

A photograph of a lush green forest. In the foreground, a chimpanzee is visible, looking towards the camera. In the background, a person wearing a blue shirt and a brown skirt is working in the forest, possibly harvesting or tending to plants. The forest is dense with various types of trees and large-leafed plants.

Hosting Chimpanzees in Private Forests

**The Experience and Contribution of
Private Forest Owners in Bunyoro**



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The Cross-Cultural Foundation is a registered Ugandan Non Governmental Organisation promoting the recognition of culture as vital for human development the responds to our diverse identities.

Cover photo

Matthew McLennan. Bulindi Chimpanzee & Community Project

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Executive Summary

The habitat and livelihood for the chimpanzee (*Pan Troglodytes Schweinfurthii*) in the Northern Albertine rift in Uganda, particularly in the Bunyoro area, is fast disappearing with the loss of forest cover at 5.1% per annum, higher than double the national average of 2.1%. The chimpanzee population estimated between 250 and 500 in the community and private areas require more than the State Protected Areas in the Bugoma-Budongo landscape. Firstly, sections of the protected areas are quite significantly degraded and cannot provide the food and water resources needed by the chimpanzee population. Secondly, the protected areas are disjointed, which means that chimpanzees and other wildlife transiting between them become susceptible to challenges such as human harassment and poaching. The presence of forest patches between and beyond these protected areas is, therefore, of significant value as they provide habitat, food, and water for the chimpanzees. Many of these forest patches are owned and managed by private forest owners (PFOs).

Since 2014, the Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda (CCFU) has been supported by the Arcus Foundation to conduct research and implement initiatives employing a cultural approach to the conservation of chimpanzees in Uganda, particularly in Bunyoro and Rwenzori. Over the course of our work, PFOs have been an instrumental force, particularly in regard to protecting chimpanzees outside protected areas. However, a challenge to working with PFOs has been that their work is insufficiently profiled and, therefore, their contribution largely unrecognised. This limited understanding of their work undermines the possibilities of sustaining their work through support from the public, cultural institutions, the civil society, and the State.

The research reported in this publication was undertaken to profile and discuss the experiences and contribution of PFOs in the Bunyoro area. It sought to define PFOs, understand their working context, delimit their contribution, understand their challenges, and suggest possible remedies to these challenges with the view of sustaining and strengthening their work.

Data was collected from field visits and interviews, supplemented with secondary literature.

Noting the absence of a precise definition of PFOs hitherto, our study synthesises perspectives and defines them as the individuals, families and non-State institutions that own and tend forests for various reasons including cultural, environmental, economic, and other purposes. Some PFOs own and manage naturally existing forests, others have planted indigenous species, and others have exotic tree forests. PFOs conserve forests for a diversity of reasons. Some conserve because they are aware of and are committed to the intrinsic value of forests and wildlife especially the plight of the endangered chimpanzee. Others conserve for cultural reasons, such as the forest as a source of herbal medicine, a habitat for plant and animal totems, and a space for traditional worship.

Among the key contextual issues relating to PFO's work of forest and chimpanzee conservation, the study notes the rapidly decreasing forest cover and together with it the food and water needed for the survival of chimpanzees, which leads the already endangered apes forage from private farms where they risk being harassed, trapped, or hunted. An increasingly distractive cash economy is sweeping throughout the country and, in the Bunyoro area, leading to the clearing of forests for subsistence and commercial farming, notably to set up sugarcane plantations. In spite of the achievements, the Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES)¹ which was implemented in the area met with challenges that would reduce the sustainability of the conservation agenda; such including shifting the motive for conservation from the intrinsic value of the forest to purely monetary interests, triggering conflicts among forest owners as stakeholders to collectively owned forests scampered for the money provided; and the need for a perpetually ongoing source of funding.

Another key contextual issue is the diversity of stakeholders (state and non-state in forest and chimpanzee conservation, all of whose contribution

¹ Payments for ecosystem services (PES) policies compensate individuals or communities for undertaking actions that increase the provision of ecosystem services such as water purification, flood mitigation, or carbon sequestration.

to the experiences and work of PFOs need to be harnessed, systematically combined and strengthened.

Part of the current study's agenda was to identify in specific terms what PFOs contribute to chimpanzee conservation. An obvious answer to this is that they own and manage forests and thereby provide food, water, and shelter for the animals. The PFOs, however, go beyond this. Many are engaged in actively monitoring the welfare of the chimpanzees in and beyond their forests, and reporting to the authorities in case danger to the animals (or people in relation to animals) is detected. The PFOs also conduct sensitisation through informal and formal means – some move door to door, others at public functions, others in regular conversations. PFOs are also engaged in policy and other advocacy activities. They lodge campaigns calling for actions such as the promulgation of local government ordinances pertaining to environment protection, and form pressure groups to cause or halt development that destroy the environment. Many are part of the "Save Bugoma Forest Campaign", which aims at sustaining the forest and the wildlife therein.

The context in which PFOs work presents them with numerous challenges. Key among these, the PFOs are largely blamed by members of the public in the event of human-chimpanzee conflicts, since they maintain forests in which the animals find a haven. The resources required for maintaining forests are quite overwhelming for some PFOs. Some of those who have cut down or sold off their forests are said to

have been overwhelmed by demand for finances, time and effort required, especially that the cash economy is always luring them for ways of land use alternative to maintaining forests. Many PFOs also lack the expertise necessary for the effective growing of trees, management of forests, and caring for chimpanzees without causing risks to them.

The need for mitigating the challenges faced by PFOs in sustaining forests and conserving the chimpanzee cannot be overstated. Drawing on indigenous knowledge and invoking cultural reasons for conservation can mitigate some of the challenges relating to a dwindling motivation for conservation; and fill some gaps in expertise regarding forest maintenance and animal behaviour. Relatedly, mechanisms for transmitting across generations the indigenous knowledge related to conservation need to be devised as sustaining these efforts is contingent on the involvement and understanding of young people.

Whereas some PFOs are already organised in associations, further unionisation would serve to strengthen their advocacy voice and collective bargaining power for the support they might require from different stakeholders including State and non-State agencies. Attracting such support requires that the experiences and contribution of the PFOs are well understood by the public and institutions. This necessitates the involvement of the media and studies such as the one reported in this publication.

Introduction

Background: CCFU's Culture in Conservation Project

Since 2014, the Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda (CCFU) has been supported by the Arcus Foundation to conduct research and implement interventions drawing on indigenous cultures to advance the conservation of chimpanzees (*Pan Troglodytes Schweinfurthii*) in Uganda, particularly in the Bunyoro and Rwenzori subregions. CCFU interventions target cultural institutions, clans (particularly the Bayanja and Batangyi), private forest owners, community-based organisations, youth, as well as other stakeholders whose practices and experiences contribute to the conservation of chimpanzees and forests in Bunyoro and Rwenzori.

