**Evaluation Summary**

**Project Description:**  The project objective was: ‘Biodiversity of the Kidepo Critical Landscape in north-eastern Uganda is protected from existing and emerging threats.’ The project was designed with two main components: Strengthening Management Effectiveness of the Kidepo Critical Landscape; and Integrating Protected Area (PA) Management into the Wider Landscape.

**Project Location**: The project location was in six districts of Kitgum, Agago, Abim, Otuke, Kaabong and Kotido, and the following biodiversity conservation areas within the districts: Kidepo Valley National Park (KVNP), Karenga Community Wildlife Area (KCWA); and six Central Forest Reserves (CFRs) – Nyangea-Nyapore, Rom, Morongole, Lwala, Timu, and Zulia. Together, these areas make up the Kidepo Critical Landscape (KCL)

**Project Management:** UNDP were the GEF Implementing Agency (IA). The Ministry of Finance, Planning & Economic Development (MoFPED) were the Executing Agency (EA), with the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) as the designated main Implementing Partner (IP). Other IPs were Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), the National Forestry Authority (NFA), and the Uganda Export Promotion Board (UEPB). The project was supported by a NEMAled Project Management Unit (PMU) which also acted as the secretariat to the Project Board.

**Purpose and Methodology:** The objective of the Terminal Evaluation (TE) was to gain an independent analysis of the achievement of the project at completion, as well as to assess its sustainability and impact. The report focuses on assessing outcomes and project management. The TE additionally considered accountability and transparency, and provided lessonslearned for future UNDP-GEF projects, in terms of design and implementation. The overall approach and methodology of the TE followed the guidelines outlined in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported GEF-financed Projects (2012). The TE was an evidence-based assessment and relied on feedback from persons who were involved in the design, implementation, and supervision of the project1. The TE determined if the project’s building blocks (technical, financial, management, legal) were put in place and then, if together these were catalysed sufficiently to make the project successful.

 **Evaluation Ratings Summary:**

GEF-financed UNDP-supported projects of this type require the TE to evaluate implementation according to set parameters and ratings. The result of this TE is presented in Exhibit 2, below. (see Annex 9 for rating scale):

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1. Monitoring & Evaluation** | **Rating** | **2. Implementing Agency (UNDP) & Executing Agency / Partner (NEMA) Execution** | **Rating** |
| **Overall quality of M&E** | **MU** | **Overall quality of Implementation / Execution** | **MU** |
| **M&E Design at entry** | **MS** | **Quality of UNDP Implementation** | **MS** |
| **M&E Implementation** | **MU** | **Quality of Execution – NEMA / UWA / NFA** | **MU** |
| **3. Assessment of Outcomes** | **Rating** | **4. Sustainability** | **Rating** |
| **Overall Project Outcome (Objective)** | **MS** | **Overall Likelihood of Sustainability** | **MU** |
| **Effectiveness of Outcome 1** | **MS** | **Financial resources** | **MU** |
| **Effectiveness of Outcome 2** | **MS** | **Socio-economic** | **MU** |
| **Efficiency** | **MS** | **Institutional framework & governance** | **MU** |
| **Relevance** | **Relevant** | **Environmental** | **MU** |
| **5. Impact** | **Rating** |  |  |
| **Impact** | **Minimal** |  |  |

NB: for Sustainability MU indicates Moderately Unlikely

**Conclusions**

Uganda is a signatory to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which promotes the protection of ecosystems, natural habitats and the maintenance of viable populations of species in natural surroundings. It is known that KVNP alone is not a viable area for the large mammal (mainly ungulate) species present, especially in terms of sufficient all-year habitat and for out-breeding populations of certain species. It needs to be augmented by Karenga Community Wildlife Area (KCWA) and the fuller wildlife migration and dispersal area with the KCL (see dispersal map in Annex 5).

