

## Final Evaluation Report

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Your Details	
<b>Full Name</b>	Amos Fang Zeh
<b>Project Title</b>	Strengthening collaboration management for the Protection of the Nigeria Cameroon Chimpanzee and Pangolins in the Kimbi Fungom National Park, Cameroon
<b>Application ID</b>	38323-2
<b>Date of this Report</b>	September 30 <sup>th</sup> 2023

**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
Assess the population of the Nigeria-Cameroon chimpanzee and pangolin,				<p>Assessment of population was successfully conducted. We used the transect survey, recce walk and opportunistically observation.</p> <p>We detected a troop of chimpanzees with 11 individuals sighted in the impenetrable rocky landscape at Etchem, 17 chimpanzee nests were also detected: three very old, eight old and seven recent nests. Most of the nests were detected in hilly rocky gallery forests while three were found in thick woody savanna. Most chimpanzees have been disturbed due to high human pressure from habitat fragmentation and hunting activities. A total of 106 signs of pangolin were encountered along transects, recce and opportunistically, 12 live pangolins were encountered through recce walk and 28 live pangolins were encountered opportunistically in the woody savanna. The highest number of pangolins encountered opportunistically was in the dry season between December and February.</p>
Assessing Indigenous Knowledge and Perceptions				<p>Having known about the human-chimpanzee conflicts, we conducted a survey on Indigenous knowledge on the recent recurrent chimpanzee attack in the park. This was done using 300 questionnaires, interviews and focus discussion. A total of 300 questionnaires were administered purposively to 10 communities in and around the park. The aim of the survey was to assess their knowledge and perceptions about the recurrent chimpanzee attacks in the park and their feelings about conservation output. Interviews were granted to the park officials and some conservationists to see if their perceptions and thoughts are the</p>

			<p>same as that of the local communities. It was realised that there were some similarities and disparities amongst the local population perception, the park officials and conservationists. All local respondents to the questionnaire had knowledge of the attacks. Between 2020 and 2021, there have been five serious chimpanzee attacks. Respondent described the conflict as being very serious.</p>
Sensitisation of Ten Peripheral Communities			<p>Having seen the threats posed by chimpanzee in the park, 10 peripheral communities were sensitised. Sensitisations went on hit free and the local people were very much optimistic about the conservation of the chimpanzee and pangolins. This sensitisation was focused on the importance of pangolins conservation. Snaring, hunting of pangolins as well as chimpanzees and bush fire control. Besides other members of the communities, we made sure that a greater proportion of hunters were present during the sensitisation.</p>
Collaboration Management Workshops			<p>The organisation of collaboration meetings were very successful. The aim of these workshops was to reinforce and improve collaboration between the communities who live alongside the chimpanzees and pangolins and government who is the main agent of protection. The meetings were chaired by the conservator of the park, Mr. Ashu Walters, in collaboration with members of the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF). Including all the nine forest guards in the park.</p>

**2. Describe the three most important outcomes of your project.**

**a)** Firstly, in conducting population survey, we detected a troop of chimpanzees with 11 individuals sighted in impenetrable rocky landscape at Etchem, 17 chimpanzee nests were also detected: three very old, eight old and seven recent nests. Most of the nests were detected in hilly rocky gallery forests while three were found in thick woody savanna. A total of 27 vocalisations were recorded across all vegetation types in the park. Twenty of these vocalisations were detected in highly steep rocky landscapes where chimpanzees have been resorted due to high human pressure from habitat fragmentation and hunting activities.

