# ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO INTEGRATED CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT: EQUITABLE GOVERNANCE AT LAKE MBURO NATIONAL PARK, UGANDA

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## ABSTRACT

Equity and governance are vital in facilitating sustainable biodiversity conservation as alternative approaches to integrated conservation and development. However, they have not always been prioritised by protected area managers and policy implementers in various interventions. A qualitative assessment was undertaken to explore the positioning of equitable governance in pursuing conservation and development objectives at Lake Mburo National Park. Data reveals that the current integrated conservation and development interventions fall short of equitable governance principles. The more that people are involved in decision making and equitably share resources, the more they are likely to be co-managers of protected area resources. Currently, those who bear the most conservation costs are not well targeted by conservation benefits, are likely to develop resentment and engage in unauthorised resource use. Key principles of governance categorised under the dimensions of equity were used as yardsticks for the assessment. The study concludes that governance and equity are potential alternative approaches to adopt in the implementation of integrated conservation and development. We recommend the application of an equitable governance framework in order to achieve sustainable conservation.

**Key words:** equity, unauthorised resource use, protected area management, governance assessment, Uganda Wildlife Authority

## INTRODUCTION

The concepts of governance and equity which some scholars combine to mean equitable governance (Dawson et al., 2017; McDermott et al., 2013; Schreckenberg et al., 2016) have become vital in the context of protected areas conservation (Twinamatsiko et al., 2015; Schreckenberg et al., 2016). Global and national conservation policy has evolved to include stronger emphasis on governance and equity issues (Franks & Booker, 2018). This is further emphasised by the 3rd and 6th World Parks Congresses and Aichi Target 11 of the Convention for Biological Diversity (CBD) (Twinamatsiko et al., 2014; Dawson et al., 2017). Governance and equity are understood in the context of power, relationship and accountability (Dawson et al., 2017). Equitable governance is an important aspect of protected area management and contributes to better conservation outcomes (McDermott et al., 2013; Dawson et al., 2017; Twinamatsiko et al., 2015; Franks & Booker, 2018). Equitable dimensions such as recognition of actors in conservation, procedures that relate to decision making and distribution of the costs and benefits of conservation are vital in facilitating sustainable conservation and effective protected area management (Dawson et al., 2017). Achieving equity is premised on the application of these key dimensions (De Jonge, 2011; McDermott et al., 2013; Martin et al., 2016; Schreckenberg et al., 2016; Dawson et al., 2017). There is a clear linkage between equity and governance because these dimensions entail aspects of the processes and structures through which decisions are made and by whom, thus describing procedural equity. The three

dimensions of equity are categories that explain the principles of good governance in protected areas.

There is a global debate on whether integrated conservation and development interventions are equitably implemented to address people's livelihoods (Hughes & Flintan, 2001; Simpson, 2008; Blomley et al., 2010; Twinamatsiko et al., 2014). There is often contestation between local communities and protected areas premised on inadequate benefits from protected areas to address their livelihood needs amidst conservation costs (Archabald & Naughton-Treves, 2001; Bush & Mwesigwa, 2008). As a result of the perceived inequitable distribution of benefits, unauthorised resource use takes place which therefore necessitates tackling illegal wildlife trade from the grassroots. Twinamatsiko et al. (2014) and Harrison et al. (2015) indicate that those who engage in poaching are poorer people and those who perceive less involvement within the adjacent communities of protected areas. Moreover, after over three decades of an integrated conservation and development approach, there is still evidence of unauthorised resource use, limited motivation of local people to participate in conservation activities and glaring resentment of conservation programmes implementation (Twinamatsiko et al., 2014; Harrison et al., 2015). This revelation necessitates alternative approaches to integrated conservation and development.

