

## Final Evaluation Report

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Your Details	
Full Name	Angwa Gwendoline
Project Title	Improving Community Participation in the Conservation of Apes and Other Wildlife Species in the Deng Deng National Park
Application ID	40232-2
Date of this Report	September 2024

**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
Revitalizing the functioning effectiveness of 5 Village Forest Management Committees (VFMCs) around the Deng Deng National Park				Five village forest management committees were selected and trained. The selected communities were, Deng Deng, Mansa, Hona, Lompangar and Mbaki Village. Sensitisation and trainings were done by the project team, ACES, and the Park Management team. Training was centre on the role communities play in the effective management of wildlife and protected areas. During the meeting, the team completely change the community's ideology of protected area management. The Ministry of Forestry represented by the ecoguards of the park also explain the 1994 wildlife laws explaining the penalties for defaulters and also discourage poaching for commercial purpose. In some communities, the VFMCs was not in existence and after explaining to the village what the group represent and what is expected of them, we together with the village chief select members who can best represent the village in the management of the forest. Registra were shared to all the communities for recording every project taking place in the communities with respect to the management of the park and the communities were also trained on how to record information

				<p>in the registrar. The Financial need for the effective functioning of VFMCs is already well articulated in the approved management plan of the park. But not implemented due to lack of funds and international conservation partners. ACES in the course of the training introduce a annual compensation scheme for each of the villages that will not hunt for commercial purpose, will not kill any endangered species will have a compensation of 100,000F CFA to support community development projects each year.</p> <p>This objective, was 100% completed</p>
<p>Providing alternative sources of income by engaging 200 farmers and hunters from 5 communities in Bee farming</p>				<p>This objective was greatly cherished by the communities and was initially planned to trained and engage 200 farmers in five villages but at the end 113 farmers in three villages were trained. Due to the high cost of the hives almost three times what was budget, we were only able to produce 75 bee hives and engage three (3) villages in the project. The training was well articulated by an expert in the domain of honey production. Participation for the training was open and attended by all members of the communities. 25 hives was distributed in each village. In some villages 5 people benefited and others were trained on the construction of local hives. During the follow-up, we discovered that the hives were not colonised in all three villages and a refreshers training was done in all the villages and the team together with the communities repeated the installation of hives for</p>

				<p>at least two beneficiary per village. This time the hives were colonies in three villages and after four months, the honey was harvested. In Mansa, 25 litters of honey was harvested and in Mbaki 12 litters. The bees in the colony's hives in Lompangar escape. During the training the expert emphasize that honey harvesting cannot be done by one person so we increase the number of bee suits to 8. 4 smokers, and 1 honey press were purchase and distributed to the three communities. The team also kept a set of bee suits and a smoker for use during monitoring and this was handed to ACES for continuous follow-up. We greatly appreciate the result achieved and we have learnt very greatly on how best to improve on the outcome of this project this is the pilot phase and we hope to use the lessons learned to improve on the project in the future.</p>
Understanding community perception and effectiveness of indigenous knowledge in managing human wildlife conflict through a participatory problem analysis with 5 local communities				<p>A participatory community workshop was organised in five villages. During this very interactive workshop, communities share their grievances towards the management of the park and stated categorically that the protected area has left them with no choice or mean of survival, they lack space for agricultural activities and the park is just a few kilometres away from the village. 100 questionnaires were administered in the five communities to documents community perception towards conservation and traditional knowledge in managing human wildlife conflict. According to the responses of 100 participants within the five</p>

				<p>communities, 22% attested that they use local techniques to reduce crop destructions by animals. They use methods such as scarecrow, cassette tape vibration and animal fences. Though the participants confess that these methods were not effective for large animals such as Elephant and Gorillas but it helps prevent small mammal and monkeys from crop destruction especially in their maize and cocoa farms. The participants also attested that they are aware of some effective local techniques such as bee hive and chili pepper fencing but do not have the skills to apply this method to reduce conflict in the area. The bee hive and chili pepper fencing has been proven effective in mitigating elephant conflict in the mount Cameroon National Park. For community perception, two areas were analysed. 1) suitability of conservation management and 2) use of wildlife product and knowledge of wildlife laws. The attitude of the respondent toward the establishment of the National Park differs 63% (n = 100) of the respondent appreciate the Park establishment and are happy with the work of eco guards in the management of the park and the main reasons was to give their children</p>
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				<p>the opportunity to see the different wildlife species in the area. Despite the overwhelming number happy with the park management, 37% thinks the park is a hindrance to community development and livelihood since they are prohibited from entering the park and those who violate the law are apprehended and detained. The communities do not have any contribution to the day-to-day management of the park and hence they feel their livelihood is susceptible. All 100% responded recognizes the park boundaries and understand that it is strictly out of bands. They are more aware of illegal activities conducted in the park as opposed to the legal activities. For instance, poaching and tree cutting were the most frequently cited illegal activities in the park. This is corroborated by the number of respondents that felt that the wildlife in the park was decreasing due to poaching (68%) and 32% felt that wildlife populations were increasing primarily due to protection from government Eco guards. for law enforcement, 45% of the respondent believed that law enforcement is active in their communities and the effort has increase over the last two years while</p>
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				<p>55% comment that law enforcement is nonexistent or have a very low frequency in their communities (this was so for Tete d'elephant and Ligiem).</p> <p>Furthermore, the research found that 85% of the respondent shows a negative attitude towards restrictions on wildlife harvest (hunting) and this was directly related to their religion. The communities base on their believe as forest dwellers say the consumption of wildlife is inbuilt as the they claim bush meat taste better than any other community domesticated animal. To them hunting for consumption should be legal and restricted only for commercial purpose. The reasons associated to commercial hunting based on the respondent was a fast way to raise income for their day-to-day life. They believed the law could be more flexible and only trade-hunters should be punished by law. Another very peculiar reason for wildlife harvest was because communities feel all attention is place on wildlife protection with no livelihood support project to forest adjacent communities to increase income and reduce their dependency on forest resources. Our results suggested that most respondents have a strong desire to hunt for consumption.</p>
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**2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.**

