelled via an organization. I had to pay for their tax obligations.
<b>TOTAL</b>	500	5086		<b>Exchange rate used: 1 RGS =134 Kenya Shillings</b>

**9. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?**

We look forward to dialogues with communities and think through what projects to engage in a way that supports their aspirations. We would prefer the next project/intervention to be decided by the community.

**10. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the Foundation receive any publicity during the course of your work?**

The Rufford Foundation is acknowledged in the film credits. The community was also informed about the source of funds for the activities we conducted.

**11. Please provide a full list of all the members of your team and briefly what was their role in the project.**

Research assistant 1: **Samuel Gathu Mbugua** - Mbugua is a conservation professional with over 10 years of experience in working with communities in diverse landscapes. He has worked in this particular landscape and is heavily invested in community-driven conservation. He was very instrumental in organizing community workshops and also facilitating discussions.

Research Assistant 2: **Agnes Kawira** - Agnes worked with the Green Belt Movement on the western side of the forest. She initiated ecological restorative works there. She is a forester with vast experience in working in forest governance and community engagement. She was very instrumental in supervising tree planting activities.

I also worked with a team of elders who were instrumental in helping us gain entry to the community. They are deeply knowledgeable in indigenous knowledge systems. These elders would be the lead experts in conducting community workshops that will

be geared towards promoting inter-generational transfer of knowledge with the youth. One elder, **Jeremiah Karago** was instrumental in mobilization of the community on the eastern side of the forest.

**Paul Patrick and Donald Thige** – These are film makers. I am working with them to produce the film.

## 12. Any other comments?

I remain very grateful to The Rufford Foundation for their continued support. I am confident this engagement with the community we have activated will continue to grow and become more robust in safeguarding the Nyandarwa forest, an absolutely critical ecosystem in very many dimensions. The work that we have done and continue to do feeds into the larger discourse of climate change mitigation, adaptation, and other broader biodiversity conservation goals.