The integrated conservation and development (ICD) approach has evolved since 1985 in Uganda to provide alternative mechanisms to achieve sustainable conservation (Roe, 2008; Salafsky, 2011; Blomley et al., 2010; Kremen et al., 1998; Wells & Brandon, 1993; Albert, 1995). Since 1985 ICD has evolved from the substitution and compensation era to benefit sharing and to power sharing (Blomley et al., 2010). The ICD concept was intended to offer a more socially acceptable alternative to the traditional fines and fences – the protectionist approach to conservation and protected area management (Hughes & Flintan, 2001). Wells and Brandon (1993) noted that ICD projects stabilise land use outside protected area boundaries and increase local incomes to reduce pressure from further exploitation of natural resources. ICD aims to provide services and employment to park adjacent communities to encourage acceptance of conservation policies and reduce pressure on the environment. Similarly, Roe (2008) suggested that ICD projects should enhance the conservation of biodiversity by focusing on the social and economic needs of the nearby communities. This creates reconciliation of protected area management and the needs of local people. Governance and equity have gained momentum as alternative approaches to protectionism to augment protected area management in Uganda (Franks & Blomley, 2004). This study therefore assessed the application of locally prioritised governance and equity principles (dimensions) at Lake

Fauna in Lake Mburo National Park © Amelia Ampumuza

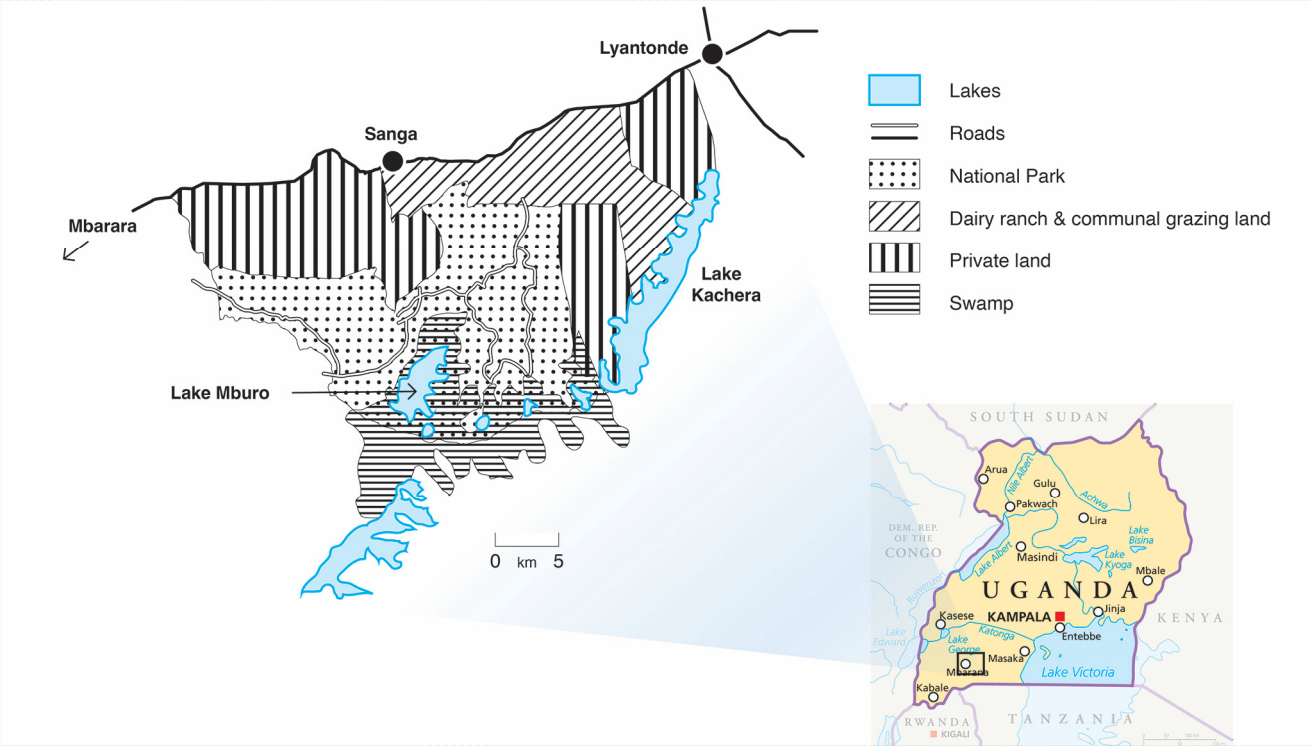


**Figure 1. Map of Lake Mburo National Park Source: redrawn from UWA, 2012**

Mburo National Park to understand the strengths, weaknesses and priority areas for action.

