



USAID
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UGANDA/SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN THE ALBERTINE RIFT (USAID-STAR)

Global Sustainable Tourism Alliance

Final Report

July 2009 – August 2011

This program is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the terms of its Associate Award Number 170-A-00-08-00101-00 (Uganda Global Sustainable Tourism Activity) implemented by prime recipient FHI 360, Solimar International, and The George Washington University. The GSTA/Uganda Associate Award has been issued under the Global Sustainable Tourism Alliance (GSTA) Leadership with Associates (LWA) Cooperative Agreement No. EPP-A-00-06-00002-000 and supports the same program objectives described in the LWA. The GSTA is funded and managed by the USAID Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade Bureau: Natural Resources Management Office. Technical services for the GSTA LWA are provided by the FHI 360 in partnership with The George Washington University, The Nature Conservancy, and Solimar International.

Uganda/Sustainable Tourism in the Albertine Rift (USAID-STAR) Program

Contract Information

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Prepared By

Global Sustainable Tourism Alliance Uganda/USAID-STAR Program

Submitted By

Roberto Martin
USAID-STAR Program Manager, FHI 360
rmartin@fhi360.org

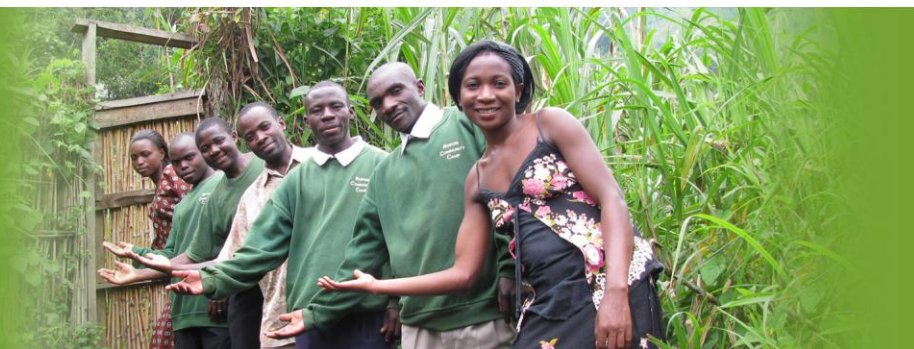
Submitted To

Sudi Bamulesewa
Agreement Officer's Technical Representative (AOTR), USAID/Uganda
Kampala, Uganda

For More Information

Global Sustainable Tourism Alliance
c/o FHI 360
1825 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20009 USA
Tel: (202) 884-8000 / Fax: (202) 884-8997
Web site: <http://www.GSTAlliance.org>

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USAID-STAR
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN THE ALBERTINE RIFT
FINAL REPORT
August 2009 - July 2011



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ACRONYMS

AUTO	Association of Uganda Tour Operators
AWF	African Wildlife Foundation
CBO	Community Based Organization
CTPH	Conservation Through Public Health
CTE	Community Tourism Enterprise
DMO	Destination Management Organization
EAC	East African Community
FFI	Flora and Fauna International
GSTA	Global Sustainable Tourism Alliance
HCAU	Hotel and Catering Association of Uganda
IGCP	International Gorilla Conservation Partnership
ITFC	Institute of Tropical Forest Conservation
JGI	Jane Goodall Institute
KATIC	Katwe Tourism Information Center
MTTI	Ministry of Trade, Tourism, and Industry
NFA	National Forest Authority (Uganda)
NU	Nature Uganda
NCCDF	Nkuringo Conservation and Development Foundation
PSFU	Private Sector Foundation
RCCDP	Ruboni Community Conservation and Development Program
RweMCCA	Rwenzori Mountains Cultural Values Conservation Association
SAVE	Scientific, Academic, Volunteer, and Educational Travel
TUGATA	The Uganda Association of Travel Agents
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
UAAO	Uganda Association of Air Operators
UATTI	Uganda Association of Tourism Training Institutions
UCOTA	Uganda Community Tourism Association
UDTA	Uganda District Tourism Associations
UNWTO	World Tourism Organization
UOBDU	United Organization for Batwa Development in Uganda
USAGA	Uganda Safari Guide Association
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USAID STAR	Sustainable Tourism in the Albertine Rift Program
UTA	Uganda Tourism Association
UTB	Uganda Tourism Board
UWA	Uganda Wildlife Authority
UWEC	Uganda Wildlife Education Center
VC	Visitor Center
WCU	Wildlife Clubs of Uganda

National Parks and Protected Areas

BINP	Bwindi Impenetrable National Park
BMCA	Bwindi and Mgahinga Conservation Area
KNF	Kibale National Forest
MFPA	Murchison Falls Protected Area
MGNP	Mgahinga Gorilla National Park
QENP	Queen Elizabeth National Park
RMNP	Rwenzori Mountains National Park

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

The following organizations comprised the USAID-STAR implementation team:

Solimar International: Solimar International is a tourism development firm with the mission of helping businesses, travelers, and destinations develop and connect to sustainable tourism experiences that support environmental conservation, preserve cultural heritage, and enhance the lives of local residents. Solimar takes an innovative approach to sustainable tourism development, integrating proven business solutions with many years of experience in tourism consulting, destination management, creative services, marketing, and travel operations. Solimar uses a market-oriented approach to provide business solutions through technical assistance, creative marketing, promotional tools, and industry linkages, while improving destination market opportunities and growth.

FHI 360 (formally AED): works in all the major areas of human development, with a focus on improving education, health, the environment, and economic opportunities for the least advantaged in the U.S. and in developing countries worldwide. FHI 360 has capabilities in design and management of complex, large-scale multi-country programs; social marketing and communications for behavior change; environmental education, communication, and interpretation; social mobilization, participation, and advocacy; training and capacity building, and policy formulation and support.

US Forest Service (USFS): Responsible for managing over 76 million hectares of national forests and grasslands, USFS is one of the largest land management agencies in the United States. The ultimate objective in managing these lands in the context of these different benefits and uses is to ensure sustainable healthy ecosystems for future generations via multiple-use policy. The Forest Service deals with a broad array of stakeholders, and must balance the need for resource use with competing interests including extraction, biodiversity protection, and local subsistence resource use, among others.

African Wildlife Foundation (AWF)/International Gorilla Conservation Program (IGCP): The goal of the International Gorilla Conservation Program is to ensure the conservation of mountain gorillas and their regional Afromontane forest habitat in Uganda, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Formed in 1991, IGCP comprises three coalition partners: African Wildlife Foundation, Fauna & Flora International (FFI) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). The mission of the IGCP is to empower the people of Uganda, Rwanda, and the DRC to jointly manage a network of trans-boundary protected areas that contribute significantly to sustainable development and protect the endangered mountain gorillas and their habitat. AWF/IGCP supported tourism development around the gorilla parks in Uganda.

The Jane Goodall Institute (JGI): Founded in 1977, the Jane Goodall Institute continues Dr. Goodall's pioneering research on chimpanzee behavior—research that transformed scientific perceptions of the relationship between humans and animals. JGI's work in Uganda's Albertine Rift focuses on four major forested areas that are home to more than 75% of the country's estimated population of 5000 chimpanzees: Budongo Forest Reserve,

Bugoma Forest Reserve, Kalinzu Forest Reserve, and Kibale National Park. JGI supported tourism development linked to conservation around Murchison Falls and Budongo Forest Reserve in Uganda.

Uganda Community Tourism Association (UCOTA): UCOTA exists to empower poor communities to improve their lives through community based tourism products (accommodations, tour guiding, and cultural performances). It spearheads community-based tourism development in Uganda in an attempt to ensure that the benefits of tourism stay as much as possible in the local community. UCOTA supports its members through capacity building and marketing of community tourism products. UCOTA worked closely with STAR in implementation of community tourism development activities.

Nature Uganda (NU): NU's mission is "promoting the understanding, appreciation, and conservation of nature". In pursuit of this mission, NU strives to create a nature-friendly public, enhance knowledge of Uganda's natural history, advocate for policies favorable to the environment, and take action to conserve priority species, sites, and habitats for the benefit of people. Nature Uganda implemented bird guide training and bird tourism related events in partnership with the program.

ECOTRUST (The Environmental Conservation Trust of Uganda): ECOTRUST is Uganda's leading indigenous, not-for-profit private institution supporting natural resource management (NRM) initiatives countrywide established, USAID support, in 1999. Its mission is to conserve biological diversity and enhance social welfare by promoting innovative and sustainable environmental management. Their goal is to provide long-term sustained funding for the conservation of biodiversity and environmental management in Uganda. Activities include grant management, development and promotion of model (cutting edge) conservation initiatives and Capacity building of Community Based Organizations. Their program concentrates in the Albertine Rift. USAID-STAR took advantage of a good opportunity to support an existing local grant management group that can sustain and continue supporting our activities after USAID STAR program.

