



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOP FINAL REPORT

27th February - 3rd March 2018
Mweya, Queen Elizabeth National Park, Uganda

Delivered by the

Queen Elizabeth Parks Project

Supported by

The Thin Green Line Foundation

Queen Elizabeth Country Park
Gravel Hill, Horndean, Hants, UK PO8 0QE

Phone: 07540 930092
Email: info@queenelizabethparks.org



**International
Ranger
Federation**

Community Engagement Workshop - Final Report

Index

Title	Page
Preamble	3
Introduction	4
Pre-Workshop Preparations.....	4
Workshop Methodology	5
Day 1	6
Day 2	7
Day 3	8
Day 4	9
Kasese Wildlife Day	
Protected Areas Visits	
Best Practice Guidelines	
Evaluation Process	
Cascade Training	
Recommendations.....	
Summary	
 <u>Appendices:</u>	
Workshop Participants	
Workshop Budget	

Community Engagement Workshop - Final Report

PREAMBLE

The Queen Elizabeth Parks Project (known as the Queen Elizabeth Parks Twining Project in Uganda) is a Community Conservation Initiative created by the Queen Elizabeth National Park in Uganda and the Queen Elizabeth Country Park in the UK. It is managed by a UK registered Charity under the direction of staff from the two Queen Elizabeth Parks and their employing authorities.

The Project works with Rangers (and other Parks staff) as well as teachers and community leaders to share, connect and support people who are impacted by wildlife conservation and their proximity to Protected Areas.

A key area of work is the facilitation of best practice exchange and mentoring between Park Staff and teachers.

To date the Queen Elizabeth Parks Project has hosted a number of professional exchange visits as well as training courses on sustainability, customer care and also Interpretation.

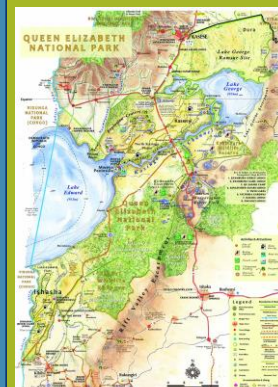
The Queen Elizabeth Parks Project has been granted privileged access to the work of the Community, Tourism and Law Enforcement Teams at several Uganda's National Parks. This access has allowed us to experience the work of these departments as critical friends and has enabled us to identify examples of excellence as well as areas that could be improved.

Community Engagement is an area where there are many examples of excellent practice, however there are also clear inconsistencies in approach and delivery which undermine the ambitions of those charged with managing the conflicts occurring in and around Protected Areas.

The Queen Elizabeth Parks Project secured a grant from the Thin Green Line Foundation to deliver a Community Engagement Workshop with the aims of:

- **Bringing together experienced Community Engagement Wardens and Rangers**
- **To share and evaluate Community Engagement best practice examples from across East Africa**
- **To create guidelines to ensure consist approach to Community Engagement in Uganda**
- **To develop meaningful evaluation processes to be able to track the long term effectiveness of Engagement activities.**
- **To develop a cascade training approach to Ranger personal development**

The Thin Green Line Foundation is the Charitable arm of the International Ranger Federation. It provides urgent aid, equipment, training and funding to Rangers and their families in low-income countries and conflict zones. The organisation also works with Indigenous Rangers in Australia and abroad.



Community Engagement Workshop – Final Report

INTRODUCTION

This final report summarizes the proceedings of the Community Engagement Workshop held at Jumbo House, Mweya which is located within the Queen Elizabeth National Park, Uganda.

The report also outlines key recommendations for the improvement of Community Engagement activities within Uganda Wildlife Authority as well as what the workshop participants considered to be community engagement best practice principles for Wildlife Conservation Professionals.

These recommendations and best practice principles have been sense checked by the Workshop Facilitators through a series of short visits to 3 additional National Parks where other Community Engagement related staff were further questioned and their comments compared with the Workshop observations.

The Workshop Facilitators also visited the UN World Wildlife Day event that took place on Saturday 3rd March 2018.

As well as major conservation organisations like WWF, AWF and UWA, there was range of community based organisations offering distinctly different views and ways of undertaking community-based conservation.

Whilst not technically part of the Community Engagement Workshop, some of the comments and observations encountered at that event will inevitably have had some influence on this report.

Finally, this report will also explore future evaluation and cascade training approaches with a view to ensure that the lessons learnt in the Workshop can be disseminated across all levels of Community Engagement Staff.



Community Engagement Workshop – Final Report

PRE-WORKSHOP PREPARATION

As the main instigators and organisers of the Community Engagement Workshop, the Queen Elizabeth Parks Project took the lead in terms of securing funding (courtesy of the Thin Green Line Foundation and the Project's own funds), researching the main focal points of the Community Engagement Workshop, engaging with a number of East African Community Conservation organisations and construction the workshop methodology and operating procedures.