Our approach is premised on the conviction that drawing on community-based resources and worldviews can be a strong strategy for sustaining development efforts geared towards conservation (CCFU, 2018), which has become increasingly clear over the course of our work in these regions. Among such community resources are the culturally-situated knowledge on animal species and their breeding and feeding habits; the taboos relating to conservation – chiefly the intra and inter-ethnic clan system which holds certain animals and plants as totems for particular clans and protects them from being killed or harmed; the traditional leadership structures encourage and guide on conservation; and the individuals, families and institutions which devote efforts to the conservation of forests and wildlife. Drawing on such resources promotes the localised ownership of the conservation agenda.

Whereas the State can be effective in protecting wildlife in officially gazetted protected areas, a localised ownership of the conservation agenda is potentially effective in protecting wildlife outside protected areas where State surveillance is not sufficiently or always present. Rather, the wildlife outside protected areas survives in the forests and water resources provided and managed by private individuals, families, and institutions. We refer to such individuals, families, and institutions as Private Forest Owners (PFOs).

CCFU's Work with Private Forest Owners (PFOs) to Protect Chimpanzees

Over the course of CCFU's culture in conservation work, PFOs have been a bedrock of our chimpanzee conservation interventions since their forests host and feed these great apes. As a culture-focused organisation, our relationship with PFOs is informed by the recognition that much of their motivation for keeping forests in an otherwise profit-driven economy is hinged on their culturally informed conviction that maintaining the environment serves today's and the future's needs. PFOs exist in both the Rwenzori and Bunyoro regions but in different operating contexts.

In the Rwenzori region, there is more concentration of chimpanzees in and quite close to the protected areas, majorly the Rwenzori Mountains National Park. The Bunyoro context is different. Chimpanzees, like other wildlife in Bunyoro wander between protected areas and private forests and farms. Economically, Bunyoro is currently a run-to area for investors who clear forests for timber and to give way for sugarcane growing. Coincidentally, the area being oil rich has also attracted multinational enterprises and individuals all of which scramble for as much land as they can get and subsequently clearing it of forests and water sources. We, therefore, hold in high esteem the resilience of the PFOs who remain devoted to keeping forests in this context, paying a rather high opportunity cost, as Adams et al. (2010) have established regarding the sacrifice made when conservation is sustained.

The current report presents the contribution of PFOs to the conservation of chimpanzees in the Northern Albertine Rift of Uganda, concentrating mostly on the Bunyoro region. Whereas there is general consensus among stakeholders that some contribution is being made, little attention has been accorded to profiling their working context, their efforts, challenges, possible remedies, and ways of mitigating these remedies to sustain their work in such an increasingly evolving context.

We hope that the reflections in this report will help to illuminate the work of PFOs, attract State, civil society and public support to their work and ultimately sustain the wellbeing of chimpanzees and other wildlife whose life is dependent on the continued existence of private forests.

Research Design

Research Purpose, Objectives and Questions

The research reported in this publication was undertaken to identify and discuss the experiences and contribution of Private Forest Owners (PFOs) to the conservation of chimpanzees in the Northern Albertine Rift, particularly in the Bunyoro area. The research was premised on the recognition by CCFU that although PFOs are contributing to the conservation of the chimpanzee, their work has not been documented and, therefore, remains little understood and would be hard to support by the different stakeholders, including government, civil society organisations, cultural institutions, and the general public. It is hoped that the reflections in this publication can strengthen the understanding of the conservation work done by PFOs; and can help to influence ways of advancing this work forward.

The key objectives of the research were:

1. To contribute to a working definition of PFOs;
2. To reflect on the contextual issues interfacing with the work of PFOs in chimpanzee conservation;
3. To delimit the contribution of PFOs to chimpanzee conservation in the Bunyoro area;
4. To identify the challenges affecting PFOs' forest and chimpanzee conservation work; and
5. To suggest some possible remedies to the challenges faced by the PFOs in their work.

The research was guided by the following questions:

1. Who are private forest owners?
2. What context issues interface with the PFOs' work of forest and chimpanzee conservation?
3. What motivates PFOs to maintain their forests, in light of the contextual issues?
4. What exactly do PFOs do in the conservation of chimpanzees?
5. What challenges are faced by PFOs in their chimpanzee conservation work?
6. What remedies can mitigate the challenges PFOs face in their chimpanzee conservation efforts?

Research Approach

To answer the above questions, qualitative data was collected by conducting field visits and interviews with key stakeholders in the districts of Hoima, Kikuube, Kagadi, Kakumiro, Kibaale and Masindi. A total of 153 participants were interviewed, some in groups of 2-10 and others individually. The stakeholders included selected PFOs and their neighbours, cultural leaders, civil society personnel, local government representatives, academic researchers, and young people. Textual notes and pictures were taken during the interviews and field visits. Secondary literature included research articles, policy documents and other records maintained by institutions such as civil society organisations and the local governments.

Research Findings

Defining Private Forest Owners

Who are the PFOs?

This report is important in defining Private Forest Owners (PFOs) because we could not find an elaborate definition from existing literature. Therefore, we combine implied meanings from literature with the perspectives of the participants met during our interviews and field visits to arrive at our own working definition. In the reviewed literature, PFOs are generally considered to be owners of forest patches outside of the protected areas (Abangirah, 2019; Araitum, 2021). Our interviewees expressed that PFOs are characteristically individuals, families, clans, or institutions that have a sizeable section of land which they have reserved as forests. The participants were however divided on some important aspects. Some consider only owners of forests which grew naturally, with indigenous tree species, as authentic PFOs. Others would admit owners who plant and

grow indigenous trees to the category of PFOs. Others consider owners of forests whether planted or naturally growing, whether with indigenous or exotic species, admissible¹.

The debate on the admissibility of the owners of different tree categories was quite hard to settle since they reflect different value systems. Those preferring naturally growing forests mostly focus on the historical, normally culturally inclined value of the forest. They view planted forests, including those with indigenous species as of less cultural value than the naturally existing ones. The problem with this view is that it would be too exclusive as only a few of the owners have naturally growing forests. Also, its course would be irreversible such that once one's forest has been cleared, they would perpetually lose their identity and admissibility as a PFO because even when they replant, it would not be the initially existing forest. The participants who prefer indigenous species focus on sustaining these species against the economic



PFOs planting indigenous trees for watershed restoration in Kitooke Village, Kikuube District

motivation that normally comes with exotic species. While growing indigenous species is a very good pursuit, some convincing arguments for growing exotic species have been presented. Exotic tree species characteristically grow fast and provide alternative forest resources such as fuel and poles, thereby allowing an opportunity for the regeneration of natural forests with indigenous species. With this reasoning, many farmers – often supported by conservation organisations such as the Bulindi Chimpanzee and Community Project – have planted exotic species such as eucalyptus besides indigenous species farms². Another reason we feel comfortable including this category of forests is that chimpanzees have adapted to living in exotic tree forests as well (van Dijk et al., 2021); which means in the scarcity of natural forests, the exotic ones provide an alternative even when it is not primarily preferred.