The following organizations comprised the USAID-STAR supporting partners:

Fauna & Flora International (FFI): Fauna & Flora International was the world's first international conservation organization, and the pioneering work of its founders in Africa led to the creation of numerous protected areas, including Kruger and Serengeti National Parks. Expanding beyond its African origins, Fauna & Flora International succeeds in giving conservation a voice on the international stage, drawing worldwide attention to the plight of rare and endangered species.

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS): WCS's mission is to save wildlife and wild places worldwide through science, global conservation, education and the management of the world's largest system of urban wildlife parks, led by the flagship Bronx Zoo. Together WCS activities change attitudes towards nature and help people imagine wildlife and humans living in harmony. WCS is committed to this mission because it believes it is essential to the integrity of life on Earth.

Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA): UWA is governed by a Board of Trustees appointed by the State Minister of Tourism to manage 10 National Parks, 12 Wildlife Reserves, and 14 Wildlife Sanctuaries. UWA also provides guidance for 5 Community Wildlife Area and its mission is to conserve and sustainably manage the wildlife in and outside protected areas of Uganda in partnership with neighboring communities and stakeholders for the benefit of the people of Uganda and the global community. UWA is committed to adhere to the international conventions and protocols for which Uganda is a party.

Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry (MTTI): The mandate of the MTTI is to formulate and support strategies, plans and programs that promote and ensure expansion and diversification of tourism, trade, cooperatives, environmentally sustainable industrialization, appropriate technology, conservation and preservation of other tradable national products, to generate wealth for poverty eradication and benefit the country socially and economically. The MTTI, through Uganda Tourism Board (UTB), is responsible for marketing Uganda as a tourism destination.

Wildlife Clubs of Uganda (WCU): WCU was established to ensure that Ugandan youth are taught the values of protecting wildlife and are provided with conservation education and opportunities for participation in conservation actions. The WCU mission is to ultimately ensure the sustainable use of Uganda's natural resources and to conserve the country's wildlife heritage for the present and future generations. WCU is a membership society and its members range from school clubs to individuals, families, private sector organizations and community groups. There are currently 1,500 WCU throughout the country.

Uganda Tourism Association (UTA): UTA is the apex body of tourist trade associations within the private sector. The association exists to bring together, establish and maintain a forum for these associations. Its main objective is to coordinate private sector activities, act as the industry spokesman and strengthen linkages between the private sector and the Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry, now the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife & Antiquities.

Association of Uganda Tour Operators (AUTO): AUTO is a tourism trade association representing the interests of the country's tour operators. Members offer a range of services, which can be broadly divided into the following categories; special interest safaris, air safaris, incentive travel group safaris, custom safaris for individual travelers and camping safaris (luxury & budget). AUTO is a member of the Uganda Tourist Association.

Uganda Hotel Owners Association (UHOA): UHOA helps hotel owners in the country to have common thread in fostering services offered from accommodation to recreation facilities. UHOA has a vision to be the best provider of hospitable services in the hospitality industry by providing superb standard of accommodation, facilities and services to both domestic and international tourists. The association's objectives are: lobbying and advocacy, information collection, analysis and dissemination, promotion and protection of the interests of hotel owners in Uganda.

Technical Advisory Group (TAG): USAID-STAR worked through a Technical Advisory Group of eleven members from: Association of Uganda Tour Operators, Conservation Concepts, East African Business Week Newspaper, Fauna and Flora International, Great Lakes Safaris, International Gorilla Conservation Program, Jane Goodall Institute, Makerere University Environment Department, Nature Uganda, Uganda Community Tourism Association, Uganda Journalist Association for Tourism, Uganda Wildlife Authority, and the USAID Uganda-Environmental Natural Resource Sub-team Center, individual stakeholders—especially from local communities, central and local government, donor agencies, and the private sector. By doing so, USAID-STAR could ensure that all project activities were demand-driven and all efforts continued to focus on large-scale impact.

INTRODUCTION

This Final Report provides a narrative of activities implemented during the two years of the program. The program consisted of 17 months of implementation (from March 2010 to July 2011) building upon the design phase (completed February 2010) that determined the program approach and provided the road map for implementation.

The overall goal of the USAID-STAR program was to use tourism as a lever to increase visitor spending in communities and businesses surrounding targeted protected areas, to create alternative livelihoods that would reduce conservation threats in these protected areas, and to boost support for conservation activities in the region.

To build a solid foundation for the program, USAID-STAR established strong collaborative relationships with diverse stakeholders of the Ugandan tourism sector. These stakeholders included national government institutions such as the Ministry of Tourism, Trade, and Industry (MTTI), Ministry of Finance; local government, associations including the Uganda Tourism Association, Tour Operators Association, and Hotel owners Association, conservation and community NGOs such as the Uganda Community Tourism Organization (UCOTA) and Nature Uganda, as well as the private sector, media, and other parties interested in conservation and tourism.

The USAID Mission in Uganda decided in 2009 to optimize its investment in the tourism sector through SCALE™ - System-wide Collaboration for Livelihoods and the Environment, a communications-driven management process created by AED from best practices in over 30 countries. By working across sectors and creating an environment of collaboration among many diverse stakeholders the program has succeeded in moving the tourism sector in Uganda to better serve economic growth and biodiversity conservation in the Albertine Rift. In taking a systems approach, the project involved a broad array of partners in establishing work plans and priorities. As a result, USAID-STAR has racked up an impressive set of accomplishments with large-scale impact.

In less than two years of project implementation, USAID STAR's large-scale success stories have far exceeded the initial expected outcomes and much of the success can be attributed to the communications-driven management process used to prioritize project interventions and strategic activities. From the beginning, USAID-STAR opted not to establish itself as the new "tourism expert on the block," but as a facilitator of collaboration and a convener of partnerships in support of conservation and tourism.

This role was clearly defined in the launching retreat in October 2009, when 110 representatives of 11 diverse groups, all having a role to play in the transformation and strengthening of the sustainable tourism sector, were invited for a 'whole-system-in-the-room' (WSR) gathering. During three days of self-managed exercises, the system determined its common goals and made specific and verifiable commitments to collaborative work plans. The common goals established at this gathering were:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1.Environmental Conservation | 7. Media Involvement |
| 2.Community Empowerment | 8.Marketing |
| 3.Product Development | 9. Research |
| 4.Better Information Sharing | 10.Stakeholder Engagement |
| 5.Improved Governance | 11.Increased Funding |
| 6. Improved Standards and Training | 12.Improved Infrastructure |

USAID-STAR built its program around these common goals and the commitments to collaborative activities and has continuously adapted its interventions to serve the stakeholders in their efforts to collaboratively achieve their common goals. Through the guidance of a cross-sectorial Technical Advisory Group (TAG), USAID-STAR has demonstrated that when system integration and coordination are kept at the center of all project activities, everyone wins as investments from all corners of the system are leveraged along with their commitments and support.

USAID-STAR aimed to support local partners in strengthening the tourism value chain at the national, regional, and local levels, particularly in key protected areas in the Albertine Rift and to build the social capital and support needed for improved conservation of these protected areas. The focus of program efforts was on the communities, institutions, and protected areas in the central and southern Albertine Rift Valley, centered on Bwindi, Mgahinga, Queen Elizabeth and Rwenzori Mountains National Parks. Activities in the Murchison Falls Protected Area were limited, mainly concentrating on stakeholder engagement around the tourism and oil issues as well as training support for community tourism enterprises (CTEs).

In the Albertine Rift, USAID-STAR found ample opportunities for communities to realize greater benefits from steadily increasing tourism in Uganda. Some communities in the area were already earning incomes through local tourism businesses. However, most were not realizing their potential, validating one of the major gaps identified within the system. Unlike many countries in Africa, a strong foundation for community tourism existed in Uganda - especially in the Albertine Rift - yet most of them lacked the capacity and market connectivity to be effective, sustainable enterprises. USAID-STAR built upon this foundation and involved private sector and media stakeholders to help strengthen these enterprises into functional businesses, building the link between communities and better-protected area management.

Within the programs' two-year life span, USAID STAR's focus on partnership and collaborative actions with stakeholders led to the major achievements listed below. Noteworthy smaller achievements were also realized and are highlighted in more detail in the subsequent chapters of this document.

Enterprise Development, Training & Workforce Development

During the life of the program, USAID-STAR had a strong emphasis on community tourism enterprise (CTE) development anchored around a comprehensive training program tailor made for micro enterprises and followed up by one-on-one technical assistance and mentoring. This integrated approach helped to establish functional tourism businesses that have the skills to operate successful small businesses as well as supporting conservation initiatives that reduce threats and strengthen conservation. The following highlights some of the key results from USAID-STAR's initiatives.



1. Community Tourism Development.

In targeted communities where USAID-STAR worked, the project has helped to **increase household incomes by 27% over a 16-month period.**



2. **Functional Community Tourism Business.** For targeted Community Tourism Enterprise's that USAID-STAR supported, the **average increase in tourism revenue was 16%** (based on 2010 baseline figures and 2011 6-month results for operational enterprises).



