



Summary

VULNERABLE AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS FRAMEWORK (VMGF) FOR UGANDA



INVESTING IN FORESTS AND PROTECTED AREAS FOR CLIMATE-SMART DEVELOPMENT (IFPA-CD) PROJECT

Ministry of Water and Environment
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implemented in support of Batwa will be described in the Vulnerable Marginalized Groups Management Plan (VMGMP) for Batwa communities in/around Echuya CFR, Bwindi Impenetrable NP, Mgahinga Gorilla NP, and Semliki NP. The VMGMP will be prepared in consultations with Batwa before project implementation starts.

Process of preparing the VMGF: This VMGF has been prepared by the MWE in consultation with over-all 269 Batwa representatives (100 males and 169 female) around the Echuya CFR, Bwindi Impenetrable NP, Mgahinga Gorilla NP and Semliki NP; Locals governments/Districts of Kisoro, Rubanda, Kanungu and Bundibugyo as well as some of the NGOs (e.g., BMCT, *NatureUganda*, PROBICOU) that support Batwa in these locations between 11th – 15th February 2020. Consultations were conducted in vernacular /local dialect and ensured that participants clearly understood the project objectives, investments and implementation arrangements as well as provisions for ensuring active participation by Batwa in the project.

The purpose of preparing VMGF: The purpose for preparing the VMGF is to Guide the preparation and implementation of IFPA-CD interventions that may affect Vulnerable Marginalized Groups in the targeted project areas.

The VMGF includes a description of project activities; potential positive and negative effects on VMGs; and a framework for ensuring free, prior, and informed consent (where relevant).

The VMGF serves as a practical tool to provide guidance for the project in handling any anticipated issues related VGMs in activities in and around Echuya CFR, Bwindi Impenetrable NP, Mgahinga Gorilla NP, and Semuliki NP.

The VMGF identifies measures required for avoiding or minimizing any adverse impacts on the Batwa and supports the development of alternative livelihoods where and as needed.

This VMGF applies to all components and activities that will impact the Batwa and provides procedures to ensure that the impacts are mitigated and that the Batwa benefit from the project.

The VMGF and National Policy and Legal Framework: The VMGF is consistent with the provisions for all Indigenous Peoples / Vulnerable and Marginalized Groups in Uganda that are provided under the Constitution of Uganda, and other policies and laws regulating to Equal Opportunities for all Ugandans, Culture, Land, Wildlife, Forestry, Environment, Tourism, among others.

Priority concerns of Batwa around Mgahinga, Bwindi, Semliki NPs and Echuya CFR: During consultations with Batwa held in February 2020, the following concerns were voiced by Batwa.

Category	Concerns
Livelihoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to forest resources for income generation (e.g., siting bee hives within the forest reserve, planting bamboo along forest reserve boundary, access to firewood, etc) • Access to information about the Forest, Collaborative Forest management arrangements and other development activities that impact on them. • Equitable participation and benefit from Batwa support programmes such as land purchase and allocations to Batwa families; increase in land allocation to benefit all Batwa families. • Access to social services, especially education • Inadequate mechanisms for resolving their grievances related to restriction of access and use of resources from Echuya Forest. • Preservation of Batwa Culture • Problem animals /crop raiding
Participating and benefitting from the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving quality of their crafts as well as marketing them (e.g., construction of stalls and allocating space for displaying the Batwa products) • Access to land and securing land ownership (registered land ownership) • Access agro-inputs (improved seed) and other opportunities for income generation. • Access to tree seedlings/planting materials (commercial and indigenous species) and Bamboo seedlings • Increased participation in CFM/CRM governance and CFM/CRM activities, and access to negotiated resources under CFM/CRM, equitable benefit from UWA Revenue Sharing schemes • Increased participation in ecotourism e.g. training Batwa to compete for tourism employment opportunities, registering and recognizing Batwa Ecotourism groups, establishing Batwa ecotourism business • Income generating activities for Batwa e.g., Craft shops, bee keeping • Access to social services - health, education

Likely negative impact of IFPA-CD on Batwa: The likely negative impact of the project on Batwa are related to the fact that the project aims to strengthen management of protected areas that would enhance forest protection and enforcement of restrictions to access to forest resources. However, the project support to NFA and UWA will **not** impose additional restrictions of the Batwa or affect their livelihoods.

Likely positive impacts of IFPA-CD on Batwa: The project support to NFA and UWA will result into better engagement with Batwa and delivery of benefits through; i) negotiated access to forest resources through Collaborative Forest Management (in Echuya CFR with NFA) and in Collaborative Resource Management (in Bwindi, Mgahinga and Semuliki); ii) provision of livelihoods support such as forest based enterprises (e.g, Bee keeping) , value addition to crafts and promotion of other Income Generating Activities for Batwa; iii) engagement in tourism; iv) employment; and, v) reduced effects of problem animals on Batwa investments outside the forests.

Measures for addressing negative impacts: This VMGF identifies the following measures for ensuring that negative impacts on Batwa and local communities are avoided or mitigated.

- a. Prioritize local community members and Batwa for employment opportunities in activities within the protected areas, such as; restoration planting, removal of invasive species, and infrastructure construction; tourism, etc.
- b. Build capacity of Batwa and community members to effectively engage and benefit from CFM/CRM activities, including participation of Batwa in CFM/CRM leadership structures and processes.
- c. Control problem animals and protect Batwa and community investments from crop and livestock raiding by problem animals;
- d. Demarcate, mark and publicize National Park and Forest Reserve boundaries;
- e. Promote investments that provide alternatives to forest resources (e.g., woodlots) or provide negotiated access and use of some forest resources for supporting livelihoods (e.g., non-timber products such as mushrooms, medicinal plants, wild fruits, craft materials, etc.).
- f. Promote Income generating activities and or value addition to local produce.

Developing VMGMP: Vulnerable Marginalized Group Management Plans for Batwa will be developed for each protected area. The VMGMP shall describe activities that will be supported by the project as well as their implementation and funding arrangements. The VMGMP will be funded separately.

Towards addressing grievances about the IFPA-CD: A mechanism for addressing the legitimate concerns of the project affected persons, including Batwa will be developed and applied during project implementation. This mechanism will provide a formal avenue for Batwa and other affected groups or stakeholders to engage with the project on issues of concern or unaddressed impacts. The project will sensitize Batwa and other project affected people on the existence of this mechanism, the procedures for its application and for providing feedback to complainants. It is envisaged that the mechanism will be made formal but simple and utilizing local dispute resolution structures and process or through grievances resolution structures set up at village or community levels specifically for this project.

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