## METHODOLOGY

### Site location

The study was conducted at Lake Mburo National Park (hereafter referred to as Mburo) (Figure 1). Mburo is Uganda's smallest savannah national park covering an area of 370 km2 located in the drier southwestern part of Uganda known as the Cattle Corridor. The park is managed by Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), a government agency with the responsibility to manage resources. Encompassing 13 lakes, Mburo forms part of a 50 km long wetland system and provides important habitat to over 350 bird species. It is also home to species such as Elands, Impala, Leopards, Buffaloes, Giraffes and Waterbucks. Mburo borders with three districts of Kiruhura, Isingiro and Mbarara City inhabited by pastoralists and cultivators (see land use patterns in Figure 1) whose local language is Runyankore. The main economic activities are pastoralism and arable farming which mostly depend on the resources inside the park.

Mburo was gazetted a national park in 1983 after a history as a controlled hunting area from 1933 and later a game reserve from 1963. Following gazettement, all resource access within the park was prohibited including grazing, fishing and hunting and the rangeland outside the park was subdivided into small ranges and subsistence farming plots. Many people were negatively impacted and this fueled resentment and conflict. As an attempt to address the conflict, in 1986 some adjustments were made to the boundaries of Mburo to appease local people and promote positive relations with the park.

### Assessment methodology

*Overview of methods and approach*

The study undertook an in-depth qualitative assessment of governance and equity principles/dimensions. The assessment was a two-stage process that included a preliminary assessment and follow-up validation. The assessment followed the standard procedure of conducting the Governance Assessment for Protected and Conserved Areas (GAPA) as detailed in Booker and Franks (2019). The first stage was conducted between August and September 2018 while the second phase was conducted in 2019 and 2020. In the second phase of assessment, follow-up interviews and focus group discussions with communities were carried out to validate and ascertain the extent of application of selected governance and equity principles.

The assessment was convened by UWA with the support of a facilitation team from Mbarara University of Science and Technology, the International Institute for Environment and Development and the Centre for

Research Uptake in Africa. The 10 good governance principles already identified by IUCN and the GAPA manual were presented to the participants (Borrini-Feyerabend et al., 2013). After discussion on which ones applied in the context of Mburo, six principles were prioritised and selected for assessment using a multi-stakeholder assessment approach. The governance principles and equity dimensions selected were:

1. Effective participation of relevant actors in decision making;
2. Fair benefit sharing according to criteria agreed by relevant actors;
3. Accountability for fulfilling responsibilities, other actions and inactions;
4. Fair and effective processes for dispute resolution;
5. Recognition and respect for the rights of all relevant actors;
6. Achieving conservation and other objectives efficiently and as planned.

The assessment included preparation, scoping, information gathering, validation and ideas for action, action planning and follow-up (Figure 2). After action planning, follow-up interviews/focus group discussions were conducted. Figure 2 illustrates the methodological assessment process and approach.

*Data collection and analysis*

In 2018, we conducted two workshops (scoping and validation) and data gathering using key informant interviews and focus group discussions. At the beginning, nine key stakeholders were identified by UWA and invited to prepare for the first workshop as a scoping exercise. Its purpose was to understand the governance assessment concept, agree on the governance principles that apply to Mburo and identify key informants. The participants of the scoping workshop included five UWA officials, four researchers and ten representatives of local governments of Kiruhura, Isingiro and Mbarara. The UWA officials included the chief warden, community conservation warden, law enforcement warden, assistant warden in charge of intelligence, and assistant warden in charge of problem animal management. Local government representatives were drawn from the community development, natural resource and district administration sectors. The validation workshop was attended by 42 participants that included all participants of the scoping workshop and other key government technical leaders at both central and local government levels, civil society representatives, community representatives and political leaders.