3. **Kikorongo Womens Community Group.** The women of Kikorongo launched their '*African Craft Workshop*,' to visitors in September 2010. In the 9-months since that time, the community has made the equivalent of **4,370 days of household income**, with growth in visitation continuing.



4. **Batwa Cultural Trail.** The Batwa Cultural Trail (comprising 34 Batwa guides and dancers) had a 'soft launching' in July 2010 and was officially launched in June 2011 with the signing of a joint management MOU between the Batwa (UOBDU), UWA, and the Kisoro District Government. During the 12-month soft launch period, the community earned the equivalent of **5,330 days of income** from 70 paying visitors, or the equivalent income to support almost 15 households for a year.



5. **Ruboni Community Conservation and Development Program.** In 2010 the Ruboni Community Conservation and Development Program generated revenue equivalent to the household income of 50 households (approximately 250 people). With help from USAID-STAR, in 2011 the enterprise made this same amount in the first 6-months of the year, before the tourism high season started. This represents a **100% increase in revenues** from the previous year.



6. **KATIC** experienced an 8% increase in revenues (pre-high season) in the first 6-months of 2011. In addition to enhancing their community enterprise, one of the most significant results from working with this community, that is an enclave within Queen Elizabeth National Park, was the agreement signed between KATIC and the local Town Council to **manage and protect Lake Munyanyange (a lake important for migratory birds) as a bird sanctuary.**



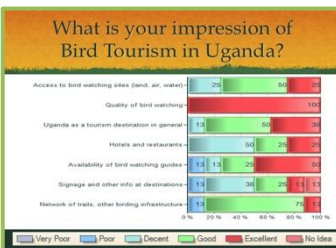
7. **Community Tourism Enterprise Development Training Program.** Targeted technical assistance and a 5-module, 144-hour per participant, training program to strengthen enterprises near protected areas and ensure functional businesses grow and continue to support conservation efforts. **Forty-two (42) Community Tourism Enterprises completed training** and 103 support organizations (local NGO's, etc.) attended as representatives of their communities.



8. **Tourism Training Skills Development.** 1,222 individuals trained in tourism and natural resource management.

Sales & Marketing

One of the major needs of micro tourism enterprises in and around protected areas is marketing and improved market access. Many of the enterprises that USAID-STAR worked with had significant potential, and through the training and enterprise development support, had the skills to run an enterprise, but often lacked the ability to access tourism markets. USAID-STAR therefore put a strong emphasis on supporting parks and tourism enterprises near to them through marketing initiatives. These efforts were focused both at the park and community enterprise level as well as the national and international level to improve the linkages between all stakeholders in the tourism value chain.



9. **Market Research and Outreach.** In 2009/2010 USAID-STAR conducted surveys of international bird tour operators and top national tour operators to help guide program activities. In 2011 USAID-STAR conducted direct outreach to East African tour operators through the Tanzanian 'Karibou' tourism fair and over 200 North American tour operators through phone, email, and mailings to promote Uganda and its parks.



10. **Identifying a new bird for Uganda.** The program, in partnership with Nature Uganda, sponsored a photographic inventory of birds in the Albertine Rift for scientific, educational and promotional purposes. During the fieldwork, which documented over 150 birds, the team discovered and documented an *Orange-Checked Waxbill* in the Semliki Valley. This is the **first time the bird has been seen in Uganda** as it was previously thought to be endemic only to the Democratic Republic of Congo.



11. **Pearls of Uganda.** Providing dedicated market access to over 30 community tourism enterprises. Over 120 Ugandan private sector leaders (lodges, hotels and tour operators) signed on as supporters of the community enterprises.



12. **Pearls of Uganda.** Award-winning marketing program for community tourism enterprises, recognized internationally as a global innovation for linking rural community tourism products to private sector sponsors/mentors and the international market. In the first four months of the website launch it received over 3,800 visitors from 76 countries each spending over five minutes on average on the site.



13. **Oh Uganda!** Launch of a song and music video by Aziz Azion and the Mwamba Children's Choir highlighting and promoting the national parks of Uganda. The song has reached millions of Ugandans and will be 'on tour' with the children's choir in six states in the United States starting in October 2011.



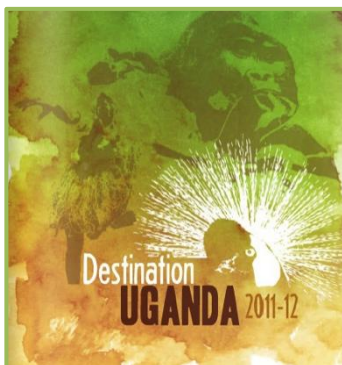
14. **Easter Road Trip.** In 2010 and 2011, USAID-STAR, in partnership with UWA, Power FM radio station and other partners supported 6-week long environmental educational campaigns through the radio about Ugandan national parks reaching millions of Ugandans with an all expenses paid trip to the parks over Easter weekend as the grand prize. To also promote domestic tourism, people could also purchase a seat on the trip. In 2011 the trip attracted 42 paying participants. .



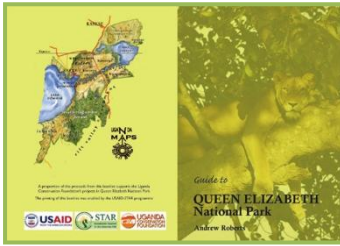
15. **Test Tours and Familiarization Trips.** The program organized trips to targeted CTEs for tour operators and visitors to help test new products. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive. In reference to The Batwa Cultural Trail, one tour operator stated **"We are not selling Uganda if we are not selling this product."**



16. **Batwa Cultural Documentary.** USAID-STAR supported IGCP in the development and publication of a documentary about the culture and traditions of the Batwa. A DVD, small book and music CD were produced to be sold in support of the Batwa initiatives in Mgahinga Gorilla National Park.



17. **Destination Uganda 2011/12 Publication.** Working with UTB and 15 private sector partners/sponsors, USAID-STAR developed and printed the first annual tourism trade guide to Uganda highlighting the country's national parks, attractions, and businesses. The guide has been distributed at international trade fairs, Ugandan Embassies, tour operator outlets, UTB functions, and private sector outlets for promotional and outreach efforts. It demonstrated to the sector that if they work together and pool their resources that they can achieve results that address their common goals. UTB will continue this initiative in coming years.



18. **Guide to Queen Elizabeth National Park (QENP).** The program supported the publication of a historical guidebook of QENP. The book provides information about the history and biological significance of the park and highlights the tourism attractions in and around the park. A portion of the revenue from the sale of the book supports conservation effort of the Uganda Conservation Foundation.



19. **Domestic Tourism.** As a result of USAID-STAR's system wide coordination efforts and direct activities (road trips, music video, familiarization trips, media awards program, etc.) domestic **visitation to Queen Elizabeth National Park increased by 23% in 2010.**



20. **Uganda: Friend of the Gorilla.** During the Friend-a-Gorilla launch, Rachel McDonald produced a short documentary film about the gorillas. The film won an International Award at the Brazil International Tourism Awards 2010 and has helped to promote gorilla conservation around the world.

Institutional Strengthening

Institutional strengthening was a vital component of the overall success of the program and sustainability of its initiatives. The focus of this intervention was to enhance tourism and conservation organizations' capacity to carry out their work through support on governance issues, networking, relationship building and accountability mechanisms. The following section highlights some of the results of this initiative.



21. **Increase Funding for Conservation and in Support for Program Objectives.** USAID-STAR and its partners helped to **boost funding for conservation activities, by \$1,841,754** over the life of the project. USAID-STAR also managed to **leverage \$4,016,111 in support of project objectives and programs.**



22. **UCOTA Institutional Capacity to Service Community Members.** UCOTA staff members were trained as specialized trainers (TOT) in implementing USAID-STAR's 5-module *Community Tourism Enterprise Development Training Program*. They successfully implemented three courses of each module in different parts of the Albertine Rift. UCOTA are now being requested by NGO's and other agencies to conduct this training for new communities in the country, building their capacity to service their members and generate sustainable revenue streams for the organization.



23. **UCOTA - Africa Investor Awards.** As a result of USAID-STAR support and increased collaboration with tourism stakeholders, UCOTA was named as a finalist in the 2011 Africa Investor Awards category:

“**Best Initiative in Facilitating SME Tourism Investment**”.



24. **Building UCOTA Membership and Institutional Sustainability.** The program supported a UCOTA membership drive as part of the final training module in June 2011. Over 40 CTEs signed up and many institutional stakeholders (NGO’s, lodges, etc.) also asked if there was a way they could become non-community members of UCOTA (supporting members).



25. **Local NGO Institutional Capacity.** USAID-STAR also helped to Strengthen Nature Uganda’s institutional capacity to manage and implement tourism training, specifically bird guide training through mentoring that improved skills in curriculum development, training techniques, budgeting, and resources management.



