

### UNDP Uganda's Conservation Efforts

Efforts to conserve and protect wildlife are an integral part of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)'s global and local efforts. Through its programmes and projects in Uganda, UNDP has supported various efforts to protect wildlife. The goal of these programmes is to support the government achieve its Vision 2040's as well as the global Agenda 2030 and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, three of which look at environmental protection calling for climate action (Goal 13), protection of life below water (Goal 14) and protection of life on land (Goal 15). These are our guiding posts to ensure that the environment is used sustainably as well as conserved for future generations. Some of our projects in this area include;

- **The Kidepo Critical Landscape Conservation project based in North Eastern Uganda.** The project has two components through which it aims to conserve both the wildlife and biodiversity of the rich Kidepo landscape. These include;
  - Strengthening Management effectiveness of the Kidepo critical landscape Protected Area cluster:** This supports efforts of the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) to enhance the management effectiveness of the protected area cluster within the Kidepo critical landscape, by elevating community wildlife areas to fully protected area status, strengthening enforcement, monitoring and other protected Area functions. Through this component, persistent and new threats to the Kidepo landscape are being addressed by supporting the introduction of a state of the art security and enforcement system with a platform for information sharing and intelligence gathering among parks and other institutions. So far, the project has trained a total of 164 Rangers on enforcement and equipped them with 164 bottles, 200 knives and 4 Binoculars to ease their work.
  - Integrating Protected Area Management in the Wider Landscape:** Led by the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), the component supports the integration of protected area management into the wider landscape in order to secure wildlife corridors and dispersal areas. It supports sustainable use of buffer zones and critical habitats. A total of 14 Community Based Organisations have been already been supported with Small Grants worth UGX 312.66m to implement alternative livelihood initiatives and enhance wildlife conservation. Some of the initiatives the communities are involved in include Shea butter processing, chilli growing and bee keeping in areas adjacent to Karenga Community Wildlife

Corridor. In addition, communities have been supported to establish cultural sites, dance and drama for conservation while others are being trained in metal fabrication as an alternative source of livelihood.



**The Karenga Cultural Group:**

One of the groups formed to create awareness and promote the conservation of Karenga Community Wildlife Area adjacent to Kidepo National Park in Karenga sub-county, Kaabong District.

The 4 year Kidepo project is funded to a tune of USD 3.08m by the Global Environment Facility/UNDP and Government of Uganda. It is implemented by the National Environment Management Authority in collaboration with Uganda Wildlife Authority and the National Forestry Authority in the districts of Kitgum, Agago, Otuke, Abim, Kotido and Kaabong.

- **Support to Kataara Women's group:** - Funding community projects has enabled groups to promote conservation efforts. One such group is the Kataara Women's group located in Rubirizi District adjacent to Queen Elizabeth National Park, which was supported by UNDP through its Strengthening Sustainable Environment, Natural Resources Management, Climate change Adaptation and Mitigation (SENRMCM) project. The group received small grants from UNDP Uganda's SENRCAM project and because of their success as a community based initiative, the group was also the recipient of the 2014 Seed Initiative award. Through the SENRMCM project, UNDP focused on supporting

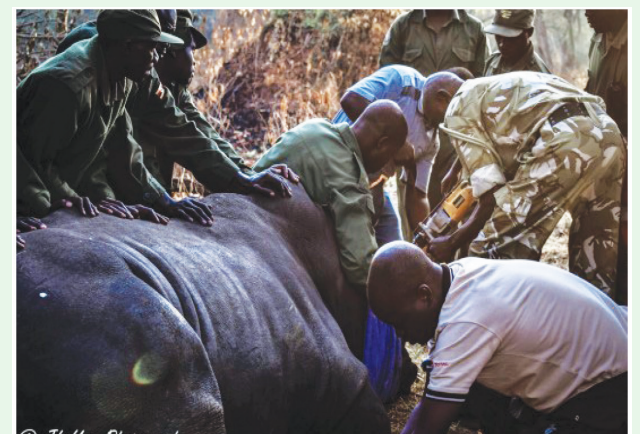
the efforts and capacities of local governments, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and communities to conserve as well as sustainably manage and utilise natural resources, integrate climate change adaptation and mitigation in their activities so as to build climate change resilient societies.