The Uganda Wildlife Authority led in the selection of the Workshop location, participants and the date of the workshop. UWA also had a large hand in setting the budget requirements. It was decided very early on that this workshop would be aimed at Senior Level Staff, primarily Warden Level.

Meetings took place in the UK (Including meeting with TGL / IRF President, Sean Wilmore) as well as Phone / Skype Meetings with UWA officials to discuss the core aims, objectives and outcomes.

There were also meetings between QEPP representatives and community engagements academics and experience practitioners to ensure the workshop was relevant, meaningful and serve a useful purpose.

Community Engagement Workshop – Final Report

WORKSHOP METHODOLOGY

The timing of the workshop was determined by the operational availability of the Community Engagement Wardens and a desire of Uganda Wildlife Authority for the workshop to be part of a week of wildlife conservation activities that preceded World Wildlife Day.

Jumbo House was chosen as the venue for the main workshop presentations and discussions. This location was an important part of establishing the informal style of the Workshop. It was crucial that all the participants felt comfortable enough to contribute openly and with honesty.

The workshop format consisted of an agreed combination of themed discussions with feedback sessions set up by the course leaders and Community Engagement Case Studies presented by experienced exponents of community-based conservation activities.

As a workshop rather than a training session, with an objective to provide future guidance and improvements, there was a strong emphasis on allowing a frank and honest exchange of views. This included critiquing

Community Engagement Workshop Leaders

- **Charles Etoru**
Co-Founder of the Queen Elizabeth Parks Project
- **Steve Peach**
Co-Founder of the Queen Elizabeth Parks Project

Workshop Assistants

- **Jan Allnutt**
Chairman of QEPP Trustees
- **Ronald Bwambale**
Uganda Director of the Queen Elizabeth Parks Project
- **Opening Address**
Edward Asalu
Conservation Area Manager for the Queen Elizabeth National Park
- **Closing Address**
Stephen Sanyi Masaba
UWA Director of Tourism and Business Services

Agreed Workshop Objectives

- To bring together experienced Community Engagement Wardens and Community members.
- To share and evaluate Community Engagement best practice examples.
- Create guidelines to ensure consist approach to Community Engagement across Uganda's National Parks
- Develop meaningful evaluation processes to be able to track the long-term effectiveness of Engagem activities.
- Develop a cascade training approach to Ranger personal development
- It was also agreed there will also be the chance to discuss any specific community issues raised by Workshop participants

Agreed Roles and Responsibilities:

Facilitators –

Time-keeping, to create the conditions for useful discussion, to ensure that everyone gets to contribute, to ensure we achieve our objectives.

To follow up on the findings of this workshop and help evaluate any programmes put in place.

Participants – To contribute honestly listen with an open mind, to help drive the direction of the discussions, to use their knowledge and experience to contribute towards our objectives, to take what is discovered and disseminate it to colleagues.

the case studies and analyzing their success against the Warden's experience of Protected Areas.

Much of the discussions took place in smaller breakout groups, feedback sessions generally happened through an elected representative.

It was also vital to experience Community Engagement 'in the raw', so visits were arranged to established community initiatives. Again, freedom was given to workshop participants and the local community members to set the agenda These proved to be both challenging and

Some Key Phrases / Words describing the Participants Likes

*Telling the Truth Travelling
Being Fair Helping the Poor Having a big Voice
Adventure Doing Things for Conservation
Respecting People Perfectionist
Going Straight Forward
Meeting Targets Cracking Jokes*

informative.

It was agreed that the Workshop Leaders would on behalf of the participants write up a final draft report which would circulate to all participants for comment and review. With a final agreed report being published for use by UWA and Thin Green Line Foundation.

Because of the possibility that some of the recommendations made by the report could be seen as critical of the existing arrangements at UWA or other organisations, no individual comments made by participants (other than the workshop leaders) would be identified.

Community Engagement Workshop – Final Report

DAY ONE

After an opening address by Edward Asalu, Conservation Area Manager for the Queen Elizabeth National Park the first session of the Workshop was taken up with agreeing the Workshop Objectives and the Roles and Responsibilities of the Workshop Facilitators and Participants and a series of introduction exercises.

The introduction exercises were designed to explore the key personality traits of the participants including key likes and dislikes, words associated with community engagement and the meaning of community engagement.

There was much discussion around the meaning of the term of Community Engagement and whether individual participants shared the same understanding as the communities they were engaging with and if this understanding was shared by the Uganda Wildlife Authority. Also what is the difference between terms like Sensitizing People, Public Participation and Community Engagement?