26. **UWA - Friend-a-Gorilla Campaign.** Improved the tourism brand of Uganda and awareness about gorilla conservation through celebrity support and international media coverage of UWA’s Friend-a-Gorilla campaign. Generated over \$2,000,000 in free international media and support for the campaign and country.



27. **UWA - Friend-a-Gorilla Campaign stimulates increased interest in Uganda.** “The Friend-a-Gorilla campaign stimulated over **\$350,000 in new bookings** for my company from a market I had never sold before.” – Ugandan Tour Operator.



28. **UWA – California School Establishes Friend-A-Gorilla Adoption Center.** In partnership with one of the Friend-a-Gorilla celebrity ambassadors, Kristy Wu, the children of Mirman School in Los Angeles, California raised money to adopt a gorilla (Friend them through the Friend-a-Gorilla website) on Valentine Day. The program raised money and awareness about gorilla conservation and Uganda. The school has also established a pen pal program with the Wildlife Club in Iryaruvumba Primary School in Kisoro District.



29. **UWA – Recognized for Innovation.** The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) noted the Friend-a-Gorilla campaign for its social marketing principles and behavior change techniques for tourism and conservation. The promotional campaign is cited by the UN agency as a great example of how social media can produce successful communication campaigns on a global scale that can benefit a destination's communities and biodiversity.



30. UWA - Connecting Culture, Conservation and Tourism in the Rwenzori Mountains. USAID-STAR and its partners sponsored the first annual ‘Kings Hike’ in the Rwenzori Mountains to promote the connection between culture, conservation, and tourism. The King of the Rwenzururu people, who live around the park, hosted the hike in an effort to strengthen the link between his people and the park and highlight the importance of tourism and protected areas. At the launch he also signed a historic MOU between his people, and UWA to allow for the cultural tourism site within the park, where the first king of the Rwenzururu is buried, to be accessed by the communities. This will help to strengthen the relationships between the park and the communities.



31. Ministry of Finance and Planning for Economic Development. USAID-STAR was invited to be a member of the Tourism Budget Committee for the Ministry of Finance. At the request of this Ministry, USAID-STAR developed two papers: one about prioritization of tourism roads in the Albertine Rift and their potential return on investment which was later used by the government in its budget planning efforts, the other identified and recommended the development of stop-over rest stops on major tourism routes in the country through consultation with tourism stakeholders. In the 2011/12 budget the government committed to work on two of the roads recommended in the tourism roads report.



32. Government Focus on Tourism. Success in advocacy at the highest levels of Ugandan government (including one-on-one meetings with the President of Uganda) resulted in the establishment of an independent Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage.



33. Wildlife Clubs of Uganda (WCU) – Snapshot Safari Board Game. In partnership with WCU, USAID-STAR developed an educational board game and 11 children’s books about Queen Elizabeth National Park for educational use in 400 schools surrounding the park. **Pre-test results showed a 57% increase in knowledge** about features of Queen Elizabeth National Park among people playing the game for one hour. The program is **reaching over 100,000 school children and adults** with the conservation messages of the game and books.



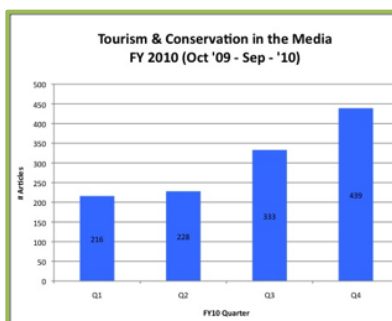
34. Wildlife Clubs of Uganda – Commercial version of Snapshot Safari Board Game. USAID-STAR developed a commercial version of the game for sale to tourists and other interested parties. Revenues from the sale of the game go to Wildlife Clubs of Uganda to support further educational programs. Within the first six months, it is expected that WCU will generate \$10,000 in revenues.

Communications, Media Integration, & Public Relations

Representatives of eleven diverse stakeholder groups representing the entire tourism and conservation system participated in 16 hours of self-managed exercises at the October 2009 Whole-System-in-the-Room Retreat in Jinja to jointly identify the common goals they shared about sustainable tourism and the steps to achieve those goals. Based on this retreat and consultation with over 200 stakeholders, the program developed its work plan. USAID-STAR has worked over the life of the program to respond to the demands of the stakeholders and help them in whatever way possible to achieve their common goals. Introducing technical interventions that fill the gaps in the system and using strategic communications to ensure stakeholders are linked to each other, creating an environment of trust and cooperation. Through these efforts USAID-STAR was able to build strong relationships with the tourism and conservation sectors and leverage partner support to scale initiatives and realize greater results than would otherwise have been possible if the project was working on its own. The following section highlights some of the results from these activities.



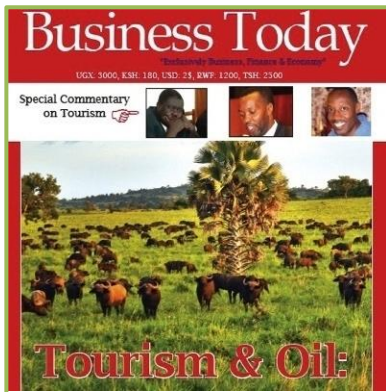
35. Information dissemination. USAID-STAR improved information flow at regional and national level through five editions and 16,000 copies of community and national newsletters - created primarily with submissions from project partners. The publications were published in partnership with UTB and UCOTA.



36. Enlisted Media Partners in Support of Tourism and Conservation. USAID-STAR worked with media to increase coverage of tourism and conservation issues in Uganda through awareness, educational trips to national parks, and a media awards program that recognized excellence in tourism reporting during the year. USAID-STAR tracked a 100% increase in media coverage of tourism and conservation issues between September 2009 and August 2010.



37. Sustainable Tourism Media Awards. USAID-STAR promoted excellence in media coverage of conservation and tourism issues culminating in two gala events in September 2010 and September 2011. The Sustainable Tourism Media Awards led to a CNN award for a project-sponsored local journalist and in 2011 generated over \$35,000 in private sector sponsorship.



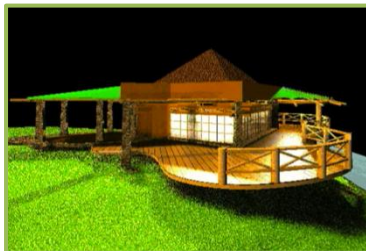
38. Media Coverage for Tourism and Conservation.

Business Today Magazine signed an agreement with USAID-STAR to dedicate two of their monthly issues each year to tourism and conservation, enhancing the dissemination of information within Uganda and the region.

The publication targets government and business leaders with readership of over 10,000 people.

Grant Program

The small grants program cut across all USAID-STAR activities, supporting transactional and transformational development in support of conservation and the communities that surround areas of high biodiversity. Grant funds supported sustainable tourism interventions in line with the USAID-STAR program objectives and activities.



39. Tourism Grant Support. USAID-STAR granted seven small grants to CTEs and conservation projects to enhance their ability to provide quality tourism services linked to support for conservation. USAID-STAR also co-funded, in partnership with ECOTRUST and private sector, the Rwenzori Mountains Visitor Center.

USAID-STAR - Impact and the System-Wide Approach

The overall, life of program objectives of USAID-STAR were to:

1. Increase community revenues through tourism;
2. Increase funding for conservation activities; and
3. Increase participation and communication in support of conservation and tourism.

USAID-STAR focused its interventions and efforts to achieve these objectives and has realized considerable results. The system-wide (SCALE) approach to tourism and conservation has also helped to achieve results beyond the expectations and goals set for the project. During the life of the project 153 partnerships were formed or strengthened in support of tourism and conservation activities. In many cases these are now self-sustaining relationships and activities that go beyond the scope and timeline of the USAID-STAR project. Activities such as the Easter Road Trip, Media Awards, and Friend-a-Gorilla activities all went beyond the initial project related goals due to the inclusion of partnerships and the tourism/conservation system from the start. At the local level, the success of the community tourism enterprises in a relatively short period of time was due in no small part

to the system wide efforts and relationships built by USAID-STAR, that were then applied to support the enterprises and create long term partnerships with other organizations.

USAID-STAR's attitude was to avoid project lead activities, but rather to identify champions with a cause and an interest in an activity that fits with USAID-STAR's objectives and help them build momentum and partnerships behind their initiative. In this way the project achieved its results and ensured that activities were owned and lead by others in support of their own interests and goals. By using a system wide approach to address broad and focused objectives, USAID-STAR was able to harness the efforts of the entire tourism and conservation system and through these efforts achieve quick and sustained results that the system has also embraced. The following sections of this report provide more details about the results that USAID-STAR achieved and the steps taken to achieve the projects goals.