#### ● Support to the Rhino Fund: -

As part of its conservation efforts in the country, UNDP has also been supporting the Rhino Fund Uganda (RFU) through the Small Grants programme.

The fund has to date received two grants, with the initial grant enabling them to introduce white rhinos to Ziwa Rhino Sanctuary in the country between 2003-2005. Today, the white rhino population has grown to 15 rhinos which are well secured in the Rhino Sanctuary in Nakasongola.

A second UNDP / GEF Small Grant allocated to the Fund enabled it to microchip the Rhinos in 2014-2016 enable live animals to be tracked and poached horns to be traced, improving the chances of poachers being prosecuted. This was done in partnership with Uganda Wildlife Authority and the Kenya Wildlife Service.



A Rhino being inserted with a micro-chip by teams from Ziwa Rhino Sanctuary, Uganda Wildlife Authority and Kenya Wildlife Authority at the Sanctuary which is run by the Rhino Fund Uganda. (Photo Credit: Rhino Fund Uganda/JL Uys Photography)

## SUCCESS STORY: Elephant dung changing women's lives in Rubirizi



Jovita Kyomugisha, (Lower Right) the chairperson for Kataara Women's Poverty Alleviation Group shows off their elephant dung paper gift bags and some of their other products which include paper beads, handmade baskets. The other group members show off some of their other works. (Photo Credit: UNDP Uganda 2015).

Happy faces welcome you to the small building that houses the Kataara Women's Poverty Alleviation Group in Rubirizi district.

The women have taken a few minutes off their work to welcome visitors before they return to work in the different corners of the

building. Some are making paper beads on the verandah while others are readying dung for making paper in another corner outside the building. The women's group which started in 2005 with ten people has now grown to 30 members, four of whom are men. Moses Agaba who founded the group says the main purpose was to provide a source of livelihood for the women most of whom are widowed, promote conservation and also rally the community to protect the animals in the Queen Elizabeth National Park which is within their neighborhood.

"The idea of making paper from elephant dung came to us during a difficult situation that turned into an opportunity. This situation was the elephants which would walk into our gardens all the time, destroying crops and incensing the locals. So we decided to get what they left in our gardens and make something productive out of it, their dung into paper," Agaba explained. This he says, has enabled the women in the group and the rest of the community to see elephants as contributing to their welfare instead of taking away from it. The elephant dung paper is used to make gift bags, cards, menus, signature/visitors books which are usually bought by tourists heading to the national parks in the area.

In addition, the group makes handicrafts, improved cook stoves and briquettes also made from a mixture of elephant dung and other materials all of which are a source of income for the group. So far, the

group has made over 6million Uganda shillings from the sale of elephant dung paper products alone.

"Having this extra source of income means that the group members and their families do not have to go inside the park to hunt for animals for meat or other resources," Agaba says. Jovita Kyomugisha the chairperson of group who takes us through their small showroom displaying the items they've made says the group has changed her life. "After my husband died, I used to depend on farming, I would work in my garden, then go and work in other people's gardens just to get some money for my six children. Now with the group, I know I can get that extra income I need so I work in my garden first then come here to work too," Kyomugisha says. Kyomugisha whose husband died twenty years ago is now able to pay school fees for children and also provide for their needs.

The members get 25 percent on every item they make that is sold, 5 percent goes to support orphans whose parents died in the park, why they would go to hurt animals for meat to eat or sell. 20 percent is re-invested in the group's on-going projects while 50 percent goes to the groups saving and credit scheme where members can save and also get small loans at low interest rates when they need them. "We are encouraging more people particularly women to join the group, and now with the funding support, we have been able to go to homes and train others in making handicrafts which we help them to sell," Kyomugisha said.

"They are a hardworking group of women who are very focused on their work, they've made this a central attraction for tourists who want to see more than just the landscapes but to interact with the communities," Isaac Mubasaliwa from the Uganda Community Tourism Association who is visiting them says. The group received a total of UGX 51.3m between 2013 and 2014 which enabled them to kick start the elephant dung paper making and the dung briquettes later on, they were able to expand their showroom where they display and sell their items. Kataara Women's group's success as a community based initiative enabled them to receive the 2014 Seed Initiative award.