Some of the beneficiaries of the hives did not install their hives but instead left them in their houses and were using them as cage to rare fowls. During the follow-up, some of the hives were retrieved and instruction given to the chief to summoned all concerns to return the hive to the chief palace.

The cost for the construction of the hives was way higher than what was budgeted and we resulted to reduce the hives from 200 to 75 hives

the hives did not colonise during the first installation and a repeated training was organised and the hive reinstalled to optimise the chances thereby causing a change in the project deadline.

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

#### **1)Revitalising the functional effectiveness of VFMCs**

The VFMCs members of five villages (Deng Deng, Mansa, Hona, Lompangar and Mbaki Village) were trained to effectively contributes to the park management. The youth representative of the VFMCs of each village will be responsible for assigning youths that will accompany park and ACES staff in wildlife research. Five (5) Registrars (book) was given to five selected village to note every community events taking place in the village ranging from research, conservation projects by other organisation and community development projects should all be register with the corresponding date, name of persons in charge and their contact detail. This is to ensure follow-up at the level of the park and the village.

The financial need of the VFMCs is well explained in the Management plan and also included in the business plan of the park (explaining community role and compensation) but this is not fully implemented due to lack of funds

#### **2) Providing alternative sources of income by engaging 200 farmers and hunters from 5 communities in Bee farming**

A total of 113 persons were trained in three villages on the construction of local bee hives, hive installation, hive management and honey harvesting. 75 modern hives, 8 bee suits, and 4 smokers were donated to three villages. 5 person per village benefited and each person had 5 modern hives. two farmers out of all the beneficiaries recorded a success in Mansa and Mbaki Village. the colonize hives in Mansa produce 25 liters of honey and in Mbaki 12 litters of honey. In Mansa, 60,000frs was generated from the sales of 20 litters of honey and the remaing 5 litters was shared to some of the villagers present during the harvest. In Mbaki 5 litter of the honey was sold for 15,000frs and the rest shared in the village. the communities were excited and other villages not included in the training has been calling the team to trained their communities.



### **3) Understanding community perception and effectiveness of indigenous knowledge in managing human wildlife conflict**

1000 brochures were shared to sensitize local communities and a participatory community workshop was organised in five villages. During this very interactive workshop, communities share their grievances towards the management of the park and stated categorically that the protected area has left them with no choice or mean of survival, they lack space for agricultural activities and the park is just a few kilometres away from the village. According to the responses of 100 participants within the five communities, 22% attested that they use local techniques to reduce crop destructions by animals. They use methods such as scarecrow, cassette tape vibration and animal fences. Though the participants confess that these methods were not effective for large animals such as Elephant and Gorillas but it helps prevent small mammal and monkeys from crop destruction especially in their maize and cocoa farms. The participants also attested that they are aware of some effective local techniques such as bee hive and chili pepper fencing but do not have the skills to apply this method to reduce conflict in the area. The bee hive and chili pepper fencing has been proven effective in mitigating elephant conflict in the mount Cameroon National Park. For community perception, two areas were analysed. 1) suitability of conservation management and 2) use of wildlife product and knowledge of wildlife laws. The attitude of the respondent toward the establishment of the National Park differs 63% (n = 100) of the respondent appreciate the Park establishment and are happy with the work of eco guards in the management of the park and the main reasons was to give their children the opportunity to see the different wildlife species in the area. Despite the overwhelming number happy with the park management, 37% thinks the park is a hindrance to community development and livelihood since they are prohibited from entering the park and those who violate the law are apprehended and detained. The communities do not have any contribution to the day-to-day management of the park and hence they feel their livelihood is susceptible. All 100% responded recognizes the park boundaries and understand that it is strictly out of bounds. They are more aware of illegal activities conducted in the park as opposed to the legal activities. For instance, poaching and tree cutting were the most frequently cited illegal activities in the park. This is corroborated by the number of respondents that felt that the wildlife in the park was decreasing due to poaching (68%) and 32% felt that wildlife populations were increasing primarily due to protection from government Eco guards. For law enforcement, 45% of the respondent believed that law enforcement is active in their communities and the effort has increase over the last two years while 55% comment that law enforcement is non-existent or have a very low frequency in their communities (this was so for Tete d'elephant and Ligiem). Furthermore, the research found that 85% of the respondent shows a negative attitude towards restrictions on wildlife harvest (hunting) and this was directly related to their religion. The communities base on their believe as forest dwellers say the consumption of wildlife is inbuilt as they claim bush meat taste better than any other community domesticated animal. To them hunting for consumption should be legal and restricted only for commercial purpose. The reasons associated to commercial hunting based on the respondent was a fast way to raise income for their day-to-day life. They believed the law could be more flexible and only trade-hunters should be punished by law. Another very peculiar reason for wildlife harvest was because communities feel all attention is place on wildlife protection with no livelihood support project to forest adjacent communities to increase income and reduce their dependency on forest resources. Our results suggested that most respondents have a strong desire to hunt for consumption.