Summary of Program Achievements per Program Indicators

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR		Unit of measure	Baseline	FY 10		FY 11 (Sept to July)		Remarks
				Target	Actual	Target	Actual	
Increased Tourism Revenues through Improved Tourism Management, Services and Products in Areas of Biological Significance to Support Conservation								
1	Number of hectares in areas of biological significance under improved management as a result of USG assistance	#	0	10,000	11,584.54	80,000	66,831.19	Number derived from the program's activities in and around target protected areas. In FY11, the project got a directive from USAID Mission not to engage the Uganda Wildlife Authority. This greatly affected our target for this indicator.
2	Number of people receiving USG supported training in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation	#	0	200	237	600	985	Trainings centered mainly in the Albertine Rift on bird guiding, conservation, practical business skills for tourism operations, as well as sale and marketing.
3	Percentage change in tourism revenue of targeted enterprises as a result of USG intervention.	%	\$ 7,400	0%	0%	4%	16%	It is still too early to measure the full impact of program activities on this indicator. However, target communities are still maturing, and average revenues for the target communities are increasing.
IR I: Direct Participation by Communities in Tourism Increased								
4	Number of people directly participating in tourism activities as a result of STAR interventions	#	0	3,800	4,395	7,600	1,762	People participating in or attending USAID-STAR events including trainings, sensitizations or meetings as well as those participating in tourism enterprises supported by USAID-STAR. The program focused on working closely with targeted community members to increase their benefits from and involvement in tourism. Broader involvement was limited due to our restriction on working with UWA and time constraints.
5	Percentage number of women directly participating in tourism activities as a result of STAR intervention	%	0	30%	36.3% (1,594)	50%	33% (574)	Number of women participating in USAID-STAR activities.
6	Number of people with increased economic benefits from sustainable natural resource management and conservation as a result of USG assistance	#	0	900	350	1,200	1,543	This is based on target CTEs and direct measurability of economic benefit.
7	Number of communities adopting best NRM practices in/ adjacent to targeted areas critical for conserving biological diversity	#	0	0	0	15	42	This indicator represents the number of communities that went through USAID-STAR's 144-hour training program in tourism and conservation. As part of the program each community enterprise committed to support specific conservation strategies.

IR 1.1: Revenues Derived by Communities From Tourist Activities & Small Enterprises Increased								
8	Number of tourism investment opportunities identified as a result of STAR intervention	#	0	7	16	5	12	This includes identification of community tourism as well as private investment opportunities. For the community tourism enterprises, investment briefs were developed for each enterprise.
9	Percentage change in household income of targeted communities	%	0	0	0	2	27%	Based on an independent survey of household income in USAID-STAR's targeted communities over a 16 month period and allowing for the proportion of household income that is attributed to tourism activities, the program achieved a significant increase in average household income for target communities.
10	Number of tourism enterprises created or improved as a result of STAR intervention	#	0	5	8	16	34	Enterprises improved through trainings and capacity building activities, as well as contract negotiations between private sector and communities.
IR 2: Funding for Organizations Managing or Supporting Conservation Activities Increased								
11	Percentage increase in funding for conservation activities in areas of biological significance in the Albertine rift	%	\$8,400,000	20% Increase (\$1,680,000)	11% Achieved (\$182,631)	10% Increase (\$840,000)	217% Achieved (\$1,841,754)	Money directly funding field conservation activities. Mainly raised from friend a gorilla event, leverage from our partners, Government of Uganda and the private sector
IR 2.1: Funding in Support of Education and Awareness Campaigns Increased								
12	Number of tourism promotional and educational materials developed and distributed as a result of STAR intervention	#	0	30,000	2,750,258	57,000	5,810,263	This includes newsletters, desktop calendars, news paper articles and their circulation, Queen Elizabeth National park board games, Destination Uganda guides, etc.
13	Dollar value of private sector resources leveraged under through public-private partnerships developed under USG funded activities	\$	0	\$500,000	\$234,357	\$1,000,000	\$1,781,754	Leverage received from partners, the private sector and Government of Uganda towards USAID-STAR events and activities.
IR 3: Instances of illegal Activities in Protected Areas Bordering Targeted Communities Decreased								
14	Percentage reduction in threat levels to forest, woodland and wetland resources in selected critical areas as a result of USG assistance.	%	19,230	0%	20,116	0%	Year not complete	Due to data collection challenges USAID-STAR was not able to establish threat levels from UWA until 2010. As the program was closed early and activities were only just starting in 2010, the impact of the programs activities cannot be measured in the short time period.
IR 4: Partnerships Formed in Support of Conservation and Tourism Policies								
15	Number of partnerships increased to support implementation of conservation and tourism policies in targeted areas	#	0	25	64	25	89	Partnerships with the private sector, Government of Uganda and conservation agencies in support of tourism and conservation.
IR 4.1: Implementation of Conservation and Tourism Policies Increased								
16	Number of policies, laws, agreements, or regulations promoting sustainable natural resource management and conservation that are implemented as a result of USG assistance	#	0	2	4	5	7	Result included, resource base policy of MTTI and UWA and MOUs with partners UCOTA and Nature Uganda, WCU and an agreement between NFA and the Echuya community, Nkuringo and local government on Buniga Forest protection, etc.

USAID-Star Estimated Cost Share

As a global development alliance, managed by the Global Sustainable Tourism Alliance, USAID-STAR committed to leverage USAID funds with additional sources of funding for project activities. The table below highlights some of the cost share generated by the program during its two years of operation. Final cost-share numbers will be presented in the projects' final financial report.

Partner	Contribution	Partner	Contribution
Friend-a-Gorilla media coverage	\$1,446,733	Hollywood red-carpet event promoting gorilla conservation	\$61,720
Uganda Community Tourism Association	\$28,009.75	Nature Uganda	\$11,488
Business Today Magazine	\$5,000	Emirates Airlines (Free flights)	\$34,806
Rwenzori Mountains National Park Visitor Information Center	\$50,000	Batwa Documentary DVD and publication	\$30,000
Destination Uganda	\$29,290	Media Awards	\$58,797
Printing Bird watching calendars	\$4,500	AWF/IGCP	\$50,577
JGI	\$16,126	Easter Road Trip	\$21,391
Oh Uganda music video	\$10,672	Karibou Trade Fair	\$300
Ruboni Community camp	\$90	National Arts and Craft Association of Uganda	\$75
Great Lakes Safaris	\$1,248		

BIODIVERSITY AND TOURISM IN UGANDA

While tourism in Uganda is increasing in importance as an “engine” for poverty alleviation and economic growth, there is a growing concern about how to strengthen the sector, as well as how to increase community benefits and protection of the natural and cultural resources that attract tourists to the country. How tourism grows and develops in Uganda is therefore of great consequence to the future of biodiversity conservation, as well as to the local people whose lives its growth will impact. Linking tourism to biodiversity conservation and the well being of local communities, and understanding how and where they overlap, unlocks many opportunities as well as challenges for those involved in tourism in Uganda.

Straddling the equator, Uganda covers 236,580 square kilometers, of which 194,000 is dry land, 33,926 is open water, and 7,674 is permanent swamp. Blessed with abundant rainfall and a consistent climate, Uganda has extraordinary natural assets. The annual temperature over most of the country ranges from 18 to 30 degrees centigrade (65-85°F), and much of the country receives 1000 to 1500 mm (33-48 inches) of rain per year, with amounts increasing with altitude.

Key Biodiversity and Tourism Attractions

The greatest attractor for leisure tourists is the country’s system of national parks. In 2009, Uganda’s parks received 152,000 visitors, of which 61,000 were non-resident visitors. Although this shows interest in the parks, it also demonstrates that these significant tourism assets are under-utilized and under-promoted in comparison with neighboring countries. Visitation to Kenya’s parks, in comparison, was 2.4 million visitors. With the potential that these parks possess, there is significant opportunity to increase visitation to the parks and related protected areas and the revenues for conservation management this brings.

Uganda’s protected areas are a showcase for the country’s exceptional biodiversity and tourism potential. Uganda is considered to be among the ten most bio-diverse countries in the world due to its position at the trans-sect between the East African savanna, West African rainforest, and the semi-desert region to the north. Of the 9,000 species of birds in the world, 2,000 are located on the African continent, with about 1,050 in Uganda (the largest single concentration in Africa). While Uganda’s parks each boast more than 200 species of birds, Queen Elizabeth National Park has more than 600 species. This positions Uganda as one of

Uganda’s Primary Tourism Attractions

National Parks:

1. Bwindi Impenetrable
2. Kibale Forest
3. Kidepo Valley
4. Lake Mburo
5. Mgahinga Gorilla
6. Mt. Elgon
7. Murchison Falls
8. Queen Elizabeth
9. Rwenzori Mountains
10. Semuliki

Game Reserves:

11. Game and Forest Reserves
12. Toro-Semuliki Wildlife Reserve
13. Budongo Forest Reserve
14. Kalinzu-Maramagambo Forest Reserve

Other Areas of Interest:

15. Jinja source of the Nile River
16. Lake Victoria
17. River Nile
18. Lake Bunyonyi
19. Ssesse Islands
20. Cultural Kingdoms and heritage

the finest birding countries in Africa, especially since roughly 150 of its species can only be seen in unstable and, therefore, rarely visited countries in West and Central Africa.