Some Key Phrases / Words describing the Participants views on Community Engagement

*Process Collaborating Plan Sustainable Involvement Hearing Voices
Issues Shared Benefits Directly Involved Capacity Building Ownership Consulting Co-
Existence Implement Policy Overcoming Challenges Word of mouth Working
Relationship What the Community Think Conserving in Abstract*

Community Engagement goes Beyond the Budget

Some Key Phrases / Words describing the Participants Dislikes

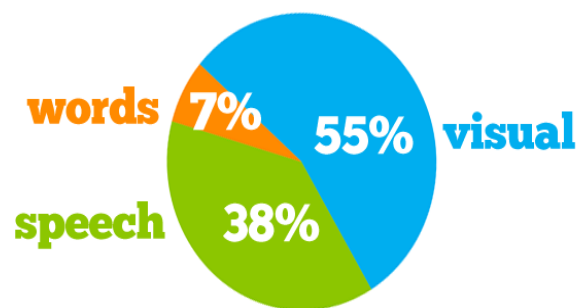
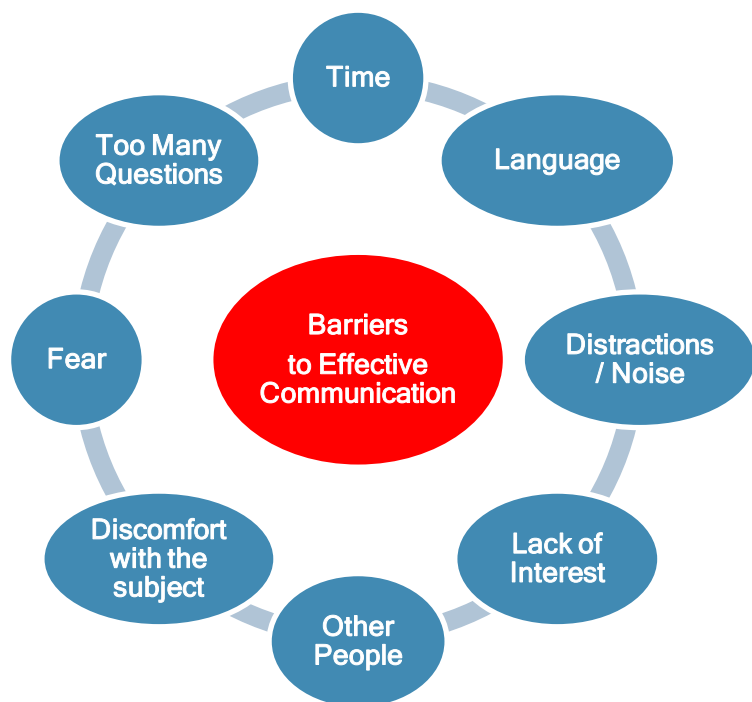
*Not Meeting Targets Being ignored by Professionals
Supervisors not completing tasks
Doing things on time Keeping Promises
Lack of Respect*

DAY ONE - CONTINUED

The Workshop looked at some definitions of Community Engagement and Public Participation

- **The International Association of Public Participation website states:**
'Public participation' means to involve those who are affected by a decision in the decision-making process. It promotes sustainable decisions by providing participants with the information they need to be involved in a meaningful way, and it communicates to participants how their input affects the decision. The practice of public participation might involve public meetings, surveys, open houses, workshops, polling, citizen's advisory committees and other forms of direct involvement with the public.
- **2005 United Nations Brisbane Declaration – the Declaration states that community engagement is a two-way process:**
- *By which the aspirations, concerns, needs and values of citizens and communities are incorporated at all levels and in all sectors in policy development, planning, decision-making, service delivery and assessment;*
- *By which governments and other business and civil society organisations involve citizens, clients, communities and other stakeholders in these processes.*

The next set of presentations were about the fundamentals of communication and the importance of understanding how individuals and groups of people take onboard information and ideas. The Workshop discussed the basics of communication, the barriers to engaging with people and practical issues language and culture.



There are only two reasons why we don't trust people.
 First, we don't know them.
 Second, we know them.
healthythoughts.in

The afternoon session was focused on Community Engagement Case Studies with presentations from Stephen Rubanga from Conservation through Public Health (CTPH) and John Tinka of Unite. (Copies of these presentations will be published on the Queen Elizabeth Parks Project website)

Both CTPH and Unite are successful community initiatives. CTPH works around 4 keys themes of wildlife health, community health, Livestock health and alternative livelihoods. It is a national organisation but has geographically focused areas. Unite's focus is on education and sustainable activities. It is very much centred around the Kibale area.

Workshop participants critiqued both organisations and shared their experience of working similar setups.

Key points were agreed for inclusion in the final report.

Community Engagement Workshop – Final Report

DAY TWO

The Workshop was split into a morning of further presentations and discussion. Followed by afternoon visits to local community groups.

After a recap of the previous day's discussions there were presentations from The Rwenzori Mountain Services (RMS) and from Community Initiatives for Biodiversity Conservation (CIBIC) based in Bwindi.

The Rwenzori Mountain Services is a long-established community-based enterprise that is deeply embedded in the tourism provision for the Rwenzori Mountain area in a way few other community groups are.

RMS is very much at the centre of the efforts to promote tourism and conservation efforts in the Kasese area.

The presentation generated much discussion around the nature of the agreements between UWA and Community Groups, also the fact that RMS took such a strong and positive role in developing tourism provision.