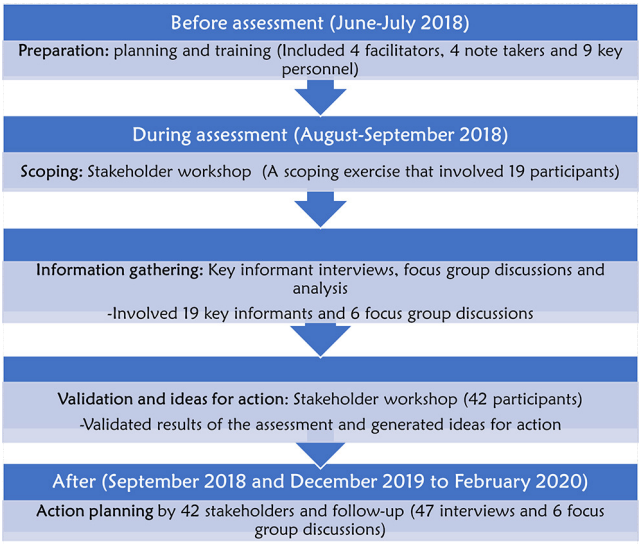


**Figure 2. Assessment process and methods used**

The second stage of assessment conducted in 2019 and 2020 employed 47 key informants and six focus group discussions. The key informants included UWA staff, local government officials, civil society and community representatives. Secondary data regarding sustainable and equitable governance of protected areas worldwide and also specifically regarding Mburo was collected using desk review. Data processing and analysis from the workshops, focus group discussions and key informant interviews was transcribed and entered with the aid of NVIVO version 11. Data was analysed qualitatively using thematic analysis. Discussion of each principle was based on standardised open questions which focused first on strengths and then on challenges of the principle in practice, underlying causes for challenges, and ideas for action to improve the situation.

## RESULTS

### Effective participation of relevant actors in decision making

Results reveal that some key aspects of effective participation as a procedural equity dimension are not systematically implemented though there has been a positive evolution of conservation from the protectionist approach. A strength of the current governance system is the election of local people to roles of authority such as local council chairpersons – who are responsible for identifying local priorities for projects to be funded by revenue sharing. The local council representatives and community leaders are always invited to participate. However, a related challenge is that local council representatives and community leaders have limited influence and while they might be invited to attend park meetings, they cannot impact on decision making.

Instead, stakeholders complained that decision making is dominated by park officials and government representatives. It was reported that where stakeholders have felt less involved and their decisions not respected, they have resented protected area activities. A case in point is when local residents shunned a meeting organised by a ranger citing lack of respect for the previous community resolutions. This therefore affects the procedural dimension of equity which relates to full involvement of local stakeholders in decision making.

The role played by UWA, local governments and some community leaders is evident in the formulation of guidelines such as the general management plans and Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) between communities and protected area management. Some MoUs mentioned are for resource access and revenue sharing. Local people, including women's groups, were said to be participating in the selection of projects to fund under a revenue sharing programme, for instance livestock and handicrafts. This was reflected in the words of a key informant as:

> One of the areas of participation is when we get benefits such as revenue sharing whereby residents benefit from community projects. We are invited to give our views whether they will be taken or not. Lack of consideration of our views results in resentment towards park activities. (Key Informant 3, 2020)

Women participants revealed that they sometimes participate in decision making by identifying their needs for revenue sharing projects (such as livestock or handicraft projects) but they generally felt excluded from decision making. These women protested that it is unfair that they are not able to participate in decision making related to resource access – especially resources they depend on such as fish and firewood. Also, local people participate in community conservation education meetings and the related programmes implemented by UWA. The participation of community members was reported as taking place through selected community representatives such as local council chairpersons and protected area committees, for example the revenue sharing committee. In other instances, the study was informed that local people participate in the governance of protected areas as informers to UWA by reporting problem animals which stray onto community farms and land. Community members also reported poaching and illegal hunting activities and unauthorised grazing in the park although this is not associated with any direct benefits.