Uganda also contains a wide diversity of mammals (342) on its savannas and in its forests. Many of these have seen their populations recover in the past decade after suffering during the years of civil strife. However, Uganda can truly distinguish itself from other East African destinations with its 18 species of primates spread across 12 forests. Most notable from both a biodiversity and tourism perspective are the world-renowned mountain gorillas and chimpanzees, as well as the lesser-known but regionally endemic golden monkeys.

Besides offering choice wildlife viewing opportunities, Uganda has several other compelling attractions. It is one of the sources of the Nile, the longest river in the world. The source at Jinja has been the centerpiece of a burgeoning adventure sports industry that features world-class whitewater rafting, bungee jumping, and other adventure activities. Downstream, at the base of Murchison Falls, sports fishermen can catch Nile perch that weigh as much as 80 kilograms. In fact, Uganda is ranked as the sixth best fresh water fishing spot in the world.

Murchison Falls, one of the most renowned waterfalls in Africa, is also a prime attraction. Yet another highly notable geographic feature is the Rwenzori Mountains chain, the highest in Africa. It contains the 3rd, 4th and 5th highest peaks and some of the most technically challenging and therefore sought after hiking and climbing experiences on the continent. Finally, no discussion of Uganda is complete without including its numerous lakes. Lakes Bunyonyi and Victoria, with its scenic Ssesse islands, are often included in the country's tourism circuits. In addition to natural assets, Uganda also possesses an interesting and storied, yet relatively unknown, cultural history focused around the ancient kingdoms of the region. With a plethora of history, diverse cultures, and traditions, these communities themselves offer Uganda and unique tourism attraction that can benefit its people if developed and promoted along with its natural treasures.

Poverty and the Tourism Sector in the Albertine Rift Valley

The Albertine Rift Valley (within Uganda) stretches from Murchison Falls National Park to Bwindi Impenetrable and Mgahinga Gorilla National Parks in the south. The region contains some of the highest human population densities in Africa, with up to 600-700 people per km² in southwest Uganda.¹ This concurrence of important areas for biodiversity and high population densities poses challenges to long-term conservation management and species survival. This is particularly so as the people living in this region are also some of the poorest in Africa, with over 95% relying on subsistence farming for their livelihoods. As populations increase, land and other essential resources become scarce, causing increased pressure on areas of biological significance. This has led to increased and unsustainable uses through exploitation and illegal access to rich biodiversity areas (parks and forest reserves).

Human population growth rates for Uganda are 2.8%, while the average world population growth rate is 1.3%. Human density estimates are equally astonishing, with Uganda's national average of 102 people/km² compared to the world's average of 42 people/km². The

¹ Plumptre et al-IGCP, CARE, WCS report.

six Albertine Rift districts between Kasese and Kisoro along the Democratic Republic of Congo border have an average of 189 people/km² and if the protected areas and lakes are removed from the analysis, the human density on the remaining land for human occupancy skyrockets to 313 people/km².² Population pressure increases incidents of human/wildlife conflict including crop raiding, animal poisoning and poaching. In addition, wildlife is threatened by transfer of human and livestock diseases. During the last 15 years, the Ugandan Albertine Rift lost over 800 km² of forest habitat due to the high pressure from neighboring communities.³

The National Tourism Policy emphasizes tourism as an economic engine of Uganda's economy and a priority for development. The national Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) recognizes tourism as an area that has had high growth for the economy in the recent past. It recognizes that the tourism sector has contributed employment to a large segment of Uganda's population. According to the PEAP report (2004/5-2007/8), direct poverty reduction benefits of tourism come from employment generated (60 percent of employees are female) and the creation of markets for handcrafts and agricultural products. To harness the potential of Uganda as a tourism destination, the PEAP and National Tourism policy for Uganda emphasize public-private-partnerships in order to steer tourism as both an important economic segment for the country as well as an important supporter for conservation. USAID-STAR has addressed public-private partnerships by inviting private sector to participate from as early as the launching in Jinja in 2009. This involved a realization from the start of the program that the solutions to poverty alleviation in the Albertine Rift depended on stronger linkages among the value chain, especially at the national level, where more investment potential from the private sector was possible.

In the Albertine Rift more than one half of the rural population and one third of the urban population is living below the poverty line. The highest recorded poverty rates seen in urban areas in the Albertine Rift are in Kisoro (58%). Rural poverty is also highest in Kisoro District, with 70 percent living below the poverty line. The lowest was found in Mbarara District, with 47 percent of the population living below the poverty line.

The generally accepted wisdom world over is that the poor are both agents and victims of environmental and natural resources degradation. Furthermore, the majority of the poor live in rural areas and is heavily dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods. Therefore, due to the high levels of poverty and the intensity of farming in the Albertine Rift region, the people living near high biodiversity areas make use of these areas to supplement their farming incomes. Heavy harvest of fuel-wood, timber, non-timber forest products, water and bush-meat occurs in some areas. As a result, there has been friction between the people living adjacent to these areas and the protected area authorities. Attempts have been made to work more closely with these local communities in ways that USAID outlines in its Nature, Wealth, and Power framework. USAID-STAR has attempted to minimize this friction and to look for ways to improve livelihoods and possibilities for income generation. Tourism is, of course, one of these strategies.

² IGCP Profile, March 2007 [www.igcp.org]

³ Virunga Massif Sustainable development Plan. Hitesh Mehta and Christine Katee. January 2005.

There are a number of ways in which communities participate in and benefit from tourism activities. These include: employment, ownership in tourism businesses, share of resource user fees and social spending, as well as the multiplier effects of these activities. Salaries and wages are a key source of revenue flows from tourism activities to people in the communities surrounding the protected areas. For a household involved in tourism, the remuneration generated by tourism employment is often the largest single flow of benefits from the protected areas. This is demonstrated in some areas in which USAID-STAR works and is highlighted in the M&E reporting section.

Threats to the regions' imperiled biodiversity continue to mount. However, wildlife populations can, and in some places are, rebounding if habitat requirements are met and if enforcement is maintained. Tourism is a great medium to help turn this situation around and biodiversity is a strong platform from which to develop the tourism sector. The Albertine Rift's unique assemblages of wildlife—its mountain gorillas, chimpanzees and globally important bird areas—along with its stunning scenery and biodiversity hot spot platform can be marketed to significantly increase tourism numbers and revenue. With such opportunity comes significant responsibility to ensure that the biodiversity and the communities living adjacent to the wildlife areas benefit equitably from increased tourism. Efforts to conserve the region's important biodiversity must link with the tourism sector both to increase revenues for conservation management but also to ensure that tourism itself does not pose a threat to the species and habitats upon which it depends. USAID documented its success in generating greater biodiversity conservation in a film it produced on Nature, Wealth, and Power in 2006 where it highlighted the success of a community in rural Namibia where local populations profited through their conservation activities through tourism revenues and ultimately became the stewards of the cause. USAID-STAR has attempted to replicate this model where applicable.