In terms of sizes of forest, these vary from 5 to 100 hectares owned by the various Private Forest Owners.

From a synthesis of the various perspectives, we define PFOs as individuals, families, clans and non-State institutions that own and care for forests for various reasons including cultural, environmental, economic, and other purposes.

How are the PFOs Organised?

The PFOs operate as individuals, families, clans or institutions. Individual PFOs are mostly those who acquired pieces of land either already forested or subsequently afforested. Many forests belonging to nuclear families are categorised as belonging to individuals since the stakeholders seldom go beyond the two cardinal family heads, often with their children. What is normally characterised as a family forest is one that belongs to an extended family or clan, usually sitting on ancestral land that has been handed down the generations of relatives.

Institutional PFOs are those with an artificially organised relationship. Forests under this category belong to cultural institutions, religious institutions, associations, civil society organisations, and educational institutions among other such establishments. An example is the forest owned by St. Joseph's Vocational Training Institute in Kikuube District.

The different categories of PFOs are increasingly uniting to form associations for common interests, especially as a response to the context in which they operate. For example, associations are almost becoming a requisite

way of accessing State and non-State funding towards community development activities such as under the Operation Wealth Creation, the Emyooga Project and the Parish Development Model. Policy advocacy also benefits from a united force, and some PFOs have been calling for unionisation to afford them the voice that would influence the creation of suitable ordinances that domesticate national policies to their respective contexts. Through various platforms, including on WhatsApp, Facebook and emails, PFOs also share opportunities, lessons and challenges regarding their work. Whereas PFO associations have been created, the aspiration of unionising them under one umbrella has not yet been realised.



A WhatsApp group chat of PFOs in Bunyoro and Rwenzori

Profile of one PFO Association: The Bulimya-Kidoma Private Forest Owners' Association in Hoima

The Association was started in 2019 and currently has 270 members who own forests ranging from ½ to about 10 acres of forested land each. They are working towards connecting a stretch of about 5 kilometres

connecting the Bugoma Forest Reserve to Wambabya Forest Reserve.

Their activities include peer and public sensitisation through knowledge, skill and experience sharing trainings and collective cultivation; alternative livelihoods enhancement through savings and a credit association and crop farming beside their forest farms; and resource mobilisation from civil society and the government.

They face challenges of some incoherent and less motivated members who sometimes cut forests and distort the connectivity of biodiversity.

Their activities have so far been supported by various civil society organisations.

Contextual Issues Interfacing with PFOs' Efforts in Chimpanzee Conservation

Forest and Water Resources versus the Chimpanzee Population

Statistics indicate that out of the approximately 5,000 chimpanzees in Uganda, between 256 and 319 chimpanzees are estimated to live in private forests in the Bugoma and Budongo landscape (McCarthy et al., 2017). A reduction of the chimpanzee population from the 570 estimated in the 2001 census to around 390 was highlighted by the Project Manager for the Wildlife Conservation Society, Mr. Paul Hatanga; and published in May 2022 media report on a National Chimpanzee Conservation Dialogue organised by CCFU (Asaba, 2022b) and an approximate of 802 chimpanzees in the Budongo Forest Reserve. Whereas the protected areas are still quite forested, even with reported degradation, much of the unprotected area is heavily deforested to give way for agriculture (Twongyirwe et al., 2015). Along with the cleared or degraded forests, important ecological needs for the well-being of chimpanzees, such as food and water (Potts et al., 2016), are eroded.

The chimpanzees in Bunyoro, therefore, forage between the protected areas and private forests and farms³. The private farms are particularly problematic because as chimpanzees scavenge for food and water resources, they destroy people's crops; and conflicts ensue. Reports of human-chimpanzee conflicts have continued often causing fatalities (Kigozi, 2020; Kiva, 2013; The Independent, 2021), in spite of some

mitigation measures which have been instituted over time (Kolinski & Milich, 2021; Webber et al., 2007).

The Increasingly Distractive Cash Economy

Private Forest Owners maintain their forests in a Bunyoro context which is increasingly cash driven. Firstly, there is a growing demand for land for livelihood resources such as fuel, building poles and medicine (Hartter & Southworth, 2009) and commercial agriculture, particularly sugarcane growing. Secondly, the discovery of oil in the Lake Albert valley has attracted multinational companies, some of them focusing on the oil industry and others establishing other businesses which demand land (Dowhaniuk et al., 2018). Thirdly, the area hosts a sizeable number of refugees and internally displaced persons many of whom need land for their subsistence needs (Kreibaum, 2016). Unfortunately, although forest cover and resources serve an important environmental purpose towards climate, wildlife, and humans, they do not answer to the immediate daily needs of the growing population and businesses. Consequently, significant amounts of forest cover are felled to give way for agriculture and other livelihood activities.

In the recent past, Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) interventions have been implemented to counter the growing resort to forested land and resources in answer to subsistence demands. PES initiatives employ a market logic that pays forest owners a sum of money by acreage over an agreed period of time (Aganyira et al., 2020); for example, an equivalent of \$28 for an acre over two years (Cárdenas, 2017). An example of such is *"Developing an Experimental Methodology for Testing the Effectiveness of Payments for Ecosystem Services to Enhance Conservation in Productive Landscapes in Uganda"* supported by the GEF Trust Fund and implemented by development partners led by the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), with the Chimpanzee Trust as the project management unit (NEMA, 2015).

Appraisals of the viability of the PES approach and programmes, however, found them (in most part) unsuitable for several reasons. One reason is that it shifted the conservation motivation from the intrinsic, often culturally motivated, value of the environment to a purely monetary value (Jayachandran, 2013). This meant that conservation would only continue for as long as satisfactory monetary returns were available, yet the monetary returns were much less than one would get if they reappropriated the forested land to either agricultural or other economic activities (Fisher, 2012).

The monetary incentives also reduced the concerned parties from families and communities to only the individuals or the small groups of people who directly received the handouts, which meant anyone else did not see much value in keeping the forests intact. The approach also required a perpetually streaming source of funding, which was quite unsustainable. By the time the PES approach was abandoned in the Bunyoro area, quite a few people had started cutting down their forests to reappropriate their land to other uses. It is, therefore, of remarkable value that some forest owners have sustained their forests against all the temptations and challenges.