John Bosco Tusingwire gave an interesting presentation about a Bwindi based community initiative. Bwindi is well known for its plethora of community projects and probably the place where the 20% revenue from the National Park to the Community is most visible.

CIBIC is a hybrid organisation, being both a not for profit and a limited company. Its key focus is on conservation through encouraging sustainable land use. It also undertakes community education as well. Amongst the workshop there was a lot of 'Bwindi' experience so once again this led to series of discussions around the role of education and tour operators in developing and supporting community conservation efforts.

The morning's plenary session concentrated on the afternoon's visits to some local community groups and what the workshop needed to get from these visits. Many participants continued the discussions through lunch, so it was with some anticipation and eagerness that the workshop set off for the village of Katwe.

Katwe Village is dominated by salt. There has been a history of salt extraction using the pan method on Lake Katwe, except for a brief interlude when a German company tried to industrialize the process. As well as producing salt, Lake Katwe is also the focus of a tourism venture based around cultural tours focused on the extraction of salt. Close by is a second lake, Lake Munyanyange, which because of the seasonal presence of Flamingos and a variety of other wader birds also hosts some tourists.

Community Visit Day



Two Information centres compete for the attention of passing tourists, but it is the main Katwe Tourism Information Centre run by KATIC that seems to have the majority of the trade and also seems to have been able to reinvest some of their income into accommodation infrastructure.

It was here that the workshop participants spent some time looking at the newly finished accommodation and discussing with two of the Directors from KATIC some of the community and conservation issues affecting KATIC and the wider populous.

After outlining the tourism services on offer at Katwe, the discussions centred on a number of issues, including concerns over the long-term viability of Lake Katwe as a salt producing lake, annoyance at the risk posed by crocodiles and the lack of maintenance of the cages, a strong feeling that there was a lack of contact between the community and the National Park, discussion at the prospect of oil exploration in the area and what that might do to the environment. There was particular angst over what appeared to be the demise of the 'Friends of Queen' meetings.

The discussion rapidly took on the form of a community meeting, and it was interesting to see how quickly UWA staff became defensive and this seemed to create an equally robust response from the KATIC managers. It became a real test of participant's tact and diplomacy.

The participants then undertook a quick visit to the Uganda Wildlife Training Institute before moving on to the village of Katunguru.

Katunguru, like Katwe, is a village very much at the frontline of conservation. Issues include poverty, fishing restrictions, poaching, education and wild animal encroachment.

The initial stopping point was Katunguru Primary School. This school is supported by a number of NGO's including the Queen Elizabeth Parks Project and is at the forefront of Kazinga Channel Schools Project. At the school the group look at the newly installed library and the 'Plastic Elephant' sculpture.

The library was supported by Education Uganda and has created a safe and secure place to keep and read books and also to study. It was revealed that many parents have also started to use the library and it has created a feel-good factor in the community.

The Elephant sculpture is part of an initiative to highlight the issue with plastic waste. Children are encouraged to collect plastic bottles and put them within the wire-caged frame of the elephant. When full the elephant is emptied, and the bottles disposed of.

After engaging with school children and teachers, the group moved on to the Katunguru Women's Group. An impromptu community meeting was held with leading members of the Women's Group where the discussion centred on how the women could improve the sales and income from their souvenir stalls and also what they perceived as a lack of engagement from the National Park. The Leader of the Women's Group also blatantly talked about the poaching of firewood and the collection of medicinal plants.

There was also a hint of challenge about the conversation.

Once returned to Jumbo House, the workshop enjoyed a final discussion and roundup of the community engagement visits.

Community Engagement Workshop – Final Report

DAY THREE

This day was split into a series of presentations followed by in-depth discussion around specific issues and potential improvements in Uganda Wildlife Authority's Community Engagement provision.

Before the presentations the participants undertook a word, association task aimed at highlighting the main points from the previous days Community Visits,

The key words and phrases coming out of that exercise are listed below, there was unanimous agreement that these capture the essence of the Community Site Visits.

Key Phrases / Words describing the Essence of Community Engagement Site Visits

Ignored, Working Together, Revenue Sharing, Tax Obligations, Joint Visits to Schools, Quality of Product, MOU – Signed, Crocodiles, Sensitizing takes time, Illegal Activities, Help from the Park, Poaching, Encroachment, Firewood, School, Park Entrance Fees, Employment- lack of, Problem Animals, Challenging, Friends of Queen,

The participants were asked to keep these words and phrases in mind as they heard from our main speakers for the day.

The Workshop heard from Dr Moses Chemurot, Makere University, College of Natural Sciences, Mayanja Deokabugujjo, from the Ggaba Teacher Training College who also works with Pan African Conservation and Education (PACE) as well as Warden Colleagues relying their experience and Knowledge. Leading amongst these were Joseph Serugo and Walter Odokorwot.