Beyond park level, another challenge identified is the limited representation of local people in the formulation of national policies and site level guidelines despite

Community dialogue in Isingiro © Medard Twinamatsiko

their implications on people's lives. Stakeholders offered examples including the revenue sharing and fishing guidelines . In this context, park officials and government representatives have more influence over decision making than local people. The other concern mentioned was the lack of adequate planning processes that involve all stakeholders. Community members expressed a concern that policies and plans are developed from the top down rather than the bottom up. Local people do not have the opportunity to decide on what relief they should receive to counter their losses as a result of wild animal destruction. This too increases people's resentment of conservation efforts.

### Fair benefit sharing according to criteria agreed by relevant actors

The important benefits which local communities currently access include: resources from the park such as handicraft materials, firewood, fish, water, poles and medicinal plants. Others include a share of revenue derived from tourism activities in the park which has been used to fund community/livelihood projects, for example the construction of schools, roads, community halls, water points, health units and other infrastructure. The other benefit mentioned was the selling of items from community activities to tourists. Participants further pointed out that the protected areas provided some casual employment to community members in park related activities. One of the study participants expressed the view:

> Schools and dams have been constructed, resource sharing is doing good, we even received money and constructed a health facility. (Key Informant 20, 2020)

For community members there are clear governance and equity challenges in the way benefits are shared related

to fishing permits, sports hunting revenue and tourism revenue. There is a suspicion that fishing permits, for example, are rented by permit holders to people migrating from areas outside the communities bordering Mburo, in contravention with the rules that govern these resource access permits. Community members perceive unfairness or inequity in the way revenue from sports hunting and tourism is distributed – sports hunting is seen as only benefiting one community around Mburo, while tourism revenue is seen as favouring Kiruhura district over Isingiro and Mbarara. Community members also reported non-payment and delays in the disbursement of tourism revenue sharing with little or no explanation from government officials.

An important challenge for Mburo is resentment towards management actions due to the negative impacts of conservation on people's lives – including restricted resource access and human–wildlife conflict. In particular, women and men are concerned that wild animals leave the park and pose a risk to their lives or the lives of their families through death or injury. Additionally, wild animals inflict damage on crops and can kill livestock incurring significant costs to households. All stakeholders highlighted that there is no practical official policy of compensation in Uganda, but households may receive a small payment known locally as 'compassion' at the discretion of park officials. Although the government enacted the Uganda Wildlife Act in 2019, it is not yet applied on the ground (Parliament of Uganda, 2019). There is reported failure of park management to control human–wildlife conflict. For instance, animals have a right to enter people's lands and destroy their sources of livelihoods whereas people are not allowed to freely enter the national park. This is a critical underlying factor that is affecting community–park relations.

A further issue was delays in payments and sometimes non-payment of revenue sharing funds meant to be immediately disbursed to the local communities. There were reported leakages in the process of transferring benefits to the actual beneficiaries. Most stakeholders concurred that although UWA disburses funds to the districts on time, the districts do not quickly meet their obligation to remit money to the communities affected. The concern raised was that along the chain, there are delays in channelling funds downwards to the final recipients which are the local communities. In most cases, the amount of money sent to the districts will have drastically reduced by the time it reaches the final recipient:

Community revenue sharing meeting © Amelia Ampumuza

> Revenue sharing is not inclusive so few people benefit from it, there is inequitable sharing of resources, for example in Isingiro, demand is greater than supply, with a high population density. (FGD, Masha, 2019)

### Accountability for fulfilling responsibilities, other actions and inactions

The results illustrate a lack of adequate transparency and information sharing between and among stakeholders at Mburo. Community members and their representatives reported that there is little information and explanation given to local people on issues concerning Mburo from park and district government officials. Local leaders were accused by some community members as not being proactive in obtaining park related information from officials or sharing information with the people they represent. However, local leaders and officials noted that there are regular meetings on updates relevant to Mburo between park officials and local council chairpersons, and attendance of public meetings by community members can be low. An important issue reported by all stakeholders is limited awareness amongst actors of each of the stakeholders' responsibilities.

Many of the stakeholders underlined that lack of awareness about revenue sharing limits local people's ability to hold accountable those officials responsible for managing revenue sharing funds – including project management and procurement committees, district and sub-county government officials and UWA officials. This is a concern given that all stakeholders observed that as revenue sharing funds pass through these various levels of administration there is leakage and loss of finance. There were also other allegations of community projects not representing value for money due to embezzlement of funds, and more generally, a lack of follow-up and monitoring of revenue sharing projects. Such governance and equity issues with tourism revenue sharing have been seen elsewhere in Uganda at Bwindi Impenetrable National Park (see Franks & Twinamatsiko, 2017).