The Policy Environment, State Agencies and Programmes

The Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities (MTWA) and the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWA) are the key ministries in charge of the environment, including forests, water, and wildlife. They perform this role through their departments and agencies. The major State agencies involved in the conservation of forests and the chimpanzee in the Northern Albertine Rift traverse include the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), the National Forestry Authority (NFA), and the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA). In addition, the District Environment, Forest, and Natural Resource Offices play a significant role in their respective jurisdictions.

Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA): Relevant to the work of PFOs, UWA is mandated ‘...to establish and implement management plans for wildlife conservation areas and for wildlife populations outside wildlife conservation areas’ according to Article 6 (1, f) of the Uganda Wildlife Act; UWA implements the National Plan for Management of Wildlife Outside UWA Protected Areas 2021/22 - 2030/31 as mandated by the Uganda Wildlife Policy, 2014. The Plan guides stakeholder collaborations for the management of wildlife outside protected areas and PFOs are a major stakeholder in this respect. It also guides the ways different stakeholders benefit from wildlife and ecosystem conservation.

UWA collaborates with PFOs in various ways, including chimpanzee monitoring which leads to the provision of important information on chimpanzee behaviour and wellbeing. Human-chimpanzee interactions and conflicts are reported to UWA staff who are normally a call away and ready to respond quickly as they have posts and field stations spread around the area⁴. PFOs and other community members also advise UWA on

where it is appropriate to establish posts; a case in point being the field station in Kagadi which was requested and established in 2019, following reports of wild animals including man-eating crocodiles (Ssebhwami, 2019). In some areas however, for example in Kasambya (Kibaale District), some interviewees say UWA has not been responsive to chimpanzee attacks on private lands and calls from the public continue to fall on supportive non-state actors and several requests to establish an outpost by the Authority.

National Forestry Authority (NFA): NFA was established during Uganda’s forests and forestry management restructuring processes between 1998 and 2004. It is mandated to implement the Uganda Forestry Policy of 2001 and the National Forestry Plan 2002, to meet the social, economic, and environmental purposes of the forest estate Forestry (National Forestry Authority, n.d.). The key roles under this framework include operationalising and supporting the management of “forests on government land; forest[s] on private land; commercial forest plantations; forest products processing industries; collaborative forest management; farm forestry; forestry biodiversity conservation; watershed management; urban forestry; [forestry] education, training, and research; [and the] supply of tree seed and planting materials” (Obua & Agea, 2010, p. 73). The Uganda Forestry Policy, 2001 is the first in Uganda’s forests and forestry policy frameworks to institute a “collaborative forest management [approach which] means that local communities are genuinely involved in the management of the forest resource[s] through a negotiated process in which rights, roles, responsibilities and returns for the sustainable management of such forest resources are shared” (The Uganda Forestry Policy, 2001, Glossary). Its predecessors, the Forest Department (established in 1917) and its earlier version, Scientific and Forestry Department (established 1898), were mostly concerned with managing the production and conservation functions of forests (Obua & Agea, 2010).

All the chimpanzees in the Bunyoro area live and wander between the public forests managed by NFA and the ones owned and managed by PFOs. To PFOs, NFA provides material and technical support. The Authority distributes indigenous and exotic tree and fruit tree species seedlings, and guides farmers on how to effectively grow them⁵.

National Environment Management Authority (NEMA): Authorised and governed under The National Environment Act, 2019, NEMA is charged with managing the environment in its variety in

reference to different policies, strategies and plans; and in collaboration with various State and non-State entities. Relevant to the work of PFOs and, generally, chimpanzee conservation in the Bunyoro area, NEMA is responsible for authorising human activities on environmental landscapes, including commercial infrastructural developments such as the ongoing sugarcane growing and budding oil industry. Public and media reports have been quite critical of NEMA's work in the Bunyoro area. For example, NEMA has been criticised for the facilitating the destruction of at least 8,000 hectares off the Bugoma Forest (Simire, 2021), and re-authorising the forest-clearing sugarcane growing activities of Hoima Sugar (Marsi, 2021); both decisions causing significant loss of habitat for endangered species including elephants and chimpanzees. Public movements such as the Save Bugoma Forest Campaign are working to reverse some of these decisions (AIFE Uganda, 2021).

Development Response to Displacement Impact Project (DRDIP): Of recent, an initiative by the Prime Minister's Office dubbed Development Response to Displacement Impact Project (DRDIP) is active in the Bunyoro area. According to the Office of the Prime Minister, "the project addresses the unmet social, economic and environmental needs identified in the local host communities in fifteen districts of Arua, Terego, Madi-Okollo, Koboko, Yumbe, Moyo, Obongi and Adjumani in West Nile sub-region, Lamwo in Acholi sub-region, Kiryandongo Kikuube and Hoima in Bunyoro sub-region and Isingiro, Kamwenge and Kyegegwa in South West sub-region". In Bunyoro, DRDIP has demarcated water-bank stretches, possibly pursuant to the water bank buffer zones provided for in The National Environmental Act, Cap 153; and The National Environment (Wetlands, River Banks and Lake Shores Management) Regulations, No. 3/2000. This demarcation has significant implications for forest and chimpanzee conservation, particularly outside protected areas. Some PFOs fear that charting part of their hitherto protected forests away as government property makes them susceptible to degradation, citing incidences where State protected natural resources have been misappropriated⁶. In a media report, Tenywa (2021), contrasts the culturally-motivated successful protection of the Bakwonga Clan forest in Kabwoya, Kikuube, with the deforestation occurring in the neighbouring Budongo Forest. There, therefore, needs to be established stronger measures to ensure that the State protected areas are effectively managed. A combination of national policies and local

government ordinances can be useful in this respect.

Local Governments: District officers responsible for forests, environment, vermin control and natural resources are mandated by The National Environment Act, 2019 and The National Forestry and Tree Planting Act, 2003 to formulate committees that coordinate the activities of urban or district councils relating to the management of the environment and natural resources; to prepare district environment action plans; to ensure that environmental concerns are integrated in all plans and projects approved by the urban or district council; to prepare district state of the environment reports; to assist in the formulation and enforcement of ordinances and byelaws relating to the management of the environment; and to monitor all activities within its local jurisdiction to ensure that such activities do not have detrimental impact on the environment.

Private Forest Owners are technically supported by the district committees to plant trees and manage the use of forest resources. In situations where UWA is not easily reached, Local Government Officers are the alternative points of contacts for chimpanzee conservation issues⁷. In cases of chimpanzee crop raids, Vermin Control Officers at the district have been very instrumental in responding and liaising with the responsible agencies to address the eventualities⁸.

Community-based Stakeholders

The conservation of forests and chimpanzees outside protected areas is a concerted effort of various actors: forest owners, cultural leaders, and other community members, including the youth. Whereas the details of this report concern PFOs, it might be useful to highlight the relevance and involvement of other community-based stakeholders since this partly determines how effectively the contribution of PFOs can be realised.