Dr Moses Chemurot's presentation was on '**Promoting the conservation of Red Colobus in Itwara and Matiri Forests, Uganda through population monitoring, awareness creation and beekeeping**'.

This was well received and provoked both strong praise and many questions.

Part of the presentation focussed on the both the economics and the social aspects of the connections between Conservation, Tourism and Community benefit.

This aspect created much discussion as most felt this was at the heart of any successful community engagement programme.

There were also comments around the value of connecting Research and Communities, 'goal farming' / crop farming rather than bee-keeping, the importance of activities like bee-keeping on less productive land (especially the edges of forest reserves) and the reaction of different primates to types of disturbance.

The Workshop the heard from two experienced Wardens. Joseph Serugo talked about his experience at the Kayirabwa Chimpanzee Conservancy particularly the conflict between the local and immigrant populations and their impact on conservation.

Much of the community sensitization is based around trying to illustrate that wildlife and agriculture can coexist, also the importance of eco-tourism projects in terms of earning income and their alleviating some of the conflicts.

The strong benefit of eco-tourism ideas and coexistence were also themes picked up by Walter Odokorwot of Kidepo National Park in his excellent presentation about Karenga Community Wildlife Area.

This Community Wildlife Area was established to devise ways to manage wildlife both in the wildlife corridor areas and beyond. There were also issues around both perceived and actual land grabbing, changes in land use and a range of illegal activities.

One of the major successes of this initiative is the establishment of the Community Wildlife Scouts (CWS), which not supports the work of the Rangers, but also ensure more of a community buy in. This was highlighted by the fact that the CWS gained approval from many of the community elders.

One of the tourism projects included in the Karenga Community Wildlife Area was hunting, which whilst controversial did bring in significant income and local economic benefit. The discussion about hunting continued beyond the session and through lunch!

The second session of the day was group work based around what measures would workshop participants introduce to improve the consistency, efficiency and effectiveness of community engagement. Participants were also asked about what indicators of success would be helpful in monitoring the usefulness of those suggested measures.

Groups were asked to report on their deliberations and following questions and subsequent discussions the Workshop Participants findings have been condensed into the table below under three headings.

Key Principles for Engagement which would be worked in to an agreed set of Best Practice Guidelines for Rangers undertaking Community Engagement, Indicators of Success which would also become part of those Best Practice Guidelines and Recommendations to UWA, which will be passed on to the Senior Management Team as an appendix to this report.

Key Principles for Community Engagement	Indicators of Success	Recommendations To UWA
Community should form associations to access park resources	UWA staff spending minimum of 5 years on station	Reduce the Frequency of UWA Staff Transfers (Community Engagement Staff)
Groups should be registered at sub-county level	AT Least 80% of community conservation and intelligence staff understand of local languages	Knowledge of local language should be considered during the deployment to address the common needs
Schools and organised communities within the adjacent parishes of the PA's be allowed free entrance to the Park	Increased facilitation to field staff	Provide adequate facilitation to field staff
Identification of focal persons (local) cultural, religious, opinions, leaders etc	Number of association / groups registered	Community should form associations to access park resources
Engagement of the leaders on issues affecting their community	Number of reports and MOUs in place	Groups should be registered at sub-county level
Agree on the protocols of the forthcoming meetings	Number of schools and communities that enter the park	There should be support supervision from the UWA Staff in resource harvesting
Mobilisation for the community meeting (through radio, letters etc)	2 stakeholders meetings a year	Schools and organised communities within the adjacent parishes of the PA's be allowed free entrance to the Park
Conducting the meeting to get the views of the entire community – Emotional control, respecting other	Number of application received and funded	Budget allowed stakeholders consultations during planning processes should be broadened

people's views, observing the hierarchy, time management, avoid distractions (phones ringing etc), mind the language used, talk less, listen, and observe more, avoid empty promises, lies and accusations, stick to the right thing / be firm,		
Report to your immediate supervisor	Number of stakeholders brought on board	UWA should be directly involved in the selection process for the community projects from the villages to the sub-county
Engage other stakeholders	Number of projects initiated and implemented	Capacity building for both UWA staff and community groups
Prioritisation of the issues from the meeting	Number of meetings held	Professionalisation of community engagement personnel
Feedback to the community (letters, meetings etc)	Number of incidences of illegal activities	Deploying the right people in the right place
Draw a programme for the capacity building, implementation, monitoring, evaluation & review of programme	Number of illegal activities reported	All programmes and planning must be aligned with organisational goals
Hold community meetings monthly	Number of themes addressed	Consistency and keeping performing staff
Agree on clear theme of engagement	Number of training workshops and attendees, workshop reports	Getting news / ideas from elsewhere into the management system
Information sharing	Number of reports, policy documents shared	Building capacity of community conservation staff
Monitoring and evaluation of the activities	Number of field visits conducted and reports with facts and figures	Develop a policy which is effective with wildlife outside protected areas
Develop and sign MOUs with key community groups	Record of roles and responsibilities	Motivate the hardworking / performing staff
Identify and involve relevant stakeholders	Number of project proposals	Reporting system should be streamlined
Share roles and responsibilities for different stakeholders	Workplan in place	Appropriate allocation of funds to the department
Mobilise for resources	Effective implementation of workplans	
Draw a workplan / implement schedule	Improved relationship with community	
Must have work plan which is realistic SMART	Uniformed implementation across PA / UWA	
Getting news / ideas from elsewhere into the management system	Level of community awareness improved, appreciation and actions	
All programmes and planning must be aligned with organisational goals	New ideas integrated into management plans and operations	
Record of roles and responsibilities	Skilled staff on the ground	
	Appreciation of wildlife outside protected areas by communities and land owners	
	Freewill / self-driven staff on the ground	
	Effective information flow within the organisation	
	Implementation of activities done effectively and smoothly	