A total of 106 signs of pangolin were encountered along transects, recce and opportunistically, 12 live pangolins were encountered through recce walk and 28 live pangolins were encountered opportunistically in the woody savanna. The highest number of pangolins encountered opportunistically was in the dry season between December and February. This period in the park is called the “pangolin season” because even women encounter and pick live pangolins. This harmless species continuously being present in the park is through the mercy of God as it is being harvested throughout time. We were happy that two live pangolins were taken from a hunter and released back to the wild. Other species and signs detected were the olive baboons, velvet monkeys, mona monkeys, putty nosed monkeys, patas monkey, bay duikers, blue duikers, antelopes, cane rat, African civet, African wild cat, rock hyrax, porcupine, the monitor lizards and rock pythons. These species were detected in both ecosystems, lowland forests, gallery forests, woody savanna, grassland savanna and swampy ecosystem. A greater proportion of rodents were detected in the savanna and gallery forests.

**b)** All local respondents to the questionnaire had knowledge of the attacks. Between 2020 and 2021, there have been five serious chimpanzee attacks. The local described the conflict as being very serious. On the question of what must have caused these recent attacks, the local advanced reasons based on their past knowledge: when a chimpanzee is being wounded either from a trap or gunshot, sound from a vehicle/motor bike, normal aggressiveness to human, when see human with dogs. The consequences of these conflicts have been far reaching spanning from one death, one deformation on the face and three fighting (chimpanzee and humans). This according to the brought fear and misery to the families of the affected and the entire park area because they have never witnessed such things for over 50 years of their occupation of the park area except in some cases more than 20 years back where they heard reports about chimpanzee fighting with hunters in cases where the chimpanzee is shot. On the question of whether there is anything that can be done to prevent the conflicts; local people were of the fact that the park authority has hinted them on precautionary principles to follow to avoid such conflicts. But their worries are about the fact that four chimpanzee attacks have been on people on motor bikers on the major roads that pass through the park to Fru Awa subdivision which is very difficult to avoid.

**c)** Sensitisation were done in six peripheral communities and four communities inside the park. A total of 10 communities were sensitised in and around the park. The sensitisation was done in different areas including palaces, community halls, community working days (village clean up days) and market squares depending on the advice of the chiefs. Our team members alongside trained community field guides played key roles in the sensitisation campaign. They took part in community cleaning up in some peripheral communities just to make sure that the messages went through to the people. Two banners were produced carrying images of the Nigeria-Cameroon chimpanzee and pangolins. This sensitisation was focused on the importance of pangolins conservation. Snaring, hunting of pangolins as well as chimpanzees and bush fire were the main threats that were re-echoed during the sensitisation campaign.

After a series of question-and-answer sessions, the communities expressed their willingness to limit the killing of chimpanzees and harvesting of pangolins and other threatened species in the park. Many questions were raised on the recent chimpanzee attacks on the local population. The conservator at first sight indicated that chimpanzees are very jealous animals that do not want any trespass in their territory or share their territory with any other species. But the local people questioned that the attacks mainly on passengers on motorbikes through the main road passing through the park to the Fru Awa Subdivision. The good thing about the meeting was that all accepted that the four attacks of chimpanzees were on individuals who were on motorbikes, meaning that these chimpanzees are not used to the sound of bikes or vehicles. Their worries were also about the fact that they have been living in the park area for over 50 years, in which they have invested much. How can they then avoid the road of the attacks? In a polite way it was resolved that for now, they should be moving in groups to avoid attacks on a few individuals. Conservation education was also given in two secondary schools in Esu village, the main entrance into the park.

**3. Explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.**

Firstly, collaboration meetings did not take place in the park did due to the Anglophone crisis in the North-West Region of Cameroon. To solve this problem, we diverted the meetings to the Limbe Botanical Garden, in the southwest of Cameroon. We transported all those participants to meeting. There was therefore an extra cost involved in transporting the participant and providing lodging for them in Limbe. Despite the extra cost, we were optimistic that the collaborative meetings were very successful.

Secondly, there were cross-border agro-pastoral conflicts in the extreme western part of the park. This conflicts eruption as graziers from the Taraba State of Nigeria encroached into the extensive lowland of the Gayama Basin to benefit from the perennial vegetation. The clashed with lowland farmers. This led to destruction of farmlands, homes, mutilation of livestock and the death of people during the heavy battles. There was mass migration of villages. Although the conflicts did not affect the research, it is a potential threat to conservation in the park. In respond to this cross-border conflicts in this area, the Cameroon government has set up a military base to check the borders.