Cultural leaders: Cultural leaders (such as family heads, clan leaders, chiefs, and ministers in cultural institutions) are involved in forest conservation and chimpanzee protection in various ways. Firstly, culture places on them the responsibility of protecting the environment and other resources for posterity. This responsibility is performed through influencing public opinions by sensitisation; perpetuating cultural norms that support conservation, such as the clan and totem system; and ensuring that collectively owned properties such as family and clan land are not desecrated or destroyed. Secondly, cultural institutions normally own land on which forests and water resources are situated;



A water source shared between chimpanzees and humans at Katyobona Village, Kagadi District

for example, part of forested land in the Bunyoro area belongs to the Bunyoro Kitara Kingdom which has the responsibility to manage it. Thirdly, cultural leaders and traditional duty bearers such as herbalists have the responsibility of ensuring the survival of forest resources⁹.

Where culture has been blamed for counteracting conservation, the onus is also on cultural leaders and other traditional duty bearers to enact reforms and rectify the limitations. For example, traditional herbalists have been blamed for using parts of the chimpanzee in their healing practices such as bone setting (CCFU, 2018); and some measures – including state regulations prohibiting such practices – have been instituted to curb such practices. Maintaining the community members at the centre of such campaigns ensures that they themselves perform the role of monitoring the occurrence and remedying the vices.

Unfortunately, some cultural leaders have been implicated in destructive activities relating to forests and chimpanzees (see the examples reported by Asaba, 2022c).

Members of the Public: The attitude, opinions, and behaviour of members of the public determine the success of all efforts for chimpanzee conservation efforts. Most threats to the survival chimpanzees are orchestrated by human activity such as logging,

cultivation, and poaching (McLennan et al., 2021). It is, therefore, important to ensure the involvement of all members of the public in conservation activities to foster their appreciation and ownership of the conservation agenda¹⁰.

In Bunyoro, the members of the public share resources with the chimpanzees and other wildlife which come to their water sources as well as private farms and forests. Some members of the public who are not sufficiently sensitised harass the animals which then fight back and cause fatalities, even deaths. In almost all cases, members of the public play the role of monitoring the wellbeing of the chimpanzees such as by reporting to the authorities human-wildlife conflicts and threats such as poaching. The members of the public also report animal destruction of crops and other resources¹¹, which is an important step towards ensuring reparations by State agencies and towards better strategies for managing wildlife through policy and other interventions.

Youth Involvement – a gap? Traditionally, young people learn from elders through apprenticeship. Unfortunately, indigenous education spaces are increasingly shrinking with the increase of formal education with boarding schools, the lessening family sizes, and increasing trends of rural-urban migration which keeps young people away from the conservation areas.



'The inter-clan chimpanzee tournament in session, after an intergenerational dialogue on chimpanzee conservation in Muhooro, Kagadi'

Involving young people in the conservation agenda demands context appropriate strategies of sensitising and involving the youth. Since 2019, CCFU has instituted sports competitions dubbed the Chimpanzee Inter-clans Football Tournament in the Bunyoro and Rwenzori regions, as the *Ekiteera Cup* and *Ekibandu Cup*, respectively. During the sports days, young people – including urban-based youth – are engaged in dialogues with elders on culturally-motivated conservation practices to conserve totems including the chimpanzee and how the young people can play a part. CCFU also engages young people in school-based cultural heritage clubs in planting forest gardens in public spaces and at their schools. Elders, especially PFOs, are also encouraged to engage young people in every conservation activity they undertake – planting and tending trees, forest and chimpanzee monitoring, reporting cases of human-wildlife conflicts, and sensitising the public on the value of conserving forests, chimpanzees, and other wildlife.

The Civil Society: A key actor on the conservation landscape of the Northern Albertine Rift is the many civil society institutions, including non-governmental organisations (national, international, and community-based), academics, the media, and religious institutions. The activities of these institutions range from providing technical guidance and material support regarding tree growing; planting and growing trees themselves; generating conservation information through research;



Learning about chimpanzee behaviour and other primates before an inter-clan football chimpanzee tournament organised by CCFU

community sensitisation; responding to emergencies such as human-chimpanzee conflicts; monitoring forests and chimpanzee wellbeing; and policy advocacy, especially at the district levels. The media, as quoted severally in the current report, has been influential in reporting cases of chimpanzee harassment and forest destruction in Bunyoro. The media has also sensitized communities through providing free radio airtime to conservation organisations and the government.

Motivation of PFOs to Maintain their Forests and Conserve the Chimpanzee

Wildlife conservation

A significant number of the PFOs interviewed during this research indicated that their forests are conserved as habitats for wildlife, including the chimpanzee, because they felt that the animals are fast losing their home. Many are really concerned that many of the animals they grew up seeing in their communities are fast disappearing, and that in future their children will only read about them in stories – much like the dinosaurs appear today only in literature. The PFOs feel that conserving forests contributes significantly to the sustenance of the otherwise endangered wildlife. Among these, the chimpanzee is key because they are aware that it does not reproduce as frequently as other primates such as the baboons, and that it is closely linked to humans.

Cultural reasons

Some forests are conserved for cultural purposes; for example, as ancestral land, for indigenous medicine, as sacred worshiping spaces, and as habitat for totems including plants and animals. The chimpanzee is the totem for the *Abayanja* clan of the Banyoro in Bunyoro and the *Abathangyi* clan of the Bakonzo in the Rwenzoris. Families preserve ancestral spaces which are sometimes collectively owned, but also as a source and symbol of identity and belonging together¹². Many of the PFOs indicate that this is an important measure for them to defeat the monetary temptations for cutting their forests. Cultural reasons also help to deter family members who might want to sell or clear forests on ancestral or collectively owned land.



Agnes Mukoto, a PFO and Cultural leader in Kikonda, Kikuube District

Consumption of forest products

The daily value of forests to owners and community members manifests in the harvest of forest products such as firewood, medicine, mushroom, and fruits. The forests are also a comfortable place to retreat to for some cool breeze when during the dry season¹³.

Climate change mitigation

PFOs also keep their forests to reduce adverse cases of climate change. Many notice a change in their annual seasons, and they have come to realise that this is due to the fast-disappearing forest cover in their area. Although Bunyoro is still quite forested compared to other parts of Uganda, recent reports indicate that the percentage rate of deforestation stands at 5.1 as compared to the national average which stands at 2.1 (Abangirah, 2019). PFOs who are aware of these trends, therefore, are highly motivated and advocate with other community members to plant more trees and conserve forests.