UWA officials revealed that they have no connection with the district personnel who do not put to use the money meant for serving local communities. There were cases where contractors connived with district officials and set up signs on project sites where no work was actually carried out. This was said to result from local people not knowing how revenue sharing is calculated and the formula for distributing funds between districts and communities. Therefore, UWA, the district, sub-county and project management committees should be held responsible for not building the capacity of local communities.

### Fair and effective processes for dispute resolution

Local council and park officials have formed conflict resolution committees / tribunals to respond to grievances around Mburo. At times, communities may also hold dialogue meetings – especially following events of human–wildlife conflict. However, for communities, unresolved governance and equity challenges fuel their feelings of resentment towards the park – reported unresolved grievances include those related to resource access, human–wildlife conflicts and prosecution or penalties for illegal resource use (for example confiscating community livestock found in the park). Even where there are processes to deal with grievances, local people feel that park officials often do not respect the agreed process. For example, some community stakeholders perceived that local people are arrested on suspicion of illegal resource use without sufficient investigation or consultation with community conflict resolution committees. A scheme that is helping to reduce disputes is UWA's user resource access programme which has allowed permitted access to Lake Kibikwa.

### Recognition and respect of the rights of all relevant actors

Recognition and respect of the rights of all relevant actors was a difficult principle to discuss due to contextual sensitivities regarding talking about the rights of community stakeholders. According to the local people, an important governance challenge is that many government and park leaders interpret rights as privileges. There are issues related to rights of access to historical sites and some areas of pasture within the park. Some community stakeholders detailed unresolved historical cases of human rights abuses by park officials when dealing with people suspected of poaching or illegally harvesting other natural resources within Mburo.

Reported strengths of the current governance system include permission for local pastoralists to access water within Mburo during extreme dry periods, and women are permitted to access medicinal plants. Every Saturday in Rubare market, the sale of fish is only permitted to local people to ensure that communities access fish at low prices for improved nutrition. And, once a year on the 31 December all local people are given free entry to visit the park.

### Achieving conservation and other objectives efficiently and as planned

There is evidence of the commitment of park officials to fulfil their mandate in protecting the national park. The conventional evolution towards equity and governance are not yet a characteristic of UWA operations and approaches as evidenced by greater budget and human resource allocation to law enforcement compared to community conservation. As part of collaborative management, the park was said to be providing social services and support to communities, and one of the services mentioned was providing scholarships to selected students in the communities. Also mentioned was how people can now live near the park boundaries with less fear compared to before the establishment of the community conservation department. This has resulted from efforts to control wildlife from attacking local communities. This effort has changed the negative attitudes of people towards the protected area. Stakeholders informed the study that some of the human–wildlife interventions have reduced crop raiding although this needs to be further strengthened.

## DISCUSSION

The governance and equity assessment approach demonstrates a strong alternative mechanism to ICD to promote sustainable conservation of biodiversity. This is in line with Dawson et al. (2017), McDermott et al. (2013) and Schreckenberg et al. (2016). Integration, however, requires the meaningful involvement of stakeholders. Communities were able to identify aspects within the six principles of governance and the three dimensions of equity – procedural, distributive and recognitive equity that are instrumental to improving the landscape of decision making for better and equitable conservation. It is evident that the functioning of the protected area is dependent on a better working relationship with the community. Greater governance and equity strengthen community support for conservation and development. This revelation relates to Twinamatsiko et al. (2015) that the more people felt involved and that they benefited from Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, the more they increased their conservation support.

In examining the accountability of actions and inactions by stakeholders, there is evidence of limited

transparency about what happens at national level regarding protected area plans and policies. This concealment of information may have a detrimental effect on the conservation practices of local people on whom the laws apply. Further, local communities seem to have a low level of awareness of their rights in respect to wildlife resources. Yet from previous studies such as Martin et al. (2016) and Dawson et al. (2017), procedural equity and equitable governance increase motivation for biodiversity conservation. It is still an uphill task for the key stakeholders to provide adequate information to the local communities on what rights of access they have to key resources in the protected area.