The final session of day Three consisted of a presentation by Mayanja Deokabugujjo and a keynote address by Stephen Sanyi Masaba.

Mayanja Deokabugujjo started by talking about major challenges for Wildlife Conservation across Uganda and beyond East Africa. These were;

1. The increase of population
2. Industrialisation
3. Trade and Commerce
4. Global Politics
5. Wider Globalisations
6. Environmental Issues in general education
7. Cultural Practice
8. Environmental Laws

These challenges were form the basis of the presentation and discussion. Mayanja also talked about the work he has been doing with Pan African Conservation and Education (PACE). This work included working with teachers and community members to create an understanding of sustainability issues and possible local solutions. This included previously delivering a training on behalf of QEPP for Rangers and Teachers at Queen Elizabeth National Park

The workshop Participants were also introduced to some of the resource material produced by PACE which promotes environmental education and action in schools.

The finally Stephen Sanyi Masaba, Director of Tourism and Business Services for Uganda Wildlife Authority outlined the Authority's current position and priorities for future Community Engagement.

Mr Masaba confirmed UWA's commitment to improving its Community Engagement provision especially support for the shared / cascade training approach. He also made some closing comments and thanks to all that had taken part and contributed to the Workshop.

Charles Etoru and Stephen Peach then also added their thanks and made some summary remarks before giving out some prizes and certificates.

Community Engagement Workshop – Final Report

DAY FOUR

With several of the Wardens having to return to their duties, today's focus was on the analysis of the previous three days and agreeing the contents of the final report and the recommendations to be made to Uganda Wildlife Authority.

There were also internal discussions around the role cascade of training and future community engagement evaluation.

The QEPP Team also spent some time with other QENP staff based at Mweya. This was designed to sense check some of the comments made by the Wardens participating in the Workshop and see if they resonated with the lower ranked staff.

Broadly there was agreement with the view of the workshop, any alternate views tended to be matters of minor detail rather than of principle.

The general view supported the overall thoughts around inconsistency of approach, quality of training and issues around transfers. As can be expected the resourcing of Community Engagement work was highlighted.

Community Engagement Workshop – Final Report

WORLD WILDLIFE DAY, KASESE

At the invitation of both senior members of UWA and the Minister for Tourism, the QEPP Team visited the UN World Wildlife Day event held in Kasese.

At this event the Team were able to engage with a number of local community groups, including the Jane Goodall Institute, Kibale Association for Rural and Environmental Development, Rwenzori Anti-Poaching Association, Kataara Women's Poverty Alleviation Group, Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Trust and the Chimpanzee Trust.

The event also attracted major wildlife groups such as WWF, UWA and WCS.

It's not often that you get this number of smaller community conservation groups in one place at the same time, so it proved a useful experience and opportunity to discuss some of the Workshop ideas with a range of people.

Community Engagement Workshop – Final Report

PROTECTED AREA VISITS

The final part of this stage of the Workshop Programme was to speak to some of the Senior Ranger / Warden level staff who could not attend the workshop to ensure that the widest possible views and Park / Reserve type was included in the final report's findings.

With that in mind the Project Team visited Semiliki National Park, Kibale National Park and Lake Mburo National Park.

The conversations held once again supported the views of the original workshop participants deliberations. Adequate resources were mentioned, but most interestingly at each National Park there was mention of the cultural dimension in the approach to community engagement.

This supported comment made at the Workshop, as did comments around the ability to keep long-term and meaningful engagement going in the light of constantly changing staff.

Community Engagement Workshop – Final Report

BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES AND INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

The following are the agreed best practice findings of the Thin Green Line / Queen Elizabeth Parks Project Community Engagement Workshop held in March – April 2018.

The Best Practice Guidelines are intended as an aid for existing and future staff involved in Community Engagement activities so that there might be a consistent and informed method of dealing with local individuals, groups and communities.

It is recognized that none of these principles are particularly innovative or new, this Workshop has demonstrated that there are inconsistencies in the approach of UWA staff and in the expectations of the communities UWA. It is hoped that these guidelines will be developed and adopted by Uganda Wildlife Authority as standard practice for its staff.