Once a conservation area has been legally established, which KCWA is, then an integrated conservation and development (ICD) model often used to be applied. The preferred approach these days is collaborative management (co-management) of biodiversity conservation areas, which aims to bring and share management responsibility with the local communities and their local governments. This has not really happened yet in the KCWA. Rather piecemeal approaches are underway, such as the CWSs and the establishment of the Karenga Community Wildlife Association. The exclusion of local government from the (co-) management of KCWA is thus a major oversight by UWA, with at least a section within UWA intent on keeping this status quo.

The problem is that the main threat is land conversion which is not being addressed under the present UWA approach. In 10-15 years maybe 30-40% of present habitat will be lost, especially with Karenga being developed into a new district. Another threat is the increase in cattle which again is not under the remit of UWA, but rather local government as is concerns the management of natural resources. Thirdly vegetation burning which is degrading the habitats, is uncontrolled and needs to be addressed by local government.

KCWA covers several sub-counties across three districts which adds to its management challenge, especially when local government are not coordinated for conservation of this area, and traditionally UWA’s work with them has been limited. The KCWA Board of Trustee’s (BoT) purpose is to maximize revenue from sport-hunting. KCWA lacks any management plan or active management team, or even committee that is representative of the local government offices with the responsibility for land tenure and natural resources management.

Tourism is needed as the approach to raise sufficient revenue to make wildlife conservation more attractive than other land uses to local government and local indigenous and local communities (ILCs). This also means that such revenues are transparent and shared in an equitable way. For the KVNP / KCWA and its surrounds under UWA management, this is far from the case at present.

Communities need to become integral to the conservation management of KCWA. At present, they get very limited in-kind benefits. This does not empower them effectively for collaborative conservation management. The ‘benefits’ they get can be equated with ‘welfare’ payments, thus it is highly likely that land conversion within the wildlife corridor will continue. Involving communities in conservation should include wildlife monitoring, not just human-wildlife conflict reporting. District and sub-county governments need to take responsibility for land conversion, as this aspect of conservation management is ‘conspicuous by its absence’, especially by Kaabong district government.

In 2018, Uganda began a review of its National Policy for the Conservation of Wetlands and Management of Wetland Resources, with the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) as the lead. This is an opportunity (for NEMA and NFA) to re-assess part of the KCL from a landscape ecology and habitat prospective. In particular, to re-assess the seasonal wetlands in the Kacheri – Orom area, for gazettement as protected wetland estate. The KCWA was established as a hunting concession, but is not fit for purpose for wildlife (habitat) protection. UWA wish for full protected area status of KCWA4. The opportunity is there to supersede the inflexibility of the KCWA trustee board and local government / village leaders, by raising the profile of this all-important wetland through a national level consultation, with a view to it becoming protected wetland, especially in its southern part.

**Recommendations**

1. The seasonal wetlands in the Kacheri – Orom sub-counties in Kotido and Kitgum (‘boot-shaped area of KCWA) should be proposed as national wetland estate, under the national review of wetlands [NEMA / NFA to propose to MWE]

2. The land conversion with the Nyangea-Napore CFR needs to be addressed through land use planning and land allocation (LUPLA) with natural heritage areas (i.e. wildlife corridors) agreed as part of customary land use certificates issued by the Ministry of Lands, Housing & Urban Development (MLHUD), and the strict enforcement by three district governments. [NEMA as holders of the KCL plan which includes land demarcation, together with MLHUD and the district government of Kaabong, Kitgum and Kotido, with an NGO – Uganda Land Alliance]

3. NEMA to include Inter-district Coordination Forum (IDCF) funding in its planning and budgeting cycle and to lead quarterly meetings [NEMA with MoFPED]. UWA to engage effectively with this new institutional set-up, by UWA mandating its attendance within its polices. [UWA]

4. KCL management plan funding should be secured and its implementation part of NEMA’s strategic plan; and NEMA staff member should be designated to deliver the plan [NEMA, with MoFPED]

5. To ensure that legal establishment of the Karenga eco-lodge benefit-sharing mode [UNDP with UWA]

6. UEPB to continue to work with the shea women’s groups in supporting primary processing, product development and market information and linkage. The two information centres need to be utilized in training the shea women’s groups in the production of shea nut and its products to standard. [UEPB]