In the integration of conservation and development, the alternative livelihoods provided to the local communities seem not to be targeted at the people who require support in the context of bearing the costs of conservation. This directly relates to the distributive equity dimension and principles (Schreckenberg et al., 2016). This was reflected in the livestock projects provided to community members, where in some situations they were provided to households that were seen to be already well off and not those in dire need. This practice contradicts the previous assertions by Walker (2012) to target those that bear the costs of conservation. This imbalance in revenue sharing does not meet the principle of equity benefit sharing (Kremen et al., 1998; Schreckenberg et al., 2016). Resource access arrangements are appreciated by local communities, but cases of rich local community members buying permits from poor members is creating tensions within the very communities where service access is contested. There is a growing need for greater involvement of local people in decision making. This is in agreement with Martin et al. (2016) and Twinamatsiko et al. (2015) that found there is a positive relationship between local involvement and conservation support. Dawson et al. (2017) further articulates the conservation outcome generated as a result of respecting and valuing other conservation stakeholders. Following these results, the delays in revenue sharing down to the grassroots level require an emergency redress. Funds from revenue sharing are not directly channelled to the parish and are not monitored by the park and parish chiefs of the communities meant to receive the funds. This creates leakages which relates to the findings by Franks and Twinamatsiko (2017) on how revenue sharing leakages negatively impact the final beneficiaries.

The laxity in effectively implementing the legislation on compensation is promoting conflict between local people and protected area managers thus affecting sustainable governance and conservation of wildlife resources. It is evident that communities are losing their crops due to wild animals. According to Hughes and Flintan (2001), giving alternative livelihoods to those who suffer losses to conservation is vital to replace the traditional fines and fences for local people. Compensation is a direct benefit for the cost that conservation imposes on local people (Bush & Mwesigwa, 2008; Archabald & Naughton-Treves, 2001; Walker, 2012). Reviewing revenue sharing guidelines therefore appears to be a better option to facilitate the effective implementation of the compensation law to reduce resentment towards the parks from the communities in times of losses incurred due to wild animals from the park.

In an attempt to fully achieve conservation objectives and other developmental objectives, it is evident that stakeholders have to be coordinated by a central authority which is in a position to respond to local needs as Kremen et al. (1998) and Hughes and Flintan (2001) articulate in the case of Madagascar. Furthermore, stakeholders at higher levels of protected area governance suggested the use of the project implementation cycle to address the real problems faced by communities. In addition, stakeholders should increase projects for women around protected areas since animals destroy gardens cultivated by women and as such, they fail to feed their children and the elder members of the family. The greater involvement of women is a procedural equity dimension and addresses the equitable governance question in protected areas. The arguments mentioned here relate to the justifications of Blomley et al. (2010), Roe (2008) and Salafsky (2011) to integrate holistic aspects of conservation and development for better conservation outcomes.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study establishes that governance and equity are potential alternative approaches to the implementation of integrated conservation and development given their effectiveness in delivering conservation outcomes. However, critical challenges have been identified in the application of governance and equity principles and dimensions at Mburo, especially the limited involvement of the local people and lack of equitable sharing of benefits. If not addressed, these challenges have a potential adverse effect of intensifying people's resentment of conservation. Local communities bear most conservation costs and live closer to the park boundary, yet have not been effectively targeted by integrated conservation and development interventions. This also relates to the recognition and contextual

dimensions of equity as well as perception of participation and accountability shortfalls. The communities that have historical property rights such as the Bahima pastoralists and who do not have a negative effect on Mburo resources, have not been given special consideration during the implementation process of conservation and development programmes.