Weather conditions also affected the team. There was a harsh dry season between January and March 2023 and most of the streams in the savannah were heavily polluted with cow dung and dung of other wildlife in the park. This was compounded due to the fact that many streams had dried up and water was stagnant in many areas.

**4. Describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefited from the project.**

The local communities were involved at each level of the project. They were involved through field surveys ( field assistant, field guides, potters ), mobilisation and

education during sensitisation campaigns. Ten villages were involved in sensitisation as they were mobilised in their different villages. They participated during the presentation of project results, and they agreed to help conservation of endangered species especially pangolins and the critically endangered Nigeria-Cameroon chimpanzee. During collaboration workshops, 16 community leader focal point members from the four compartments of the park took part in the meetings. Ten locals from local communities were paid as field guides and received training on identification and ecological monitoring. They were actively involved in the implementation of the pangolin survey and will continue to monitor and control the offtake of chimpanzee and pangolins and other species in the park. The porters too were always taken from the communities and the entire field assistants were all from the communities. The livestock graziers around the peripheries of the park told the team that they are willing to be good ambassadors of both chimpanzee and pangolin conservation since they do not consume wildlife and are willing to work for the betterment of the park. This work funded by The Rufford Foundation has increased their knowledge on conservation.

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

Yes, we have plans to continue the work given the need involved. In our next plan, we have earmarked the following:

1. To train the local communities especially hunters on alternative sources of income like beekeeping and agroforestry.
2. To have a complete wildlife survey in the park.
3. Continue to monitor pangolins in the bushmeat market and improve training on alternative income generating activities.
4. Educate and sensitise the population on impact of on biodiversity of the park. This was identified as the greatest threats to pangolin survival in the savannah portion of the park.
5. Study the dynamics of bush meat offtake and market channel in the park.
6. Increase sensitisation campaign of the population on the increasing fatal human-primate conflicts in the park.

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

The results of this project will be shared through The Rufford Foundation website, Publication in national newspapers, peer reviewed papers, report writing and media communication (TV and radio). An article is titled "Human chimpanzee conflicts, a threat to wildlife conservation in the Kimbi Fungom National Park is near completion and will be submitted for publication in February 2024

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

The important next steps are to expand the study based on the information from the fieldwork. In our next plan, we have earmarked the following: build the capacity of local communities on beekeeping and agroforestry. This training of local communities is to divert their attention from hunting to more profitable income sources. This will reduce the friction on wildlife and other biodiversity in the park. We also have continued to monitor the population of chimpanzee and pangolins and other wildlife species in the park especially in bushmeat market using our converted conservation ambassadors. We also need to educate and sensitise the population on bushfire control in the park. Bushfire was the major threats to pangolin in the savannah ecosystem; firstly, it directly affects the pangolins during a fire incidence as pangolin finds it difficult to escape from the flames of the fire and secondly it affects them through destruction of their habitats. There is also needed to study the ecology of the chimpanzee and pangolin in the mixed ecosystem. Lastly, there is the need to assess the biodiversity of the park as there is no concise database for the park. There has been growing fatal chimpanzee attack in the park in the past 2 years. Despite the fact that this study has heightened the strategies local communities need to survive from these attacks, there is total need to expand sensitisation throughout the entire park and across all the neighbouring villages. Villages have existed in the park for over 50 years and so we need to put in massive conservation education so as to liberate the threatened species from their scorch earth hunting.

**8. 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?**

Yes, we used the Rufford logo on the sensitisation banners throughout the 10 villages. We also used the Rufford Foundation logo on the interview guide and the questionnaires administered during the socio-economic survey.