Economic reasons

Eco-Tourism: Some PFOs, in their monitoring, have a habituation agenda for touristic purposes. The late Mr. John Bagumirabingi's family is nurturing the Mairirwe Chimpanzee Conservation and Eco-Tourism Project; and estimates a host of 60 chimpanzees on their ca. 150-acre Mairirwe Forest in Hoima (Abangirah, 2019). Mr. Mathew Musinguzi in Masindi is protecting

over 120 hectares of chimpanzee inhabited family forest, with hope for support from State and non-State agencies¹⁴. If supported, such initiatives could further motivate PFOs to conserve forests, earn income and provide a safe haven for chimpanzees.



Mr. Mathew Musinguzi, a PFO in Masindi. He hopes to get support to improve eco- tourism experiences in his forest.

The sale of forest other resources and products: Cut trees are not the only forest resource that provides income. Some PFOs sell other products such as mushrooms, handicraft materials such as palm leaves, and edible fruits such as *amatungulu*. Herbal medicine is a major forest resource with a vast market in the Ugandan community, although it can only be harvested by individuals who are knowledgeable about the processing and administration of these herbs. In addition to these resources, PFOs engage in sustainable tree harvesting.

What exactly do PFOs do in Chimpanzee Conservation?

Providing forest resources: Food, water, and shelter

A basic, yet overly important role which PFOs play is planting and growing trees which serve as habitats for the chimpanzees outside protected areas. The Bunyoro area is heavily deforested, leaving forest patches which belong to PFOs as the shelter for chimpanzees outside the protected areas. Whereas chimpanzees initially lived in natural forests, they are increasingly getting accustomed to planted forests including those with exotic tree species. A 2020 case study of the Wagaisa chimpanzee community found that at least

“forty per cent of chimpanzee nests were constructed in eucalyptus trees, suggesting a behavioural adjustment to landscape changes” (McLennan et al., 2021, p. 17). Although the chimpanzees demonstrate an increasing degree of flexibility in nesting behaviour with their anthropogenically degraded environment, the urgent need for environment conservation approaches cannot



A chimpanzee monitor of the Friends of the Chimpanzee Family in Kagadi showing nests in eucalyptus plantation about 20 metres from a homestead in Muhooro, Kagadi District

be overstated (van Dijk et al., 2021). The PFOs take part of this important responsibility by hosting them in their private forests.

Some PFOs have established nursery beds to offer seedlings to all people who might need them, in addition to those offered by the government agencies such as NFA and civil society organisations such as the Chimpanzee Trust. Examples of such initiatives are

operated by the Kayirabwa Chimpanzee Conservancy Association in Kakumiro District¹⁵ and the Bulimya-Kidoma Private Forest Owners' Association in Kikuube District¹⁶.

In addition to providing shelter, PFOs provide chimpanzees with food and water in their forests. Sections of the natural forests are rather degraded and cannot provide fruits for food. So, to provide alternative sources of food, some PFOs have deliberately planted fruit trees in their private forests. A notable example of



Guava plants in Abdu Kirungi's plantation that harbors chimpanzees. Abdu has planted over 1200 fruit trees in Muhooro, Kagadi

such PFO is Mr. Abdu Kirungi who planted guavas, berries, and other chimpanzee food fruits within and around his eucalyptus forest which hosts chimpanzees in Muhooro, Kagadi¹⁷.

Chimpanzee Monitoring and Reporting

PFOs are actively involved in monitoring the welfare of the chimpanzee – where it wanders, nests, feeds, what happens to it and what it does. In some cases, they are organised in groups sharing spatial sections to monitor and share information. This monitoring approach, as we established, was initiated by conservation organisations such as the Wildlife Conservation Society, Chimpanzee Trust, Eco-Trust, the Jane Goodall Institute, the Bulindi Chimpanzee and Community Project, and Conservation in Action to monitor chimpanzee behaviour and welfare¹⁸. The information provided by the forest and chimpanzee

monitors importantly informs the design of interventions such as when and where to plant trees, including an idea of the species necessary. Of course, the tree species normally depend on the needs and preferences of the farmers¹⁹.

In monitoring what the chimpanzees do and what happens to them, the PFOs and other monitors provide vital information to relevant agencies such as UWA and the above institutions triggering the necessary response. For example, in cases of human-wildlife conflicts and crop raiding, monitors are usually quick to inform the authorities and contribute credible accounts as to what transpired, thereby facilitating arbitration processes which arrive at estimates of the necessary compensation to victims. In response to such information by PFOs and community members, UWA established an outpost in Muhooro, Kagadi.

Public Sensitisation

PFOs are involved in public sensitisation on the value of chimpanzees and other wildlife, an important message for the wellbeing of the chimpanzees because they co-exist and share forest and water resources with humans. Because there are people's gardens between the forest patches among which the chimpanzees wander, it is inevitable that the apes pass through inhabited neighbourhoods and people's gardens. Unsensitised humans harass and often kill them either as they transit from forest to forest or by hunting them in their forested habitats.

PFOs conduct public sensitisation sessions either as individuals or in groups and associations. Among the very active associations are the Friends of the Chimpanzee in Kagadi District, Bulimya-Kidoma PFO Association and Conservation in Action in Kikuube District, which often conduct house to house sensitisations and conduct information sessions in public spaces. Additionally, they have established an alternative livelihood project to reduce the pressure on forest resources. Among the activities in this project is a saving and loan scheme from which members can access finances for business; and a briquettes project to avail reusable energy as an alternative fuel to firewood and charcoal for cooking²⁰.

Advocacy for better services and policies

Many PFOs are involved in environmental policy advocacy activities at national and district levels. At the district level, PFOs advocate for ordinances that domesticate national policies to their respective local contexts. Some policy issues, especially those concerning institutions, can be rather uncomfortable to discuss; but several research participants expressed their opinions on a recent – or ongoing – debate regarding the custody of the Bugoma forest, currently under the leadership of NFA. According to them, the degradation of the forest is due to the limited coordination among the government agencies each of which seems to have separate interests – NFA for the forest, UWA for wildlife therein, and NEMA for the environment. A proposal has been made, starting at the district level, to turn Bugoma into a wildlife reserve under the custody of UWA, which would mean transitioning from NFA. A significant magnitude of supporters of this proposal are PFOs, including Mr Alex Kabusomba Byensi, the Councillor for Kabwoya

Lower²¹, who is touting the motion at the Kikuube District leadership level (Asaba, 2022a).