The key obstacle to translating natural resource benefits into livelihood improvement rests on the procedural and distributive inequities. This relates to the limited involvement of local people which affects the level of benefit appreciation and ownership, poor implementation approaches, a highly bureaucratic system and a poor monitoring system by the stakeholders that are charged with the monitoring task. If natural resource benefits do not translate into livelihood security, collaborative community-based conservation will not be achieved. Poaching is likely to scale up in the context of local communities becoming conduits of illegal wildlife trade. This is likely to hinder efforts towards reducing unsustainable resource use. There is, therefore, a need for natural resource benefits to translate into livelihood security in order to achieve collaborative community-based conservation.

Limited information access, capacity and empowerment have been identified as key gaps in the sharing of revenue and resources from the park. Therefore, local leaders and residents should be empowered to be informed on the details of the processes involved. There is a need to allocate money to parishes rather than districts to allow supervision and monitoring of the projects by local councils. The general public should be sensitised and educated about the importance of women's participation in decision making. The contradictions between the mandate of UWA and local government in the distribution of revenue sharing funds ought to become a focus of protected area managers or otherwise will continue to be a source of dissatisfaction for local people. Given the evolution of integrated conservation and development from substitution to power sharing, and based on the recent pronouncement of compensation policy in the Uganda Wildlife Act (Parliament of Uganda, 2019), it is evident that governance and equity can work as alternative approaches in the implementation of integrated conservation and development interventions. Local communities continue to appreciate the tourism revenue from the park although with implementation challenges. Strengthened local governance and equity frameworks in protected area management fit well in strategy five of the third National Development Plan (NPA, 2020) and in the greater realisation of CBD targets.

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## RESUMEN

La equidad y la gobernanza son vitales para facilitar la conservación sostenible de la biodiversidad como enfoques alternativos para la conservación y el desarrollo integrados. Sin embargo, los gestores de áreas protegidas y los responsables de la aplicación de políticas no siempre les han dado prioridad en diversas intervenciones. Se realizó una evaluación cualitativa para explorar el posicionamiento de la gobernanza equitativa en la consecución de los objetivos de conservación y desarrollo en el Parque Nacional del Lago Mburo. Los datos revelan que las actuales intervenciones integradas de conservación y desarrollo no cumplen los principios de gobernanza equitativa. Cuanto más participen las personas en la toma de decisiones y compartan equitativamente los recursos, más probabilidades tendrán de ser cogestores de los recursos de las áreas protegidas. En la actualidad, los que soportan la mayor parte de los costes de conservación no reciben los beneficios de la misma, y es probable que desarrollen resentimiento y se dediquen a un uso no autorizado de los recursos. Para la evaluación se utilizaron principios clave de gobernanza clasificados en las dimensiones de la equidad. El estudio concluye que la gobernanza y la equidad son posibles enfoques alternativos para la aplicación de la conservación y el desarrollo integrados. Se recomienda la aplicación de un marco de gobernanza equitativa para lograr una conservación sostenible.

## RÉSUMÉ

L'équité et la gouvernance sont essentielles pour faciliter la conservation durable de la biodiversité en tant qu'approches alternatives à la conservation et au développement intégrés. Cependant, les gestionnaires d'aires protégées et les responsables de la mise en œuvre des politiques ne leur ont pas toujours accordé la priorité dans le cadre de diverses interventions. Une évaluation qualitative a été entreprise pour explorer le positionnement de la gouvernance équitable dans la poursuite des objectifs de conservation et de développement au parc national du lac Mburo. Les données révèlent que les interventions actuelles de conservation et de développement intégrés ne respectent pas les principes de la gouvernance équitable. Plus les gens sont impliqués dans la prise de décision et partagent équitablement les ressources, plus ils sont susceptibles d'être cogestionnaires des ressources des aires protégées. Actuellement, ceux qui supportent le plus de coûts de conservation ne sont pas bien ciblés par les bénéfices de la conservation, sont susceptibles de développer du ressentiment et de s'engager dans une utilisation non autorisée des ressources. Les principes clés de la gouvernance, classés sous les dimensions de l'équité, ont été utilisés comme critères d'évaluation. L'étude conclut que la gouvernance et l'équité sont des approches alternatives potentielles à adopter dans la mise en œuvre de la conservation et du développement intégrés. Nous recommandons l'application d'un cadre de gouvernance équitable afin de parvenir à une conservation durable.