Alongside the best practice guidelines there are 'Indicators of Success' which are meant as mechanisms to measure the success of the best practice guidelines.

Proposed Community Engagement Best Practice Guidelines

Best Practice Principles		Indicators of Success
Pre-engagement Principles		
1.	Every Community Engagement Staff Member should have a clear understanding of the purpose of the engagement they are about to undertake both from the perspective of UWA / local Protected Area and the target community	All staff able to understand UWA / local Protected Area reasons for the engagement. All staff clear about the issues and aspirations of target communities
2.	Any Community Engagement Staff about to start a new engagement process should undertake in depth research into that the community so they have a proper understanding of the cultural, historical and environmental issues specific to that community	All staff fully informed about key target community requirements and issues. Key Community leaders / players identified and contacted
3.	There should be an agreed initial contact plan created by the Warden I/C and the Community Engagement Ranger tasked, laying out clear initial aims, objectives target, timeframe, frequency of meetings and reporting procedure	Individual Community Engagement contact plans in place All staff Aware of all these plans These contact plans identify contact details and regularity
Initial Contact Principles		
4.	Verify that you are dealing with the appropriate leaders/ community members	Whole community on board with the engagement process
5.	Agree protocols for the conduct of the initial and future meetings, to include the publicising of meetings, agenda and purpose of the meeting, conduct during the meeting and subsequent actions and reporting	Meetings are conducted regularly and as agreed. Meetings seen to be productive and responsive to the community need. Engagement Quality improves.
6.	Ensure that line managers and colleagues are debriefed after every community engagement meeting	All Community Engagement Staff to be informed about all Community Engagement Issues
Ongoing Engagement Principles		
7.	Community Engagement Staff should follow some simple meeting principles to ensure their conduct is beyond reproach: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Ensure the views of the whole community are heard</i> 2. <i>Demonstrate respect for other people's views</i> 3. <i>Observe the local hierarchy</i> 4. <i>Avoid distractions, such as phones etc</i> 5. <i>Avoid empty/ false promises -be honest at all times</i> 6. <i>Talk less, listen more</i> 7. <i>Mind the language used, remember the principles of good communication</i> 8. <i>Agree clear actions, priorities and reporting / feedback structures.</i> 9. <i>Stick to the right thing be firm</i> 10. <i>Agree the frequency of meetings</i> 	Meetings demonstrably effective and respected as effective mechanism for Community – UWA interaction.
8.	MOU's should be created with key stakeholder groups to cement the engagement relationship and demonstrate commitment on both sides	Workable MOU's in place with all key stakeholder groups
9.	As a result of engagement meetings, Community Action Plans should be created which clearly identifies the issues / problems being addressed, who is going to be involved, the proposed actions to be taken to address the problem, the assigned actions and timeframe associated with those actions, the agreed targets or success criteria and the reporting procedures.	Agreed Community Action Plans in place with all target communities. Actions being carried out within the agreed timescale Key Community Issues being addressed and Community Capacity increased
10.	Look at where there are opportunities to collaborate across communities, particularly to demonstrate previous successful engagement.	Neighbouring Communities become part of the solution process for community issues
Overall Indicator of Success – Reduction in Wildlife Conflict Issues		

Community Engagement Workshop – Final Report

CASCADE TRAINING

All UWA participants of the Workshop will be required to cascade their workshop experience to their own community engagement colleagues.

The key focus of this cascading will be around the Best Practice Principles and Indicators of success. The organisational priority being to create a consistent approach to engagement activities.

The Workshop presentations and relevant papers will be made available on a dedicated Queen Elizabeth Parks Project webpage (www.queenelizabethparks.org/cew2018)

This cascade training will be further supported by visits from the QEPP team members to selected National Parks over the next 3 years. These visits will be aimed to evaluate the success of the Workshop and to provide opportunities for short review sessions with all Community Engagement staff.

Community Engagement Workshop – Final Report

EVALUATION PROCESS

As already mentioned the main part of the evaluation process will involve a series of follow up visits to selected National Parks over the next three years. These visits will evaluate the use of the best practice principles and their effectiveness.

The process will use personal interviews based around pre-agreed evaluation questionnaires undertaken with both UWA Community Engagement Staff and key community leaders from recognized stakeholder groups.

There will also be some community engagement visits, where less structured meetings will be held to evaluate the wider community thoughts on UWA's engagement efforts.

The Project also intends to supply selected Community Engagement Wardens / Rangers with tablets to aid the community communication process, also a used motorbike to ease accessibility to more remote communities. These will become subject to the evaluation process.

Prior to these visits evaluation forms will be sent out to Workshop participants 3 months and 9 months after the workshop.

These forms and the site visit information will be presented to UWA Senior Management in July 2019 and again in February 2021.

Community Engagement Workshop – Final Report

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Queen Elizabeth Parks Project would like to offer UWA a series of recommendations based on discussions held during the workshop with participants and the conversation the Project Team members had with staff and community members at other Protected Areas during this and previous visits.