Challenges faced by PFOs in Chimpanzee Conservation

Shouldering the blame for human-chimpanzee conflicts

When chimpanzees attack crops or are involved in conflicts with humans, PFOs are blamed for keeping them close²². By keeping forests, moreover in patches between which there are people's crop gardens, PFOs are blamed for exposing the people and their crops to the 'destructive and often violent animals'. Community members reason that if private forests are cleared, the chimpanzees and other wildlife will be restricted to designated forest and wildlife reserves. Although some sensitisation has been conducted for the community members to desist from provoking chimpanzees into violence, many still believe that chimpanzees can turn violent at their own discretion especially when they meet women and children. The sensitisation also leaves without convincing solutions the destruction of crops by chimpanzees. People near forests have been encouraged to grow crops which are unpalatable to chimpanzees to avoid destruction; but this is hard to sustain as people need to earn their livelihood from a diversity of crops, and the chimpanzees can travel long distances to reach the crops wherever they are²³. Growing unpalatable crops could also work if the chimpanzees were restricted to gazetted areas, but that the PFO's forests are scattered across the area makes this approach still a challenge.



A chimpanzee in a maize plantation

Conservation expertise in forest management and chimpanzee conservation

Many of the PFOs expressed the insufficiency of their knowledge and skills in forest management and caring for chimpanzees. The farmers revealed that in some cases, they plant trees but growing them becomes a challenge as it requires specialised skills. This is especially true with exotic species which are not resistant to some of the climatic conditions in the area, requiring the knowledge of how to handle them. They, however, indicated that they often receive technical

support from NFA and civil society personnel, such as forest and chimpanzee monitors.

Regarding chimpanzee conservation, many of the PFOs rely on the indigenous knowledge of their living and feeding behaviour, leaving much of the scientific research conducted on the chimpanzees in the area untranslated to benefit the community which hosts the apes. PFOs and community members felt that a mechanism of translating the scientific research for the community to understand needs to be devised – an appeal made to institutions such as UWA.



PFOs on a learning visit to the Bakwonga clan forest in Kikuube during a workshop facilitated by CCFU

Limited resources – finances, effort, and time

Forest tending is an expensive venture; and punctuating the forests with fruit trees and water to feed the chimpanzees adds more cost to the responsibility²⁴. Whereas most PFOs try their best to meet these needs of the chimpanzee and other wildlife, they feel that they are resource-constrained to adequately provide for the chimpanzees. In commercial nursery beds, fruit trees are more expensive than other trees. Indigenous trees such as *prunas africana* – which are preferred by conservationists and more appropriate for chimpanzee conservation – take much longer to mature (about eight years). Most PFOs employ non-mechanised cultivation methods and rely on climatic conditions, especially rain and sunshine, for the growth of the trees because irrigation infrastructures and services are not widely available or affordable.

With the increasingly inconsistent seasonal changes, it is quite a challenge for farmers to predict the right season to plant trees. Many explained that they have miscalculated seasons and had their trees and crops wither due to long periods of drought.

The market forces against forested land

Many PFOs are currently battling the pressure to either clear their forests for the readily available timber and charcoal market or altogether sell the land to commercial farmers, mostly sugarcane growers. Land with natural forests is normally fertile and therefore attracts crop farmers for clearance. Many PFOs have already yielded to the temptation but some still resist it for reasons more important than immediate financial gain.²⁵

Conclusions and Recommendations

In conclusion, the efforts of PFOs in conserving the forest and the chimpanzee is remarkable. The continuity of this work, however, requires deliberate attention to and remedying the challenges the PFOs face. Some of the ways to mitigate these challenges are discussed in this section.

Drawing on indigenous knowledge

Some of the challenges facing the PFOs in chimpanzee conservation stem from insufficient understandings of forest and animal conservation. Such include a limited understanding of the value for and ways of relating with wildlife in general and chimpanzees in particular; the limited knowledge of climatic conditions and estimation of seasons; and the largely individualistic rather than communitarian ways of life trending today. People of less than 40 years today have had little contact with their indigenous cultures which would offer some answers to some of these challenges.

Indigenous knowledge is, therefore, worth exploring for remedies. Some of the elders, including cultural leaders, met during the research expressed the willingness to share their knowledge and skills from experience and culture. A challenge is to avail space for the interaction of elders and young people. CCFU runs intergenerational dialogues in which the youth and elders interact. To attract the youth, a football competition dubbed the Chimpanzee Tournament (*Ekiteera Cup* in Bunyoro and *Ekibandu Cup* in Rwenzori) is organised and the dialogues are held before or between the matches. More of such events need to be devised, and conservation messages need to be integral to some of the cultural heritage occasions such as the annual Coronation (*Empango*) Celebrations of the Bunyoro Kitara Kingdom, because messages from the apex cultural leaders are often heeded across the Kingdom.

Documentation and Publicity

The role of PFOs in chimpanzee conservation is insufficiently documented and publicised, hence the relevance of this publication. But many more efforts are still needed in this respect. Publicising their work helps to illuminate their operating context and profile

their contribution, which provides a basis for the promulgation of the relevant policies and appropriation of support by the state and civil society to the right aspects of their work. In the Bunyoro area, the media houses such as *Kazi-Njema News*, Kagadi Kibaale Community Radio (KKCR FM), and Spice FM are conducting strong publicity for environmental issues, including forest and chimpanzee conservation. The annual celebration of the World Chimpanzee Day, on 14 July, presents another good opportunity for highlighting the experiences and contribution of PFOs in chimpanzee conservation. More of such platforms and opportunities are needed.

Strengthening Associations

Whereas some PFOs are already united and registered in associations, further unionisation is needed to strengthen the possibility of a common voice on issues that affect their work²⁶. In cases where PFOs and other community members have come together, some achievements have been met or are in sight on the fronts of requesting for technical support²⁷ as well as advocacy, such as agitation for the opening of the Budongo forest boundaries, even with related challenges (Asaba, 2021; Kazi Njema Reporter, 2022a, 2022b). A suitable coordination mechanism needs to be devised because the PFOs operate in largely remote areas of different districts, including Hoima, Kagadi, Kakumiro, Kibaale, Kikuube, and Masindi. PFOs can also be supported to mobilise and develop own community rapid response mechanisms in case of wildlife conflicts.

Support PFOs – Individuals, State and non-State Institutions

PFOs have demonstrated commitment that is highly worthy of support from individuals, the State and non-State institutions such as the civil society, cultural institutions, corporate entities, and the media.

Some of the ways the different stakeholders can support PFOs include the following:

1. **Regulatory support:** The National Plan for Management of Wildlife Outside UWA Protected Areas 2021/22- 2030/31 and The Uganda

Forestry Policy, 2001 provide good frameworks for supporting PFOs. There is a need to domesticate these to the specific contexts of the districts and communities by drafting ordinances that, among other aspects, recognise the role of PFOs and address their challenges.

2. **Livelihood interventions:** The purpose of linking livelihoods to forest and chimpanzee protection is to properly address the relationship between “livelihood” and “conservation”. For example, the conversion of forested lands to agriculture or other forms of land use are all linked to livelihoods. Thus, it can be seen that improving livelihoods plays a crucial role in forest protection and development. Livelihood interventions that focus on leveraging the presence of forests including apiary or supporting farmers to grow high yield crops must be done.