Conservation Threats In The Albertine Rift - The Basis Of The USAID-STAR Program

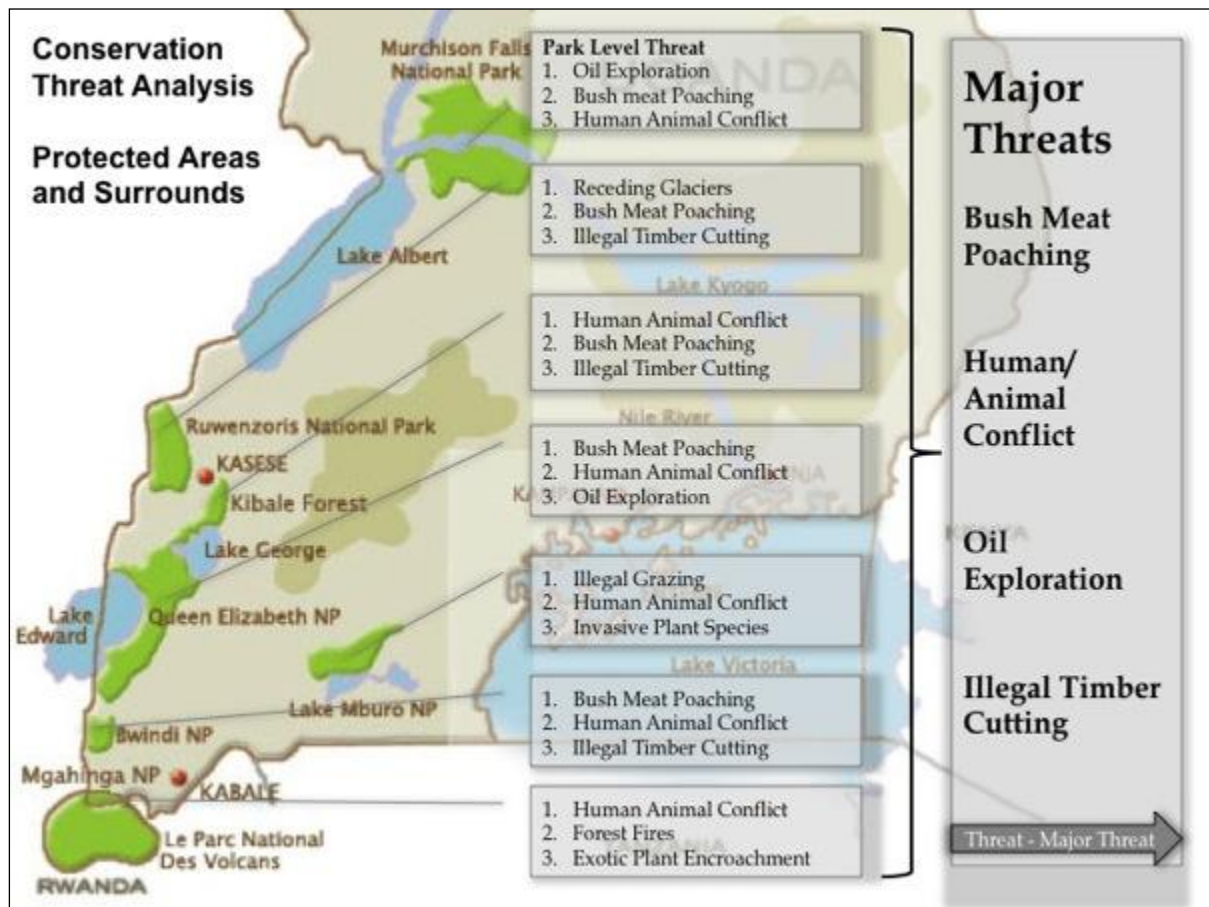
At the start of the program, the USAID-STAR program conducted a rapid assessment of the biodiversity and tourism assets in the Albertine Rift. It also examined assets, institutions, and capacities at the broader national level. The purpose of the assessment was to provide a context and initial understanding of the biodiversity and tourism situation in Uganda for the USAID-STAR team and its partners. Information obtained through the assessment—combined with partner inputs through the 'Whole System in the Room' (WSR) retreat in Jinja and extensive interviews with 200 local partners enabled the team to develop an implementation and action plan for the USAID-STAR program that reflected the pressing conservation threats of the region and the needs of the tourism sector.

Serious conservation threats were identified in Uganda's high biodiversity areas—especially within the national parks. The parks identified as focus destinations for the program include Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Mgahinga Gorilla National Park, Queen Elizabeth National Park, Rwenzori Mountains National Park, and Murchison Falls Protected Area. The

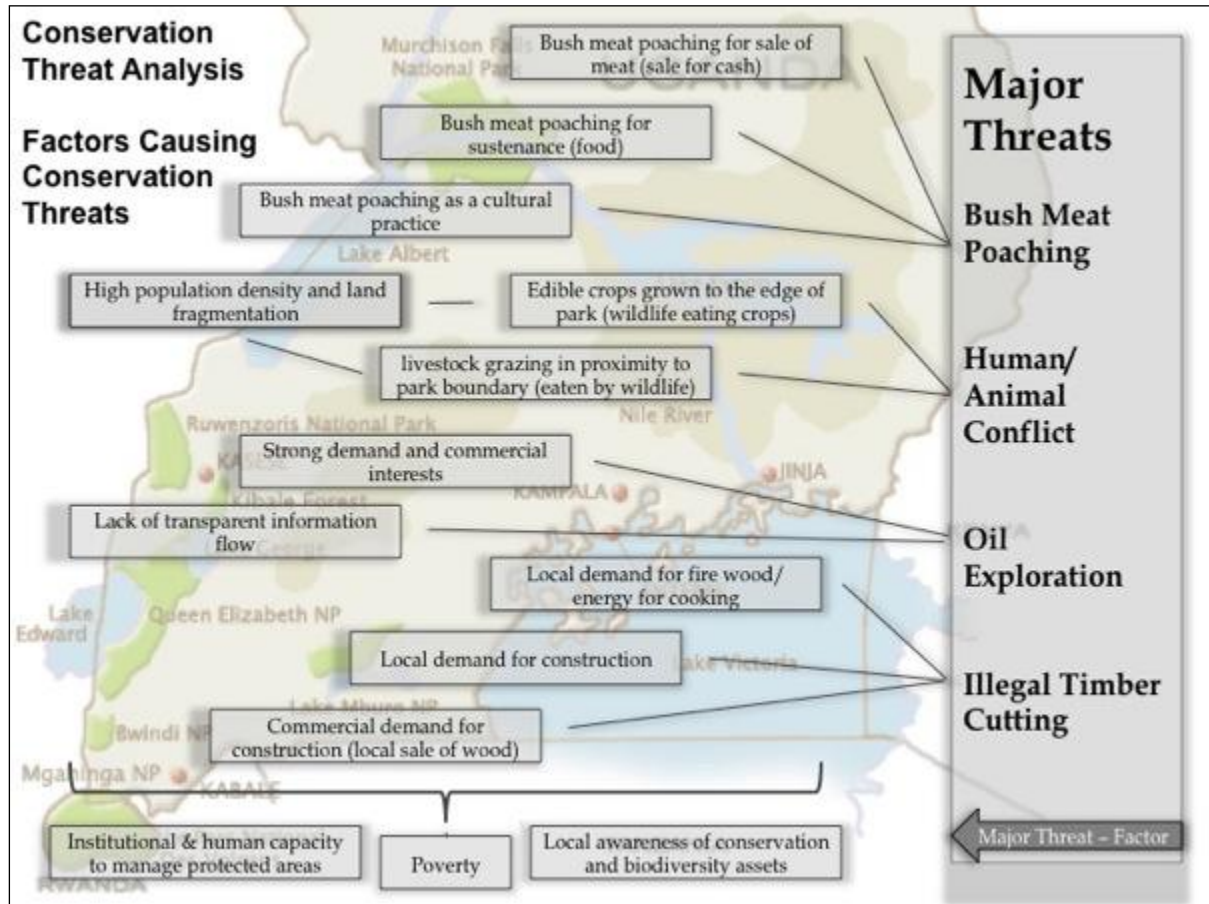
four most critical threats, as identified by park staff, conservation NGOs, and other stakeholders, included bush meat poaching, human/animal conflict (encroachment), illegal timber cutting, and oil exploration. With the exception of the latter, these threats are caused by surrounding communities with high poverty rates and increasingly high population densities.

The following graphics outline the threat analysis and links between the identified threats and the tourism activities conducted during the program.

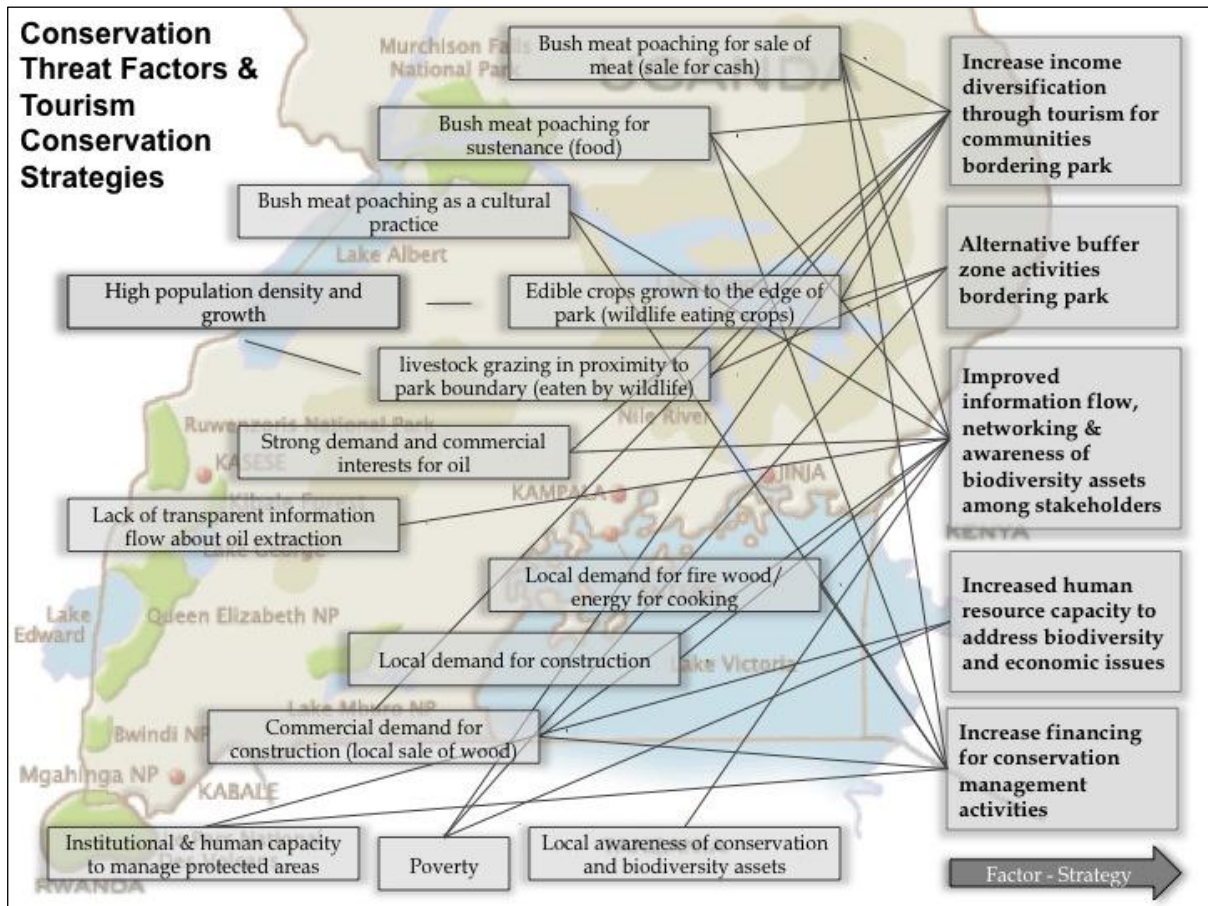
Major Threats Identified at the National Park level and four cross cutting major threats derived from the park level information for the entire Albertine Rift Valley.