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

This project was developed together with communities. They were involved in all the objectives of the project. They were trained on bee farming and benefited from the Bee hive, bee suits and smoker donated to the communities. The equipment's will be managed by the president of the Village Forest Management Committees (VFMCs) who is the chief of the respective villages. The communities also benefited from the sensitisation meeting and 1000 pictorial and brochures were distributed to them. The communities also participated in the training of VFMCs and benefited from the registrar that was shared to the communities. They were also involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the project. During which the challenges and way forwards were discussed.

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

**Yes.**

This project especially the bee keeping was a pilot project and although the objective was partially fulfilled, we have identified our shortcoming and the community challenges in handling such a project and we would like to invest again further into this objective by engaging farmers in group bee keeping such that all the hives donated are install in a carefully selected location in each village and communities mobilised into groups for the management of the site. Which needs to be quiet and calm at all times.

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

We have produced articles for specific objectives which has all been publish on the ACES website, LinkedIn pages and Facebook page of ACES acknowledging the Rufford foundation.

A manual on bee farming was produce with the logo of the funder (Rufford Foundation) for continuous use in the project areas.

A project final results will be shared on ACES website, Rufford foundation website, our social media handles and a brief journal paper on the extend of human wildlife conflict and the perception of local communities will be produce for publication.

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

This project was planned to run from July 2023 to April 2024 but due to the repeated training on bee keeping and considering the time that the hives were colonized, we needed to keep them for four months to attained maturity before harvest. The project finally lasted longer from July 2023 to September 2024

**8. Budget [intentionally deleted]**

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

The most important next step will be to further support the bee keeping project in the communities and ensuring that the difficulties encountered are addressed to achieve desired results.

- 1) carry out a refresher training to ensure optimum realisation and engagement of farmers and hunters in bee farming
- 2) mobilised farmers to establish a microcredit enterprise to boost local community growth.
- 3) Engage women in sustainable agriculture through the introduction of agroecology to boost productivity and reduce dependency on forest resources.

**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?**

Yes, we use the Rufford logo in all brochures and training manual produced and distributed to stakeholders. The foundation was well acknowledged in all articles posted on ACES website and social media platform. We also use the Rufford Logo on ACES website as our financial partner for this project.

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

**Angwa Gwendoline:** Project Team Leader, involved in all the implementation stages of the project, data collection, workshops, training, questionnaire design using cobo collect, Data analysis and reporting

**Njom Ignatius Nji:** was involved in the beekeeping training (he was the trainer) he ensured the training, installation management and harvesting of honey.

**Teneng Claris Pih:** was involved in the sensitization and collection of data regarding wildlife conflict and perception of local communities. She also led the participating community workshop

**Atud Cecile Bih:** she is the community Development Volunteer for ACES and she was involved in the training of VFMCs on sustainable forest management and their role in forest protection.

**Meka Jean ( Conservator DDNP):** he was involved in the strategic planning and project orientation, he assigned an ecoguards to accompany us throughout the project training, and support with field equipment.

**Docta Molar Stephane:** he acted as the community mobiliser helping us to relate information and bridging communication gaps with villages. Most of the villages do not have network.

**12. Any other comments?**

I wish to use this opportunity to appreciate the Rufford foundation for trusting in me again on this project and I am very glad to say that the initiative of ACES birth was as a result of the first Rufford project I received. Through that support and visibility given to me by RUFFORD, I have been able to mobilise other small grants to continue supporting conservation works around the Deng Deng National Park.

ANNEX: PICTURES