The creation of, and/or strengthening existing, Savings and Credit Cooperative Associations (SACCOs) would help cater for some of the resource needs of the PFOs. PFOs face emergency situations that sometimes require funds related interventions, for example when chimpanzee attack human beings, this fund could provide a quick fix to cater for medical bills before

they are settled by the State. This fund could also boost livelihoods of families and individuals for example by providing small business capital to reduce the pressures that often leads to selling off forests/trees.

State supported livelihood programmes, such as the Parish Development Model, the *Emyoga* Project and the Operation Wealth Creation are a good way to support PFOs in both their livelihood and conservation work.

3. **Public sensitisation:** All duty bearers need to support the endeavours of PFOs by sensitising community members and corporate actors on the value of conservation, and the role PFOs are playing to help the situation. Cultural, political, and religious leaders, specifically have a strong bearing on community perceptions, so their role in sensitisation is highly important.
4. **Technical support:** Specialised support by State and non-State agencies towards PFOs regarding networking, tree growing, managing forest-based enterprises, the law and understanding wildlife (chimpanzee) behavior needs to be continuously offered. UWA, NFA and other conservation agencies have a strong role to play in this respect.

Cited Interviews

- ¹ Almost interviews conducted departed from defining PFOs; this therefore, is a summary of the different perspectives.
- ² Interview with Moses Ssemahunge, Project Manager, Bulindi Chimpanzee and Community Project, Hoima, 5 October 2021
- ³ Focus Group Discussion with Agnes Nyangoma Mukooto, Simon Kunihiro, Annet Mukonyezi, Stephen Kyaligonza, Yafesi Kaahwa, and James Asiimwe; Kabwoya; 2 October 2021
- ⁴ Interview with Mr. Wilson Kagoro, Community Conservation Officer, UWA, Murchison Falls National Park, 7 November 2021
- ⁵ Interview (and Conference presentation) with Mr. Boaz Basigirenda Abwoli, NFA Range Manager, 12 March 2021
- ⁶ Interview with Mr Stephen Nyakoojo member of the Kwonga Family, Kabwoya, 19 September 2021
- ⁷ Interview with Mr. Godfrey Nagonza, Mayor of Muhooro Town Council, Kagadi, 2 November 2021
- ⁸ Interview with Crispus Muhindo, Kagadi District Vermin Control Officer; and Robert Banura, Kagadi District Tourism Officer; Kagadi, 7 September 2021
- ⁹ Interview with Mr. Robert Rukahemura, PFO and Member Culture Committee, Bunyoro Kitara Kingdom, 6 October 2021
- ¹⁰ Interview with Mr. David Eryenyu, Field Manager, Budongo Conservation Field Station and Racheal Asaba, Masters in Forestry Student, 9 November 2021
- ¹¹ Interview with Sgt. Wilson Amanyire, UWA Outpost, Muhooro, 2 November 2021
- ¹² Interview with Mr. Robert Rukahemura, PFO and Member Culture Committee, Bunyoro Kitara Kingdom, 6 October 2021
- ¹³ Interview with Mr Joseph Muruuli, member of the Kwonga Family, Kabwoya, 29 January 2021
- ¹⁴ Interview with Mr. Mathew Musinguzi, PFO and proprietor of the Kigaju Forest Camp, Masindi, 7 November 2021
- ¹⁵ Interview with Mr. Joseph Serugo, PFO and proprietor of the Kairabwa Chimpanzee Conservancy Association in Kakumiro, Hoima, 5 October 2021
- ¹⁶ Interview with Mr. Nelson Mugisha and Mr. Alex Matsiko, Bulimbya-Kidoma PFO Association, Hoima, 1 November 2021
- ¹⁷ Interview with Mr. Abdu Kirungi, PFO in Muhooro, Kagadi, 7 September 2021
- ¹⁸ Interview with Mr. Herbert Kelly Aliija, Conservation in Action, Kabwoya, 2 October 2021
- ¹⁹ Interview with Ms Jennifer Atuhairwe and Mr. Silver Birungi, Chimpanzee Wildlife and Sanctuary Trust, Hoima, 9 November 2021
- ²⁰ Focus Group Discussion with Friends of Chimpanzee Family (in attendance: Mr. Kuteesa Swaleh (Executive Director), Mr. Tom Tibaleka, Ms Eularia Nyamahunge, Mr. Tugume Kamanyire, Mr. Ahumuza Daniel and Mr. Mulyaburo Kasaija), Muhooro, 2 November 2021
- ²¹ Interview with Mr. Alex Kabusomba Byensi, District Councillor, Kikuube District, 19 September 2021
- ²² Interview with Stephen Nyakoojo, member of the Kwonga Family, Kabwoya, 29 January 2021
- ²³ Interview with Crispus Muhindo, Kagadi District Vermin Control Officer; and Robert Banura, Kagadi District Tourism Officer; Kagadi, 7 September 2021
- ²⁴ Interview with Mr. Abdu Kirungi, PFO in Muhooro, Kagadi, 7 September 2021
- ²⁵ Focus Group Discussion with Friends of the Chimpanzee (in attendance: Mr. Kuteesa Swaleh (Executive Director), Mr. Tom Tibaleka, Ms Eularia Nyamahunge, Mr. Tugume Kamanyire, Mr. Ahumuza Daniel and Mr. Mulyaburo Kasaija), Muhooro, 2 November 2021

²⁶ The call for unionisation was repeated in various interviews and focus group discussions, including by Kiva Francis, Senior Assistant Secretary, Kikuube District

²⁷ Focus Group Discussion with Agnes Nyangoma Mukoto, Simon Kunihiro, Annet Mukonyezi, Stephen Kyaligonza, Yafesi Kaahwa, and James Asiimwe; Kabwoya; 2 October 2021

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The research reported in this publication investigated and discusses the experiences and contribution of private forest owners (PFOs) to the conservation of the chimpanzee in the Bunyoro area of Uganda, which is part of the Northern Albertine Rift.

The research defines PFOs, their motivation for forest and chimpanzee conservation, and discusses the context they work in. It highlights some of the major activities the PFOs engage in, the challenges they face, and suggests some remedies.

The Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda (CCFU) employs a “culture in conservation” approach which utilises cultural and community resources for the conservation of the chimpanzee and its habitat in the Bunyoro and Rwenzori regions.

CCFU is grateful for the resource support provided by the Arcus Foundation towards the implementation of this culturally informed approach to chimpanzee conservation. We are also grateful to the individuals, families and institutions that participated in the various activities of this project, including as field guides and interviewees as we conducted the current study.

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