Where possible we have listed the rationale behind the recommendation and our projected outcome if the recommendation was adopted.

The Project Team intends to meet with UWA Senior Management members to go through these in more detail.

Recommendation	Rationale	Projected Outcome
All Community Engagement Staff should be fluent in the language and cultural customs of the community they are engaging with	Community trust, honesty and understanding is built around the ability to properly communicate.	Open and more meaningful community engagement conversations. Greater pick up of cultural subtleties.
Community Engagement should be recognised as a specialism, with CE staff being subject to a rigorous training and evaluation process to ensure they have the right aptitude for CE	Because of what's at stake it should not be left to chance that staff and suited to this work. Putting the wrong person in CE can caused much damage and resentment	Reduced risk of CE going wrong or misunderstandings occurring Line Managers can have confidence in their staff and staff cab be confidence they have the appropriate training for the post.
New CE staff should go through a period of in the field mentoring, before being given 'live' CE responsibilities	Experience is the key when it comes to CE, so the more time new staff spend in the field (but with reduced risk) the quicker they will learn	New staff better able to cope, community members will be quicker to develop respect / trust in the new staff member.
Consideration should be given to reducing the frequency of CE Transfers, especially where a CE staff member has been successful	It takes time to build meaningful relationships with the community, frequent or ill-timed transfers can set back community – UWA relationships There also a risk of reducing the community buy-in, as the Community are not involved in these decisions	More buy-in / better relationship with the community Faster response to / understanding of issues
Where transfers do take place, appropriate notice given to both the CE staff member and the community served by that CE staff member	It is important the local community feel consulted and informed about transfers so that the transition of staff does not impact on the community trust and involvement	Smoother transition between staff / working arrangements and Community Action Plans; less impact on the community
Quicker removal of poorly performing CE staff	Community trust can take years to build but only days to destroy Poorly performing CE staff put UWA programmes and staff at risk	Community Confidence is improved, and staff standards increased.
UWA should impose standards and protocols for meetings and the frequency of engagement	An inconsistent approach undermines UWA's credibility	Community Confidence is improved, and staff standards increased.
Bi-annual CE staff conferences to facilitate the exchange of experience and best practice	There are some excellent and very experienced CE staff across UWA, but not many opportunities to pass that experience on	A cost-effective method of improving staff knowledge and building a strong team ethic
Speed up the use of MOU and other administrative devices	Formal agreements help cement the sense of involvement and participation	Community Groups able to commit quicker to local action. UWA reconsided as an efficient organisation
UWA should be more closely involved in the selection of Community Projects funded through the 20% community contribution	In some places there is a disconnect between the 20% contribution and the community	Higher profile for the UWA contribution to the community, More positive view of the National Parks

Community Engagement Workshop – Final Report

NEXT STEPS

The following table outlines a timetable for future actions.

Month	Action
May 2018	Final Report circulated to Workshop Participants, Thin Green Line and Uganda Wildlife Authority
July / August 2018	QEPP Follow Up Visit – Visit to Project schools and communities - Initial Meeting with UWA Managers
June 2018	First Workshop Participants evaluation form sent out
December 2018	Second Workshop Participants evaluation form sent out
February 2019	QEPP Follow Up Visits - Visits to selected National Park - Tablets install with selected Community Engagement Staff - Used motor bike place at QENP Community Team - Meeting with UWA Senior Management Team
July 2019	QEPP Follow Up Visits
July 2020	QEPP Follow Up Visits
July 2021	QEPP Follow Up Visits – Final Evaluation and Further Recommendations Stage

Community Engagement Workshop – Final Report

SUMMARY

This Community Engagement Workshop set out with the intention of bringing together some of the most knowledgeable Community Engagement Wardens and Leaders of successful community engagement projects to share thoughts and experiences on how best we can all improve Community Engagement at Uganda Wildlife Authority.

As can be seen by the raft of suggested principles and recommendations, the participants were hugely passionate and committed about their task.

The participants wanted to record their thanks to Thin Green Line for its financial support, to Uganda Wildlife Authority for its encouragement and support and finally to QEPP for taking the lead and delivering the Workshop.

Through its deliberations; the Workshop has highlighted the importance of high quality community engagement activities in protecting both people and wildlife. It also valued the role of ecotourism in creating strong sustainable communities that recognized the role of Protected Areas.

Whilst the participants focused on the positive side of community engagement, it did recognize that there were areas that needed improvement and so with much honesty these were tackled.

The Queen Elizabeth Parks Project sees this workshop as the start of a process in auditing and improving Community Engagement in Uganda. It is committed to following up on the recommendations and requests from the Workshop Participants and working with UWA and other Community Groups to ensure that best practice ideas and knowledge is disseminated to all those working with Communities.

Appendix 1 – Workshop Participants

Name	Location

Appendix 2 – Workshop Budget (For Thin Green Line Foundation Only)

