

“Using culture to strengthen collaborative conservation of chimpanzees in Uganda”

A project implemented by the Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda

1. Background

With support from the Arcus Foundation, the Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda (CCFU) is implementing a 2-year project (2019-2021) in Bunyoro and the Rwenzori sub-region to strengthen the conservation of chimpanzees, not through legal mechanisms, but by re-inforcing cultural mechanisms.

This is based on the conclusions of a study conducted last year which showed that there are positive and negative cultural attachment to the chimpanzees, reinforced by traditional beliefs, principles and practices. Traditional leaders and structures such as the family, elders and clans (particularly among the Batangyi (Bakonzo) and Bayanja (Banyoro) clans, whose totem is the chimpanzee), as well as private forest owners were identified as important organisations that could support the conservation of the chimpanzee.



2. Objectives and activities

The project has three objectives, with the following activities:

i) **To support cultural leaders in strengthening their role in conservation, with a particular focus on the chimpanzee.** *This will involve consultative inter-clan meetings, the production of 2 statements and a publication on conservation of the chimpanzees through culture, a dialogue meeting with conservationists, exchange visits by clans, and publicity.*

ii) **To strengthen the role of youth as future conservation agents.** *This will involve annual inter-clan heritage conservation competitions, inter-generational dialogues on conservation (youth and cultural leaders), production of information on chimpanzee conservation and engaging youth conservation champions in radio talk shows.*

iii) **To strengthen private forest owners as partners in conservation of the chimpanzee.** *This will be achieved through annual stakeholder dialogue meetings, trainings on ‘Culture in Development’ and Wildlife Ranching linked to chimpanzee conservation, as well as community sensitisation.*

Collaboration

All the activities will be implemented in collaboration with communities in the Bunyoro and Rwenzori regions (including those that hold the chimpanzee as their totem), cultural and clan leaders, the youth, traditional medicine practitioners, relevant local government officials, the Uganda Wildlife Authority, the National Forestry Authority and private forest owners.

Expected outcomes

It is anticipated that, at the end of the project, cultural leaders will have a renewed appreciation of their responsibility to conserve chimpanzees; the youth will have a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities; forest owners will better protect chimpanzees and dialogue and coordination among relevant conservationists at local and national governments on the effective conservation of chimpanzees in Uganda will be enhanced.