**9. Provide a full list of all the members of your team and their role in the project.**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Location</b>
Amos Fang Zeh	Principal Investigator	Buea
Dr. Kamah Paschal Buntu	Forester; Principal Research Assistant	Buea
Forsah Albert	GIS Expert. Design the research maps	Buea
Prof. Kimengsi Jude.	Research adviser	Bamenda
Mr. Ashu Walters	Conservator of the Kimbi-Fungom National Park	Bamenda
Meh Elvis Ngwuh	Government Eco guard - He guided research team	Kimbi
Gomnov Ntah Jean Paul	Government Eco guard - He guided research team	Kimbi
Godi Mvondo Donald	Government Eco guard - He guided research team	Kimbi
Ndukong Cosmas Nfon	Government Eco guard - He guided research team	Kimbi

Essomba Mbassi	Government Eco guard - He guided research team	Kimbi
Oscar Cedric	Government Eco guard - He guided research team	Kimbi
Ndi Magnus Ngangsi	Government Eco guard - He guided research team	Kimbi
Mewode Brice Tresor	Government Eco guard - He guided research team	Kimbi
Dieudonne Guy	Government Eco guard - He guided research team	Kimbi
Yau Mahadu	Community Leader	Kimbi
Kum Ernest	Community Leader	Esu
Ukah Dickson	Social Scientist assistant	Buea
Takang Blessing Takor	Community mobiliser	Buea
Mbouagawore Ndem	Trainer	Limbe
Nzhie Mang Elise	Participant	Limbi
Ebong Lyna Arreya	Community mobiliser	Kimbi
Ayuk Clariss Manyi	Participant	Buea
Ngangu Novert	Field assistant	Limbe
Niki Bororo Jerome	Field training technician	Dschang
Beh James	Lead field guide. Help the research team in pangolin survey	Esu
Jean Mbene	Field guide. Help the research team in surveys	Kimbi
Clarise Pih	Principal Social Scientist	Buea
Mpame Cynthia Muh	Sociologist	Bamenda
Eweh Stephen Tem	Field guide, Photographer	Medzey
Ngwoh Roland Fuh	Field guide. Help the research team in pangolin survey	Munkep
Beh John Kum	Field guide. Help in Bushmeat survey	Gayama
Meh Raymond N	Porter	Etchem
David Luam Meh	Field guide. Help the research team in pangolin survey	Gayama
Ngong Lewis Field guide.	Help the research team in pangolin survey	Subuum
Kpwe Albert	Field guide. Help the research team during bush meat survey	Esu
Zang Charles	Field guide. Help the research team in in bushmeat survey	Mbwi-mbwi
Oliver Meh	Field guide. Help the research team in pangolin survey	Tengheukah
Kum Lewis	Field assistant during sensitisation meetings	Etchem
Kpwe Albert	Field assistant during sensitisation meetings	Gayama
Kum Jarvis	Field assistant	Gayama
Oliver Meh	Filed assistant	Kpep

## 10. Any other comments?

During the period of this project, we came across a growing problem in the Kimbi Fungom National Park that a growing rate fatal agro pastoral conflict and cross border conflicts in the extreme western park of the park (the Gayama Basin). These conflicts have remained problematic to conservation effort because it led to the displacement of the population and prevent government patrol in the park. This conflict is a result of graziers from the neighbouring Nigeria encroaching into Cameroon territory to benefit from the perennial pasture at the Gayama Basin, fertile and extensive lowland that has been earmarked for rice cultivation. We were very happy that the conflict did not affect our project in the park. Also, there is continuous habitat fragmentation in the park as coco production is gaining ground and more productive. I want to sincerely thank The Rufford Foundation for this grant given to us for the realisation of this project. We remain grateful as satisfactory results were gotten from the field. The Kimbi-Fungom National Park is going to see a new leaf in the conservation initiatives especially as our works have started converting many hunters into conservation ambassadors.



Principal investigator in the field using binocular to detect Chimpanzee.



Principal investigator in the field collecting biological data.