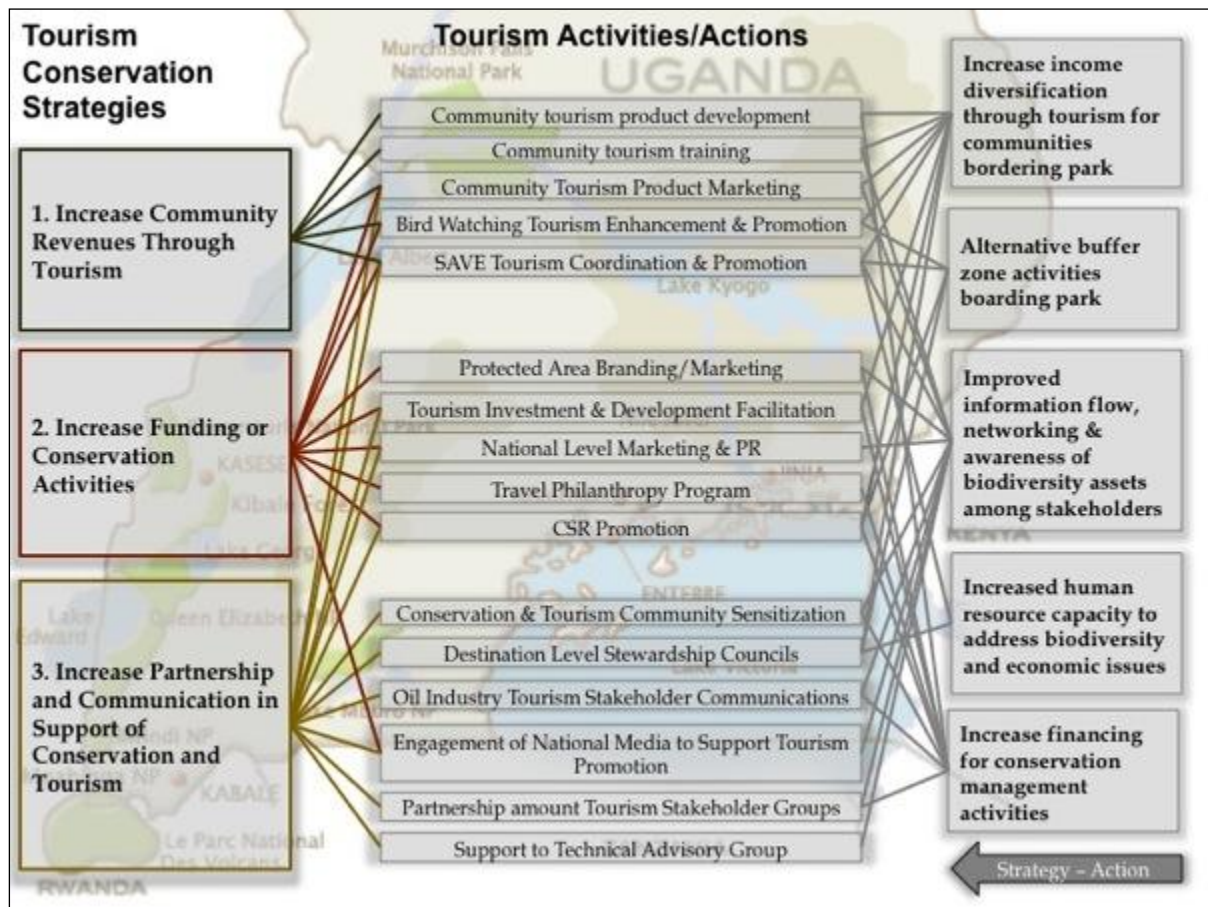
Major threats are caused by underlying factors. The major threats were analyzed to determine the threat factors that caused them.



The team then assessed each threat factor and developed five broad strategies that would help to address the threat factors identified.



Specific actions or activities were then developed based on the five strategies for addressing threat factors. These activities and actions were the premise and direction for USAID-STAR activities.



While sustainable tourism cannot directly mitigate all threats, the USAID-STAR program was developed to produce outcomes through increased collaboration of diverse stakeholders and targeted technical assistance – particularly for local communities—that serve as powerful tools for addressing these threats and promoting biodiversity conservation. The assessment, combined with the outcomes of the ‘Whole System in the Room’ retreat and further inputs from local partners enabled the program to develop an integrated implementation and action plan for the USAID-STAR program that reacted to the pressing conservation threats of the region and the needs of the tourism sector. It also motivated the sector itself to participate in enhancing tourism and conservation in the Albertine Rift. The following sections outline the results based on the action plans developed.

1. ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

Results (Enterprise Development and Training):

- 27% increase in household income
- 19.6% increase in enterprise revenues
- 4,370 days of household income for Kikorongo Womens Community Group in 9-months of operations
- 5,330 days of household income for the guides and dancers of the Batwa Cultural Trail in the first 12-months of operations
- 100% increase in revenues for the Ruboni Community Conservation and Development Program
- Conservation of Lake Munyantange in Katwe Community, near Queen Elizabeth National Park

The Community Tourism Enterprise (CTE) Development program was implemented to promote the development of quality tourism products that can be offered in each of the targeted high-biodiversity conservation areas with the goal of increasing the benefits communities receive from protected areas. This program was established by USAID-STAR to respond to the demands of the stakeholders as outlined in two common goals, established at Jinja in October 2009: Community Empowerment and Product Development.

The overall approach to community enterprise development is based on Solimar International's Enterprise Development Program model that includes site assessment to identify product development opportunities, participatory business planning to develop business plans that are linked to conservation, development of management and operations capacity through systems and operational procedures, training and technical assistance, development of high quality tourism products and services, and linking enterprises to target markets.

Although many community tourism products can be found in the Albertine Rift, very few are viable enterprises and few offer tourism experiences that meet market requirements (based on market research conducted by the program). The strategic aim of this activity was to increase the quality, and through it, revenues for community tourism enterprises, and strengthen their link to conservation and protected areas.

In this regard, USAID-STAR conducted a field assessment of the existing and potential community tourism products. The objective of the assessment was to determine the range of products offered, level of community involvement and benefits from the enterprises, market viability and linkages with private sector operators such as lodges, tour operators, and NGOs. The assessment covered the areas in and around five protected areas that are the focus of the program. The results of the assessment provided a basis for developing product briefs and reaching out to the tourism

"People are the key ingredient to any successful business, a business-savvy entrepreneur is therefore the most important component of any enterprise development program."

*Ashley Silver
USAID-STAR Training Specialist*



market to obtain their input on the most viable tourism products.

A vital component of the program’s market-driven approach to enterprise development is assessment and validation of the tourism products by market intermediaries (tour operators, lodges, etc.) that will ultimately be selling them. Although many potential enterprises were assessed, the validation process was completed for ten community tourism enterprises that where the initial focal point of the USAID-STAR CTE initiative (see program focal area map on page 27).

Due to constraints in partnering with UWA (based on a USAID notification to temporarily halt direct work with the organization) and further research into the viability of projects based on the programs criteria these were later narrowed further to a total of seven CTEs on which the program focused its attention. The criteria for selecting these enterprises is:

- CTE’s level of interest in and commitment from the community to pursue tourism development and conservation;
- Linkages between tourism development and the mitigation of important biodiversity threats;
- Previous experience with tourism (either direct or indirect);
- Existing relationships with local partner institutions; and
- Market potential including access, relation to existing circuits, proximity to accommodations, novelty of product, product quality and competitive position (based on market surveys and analysis).

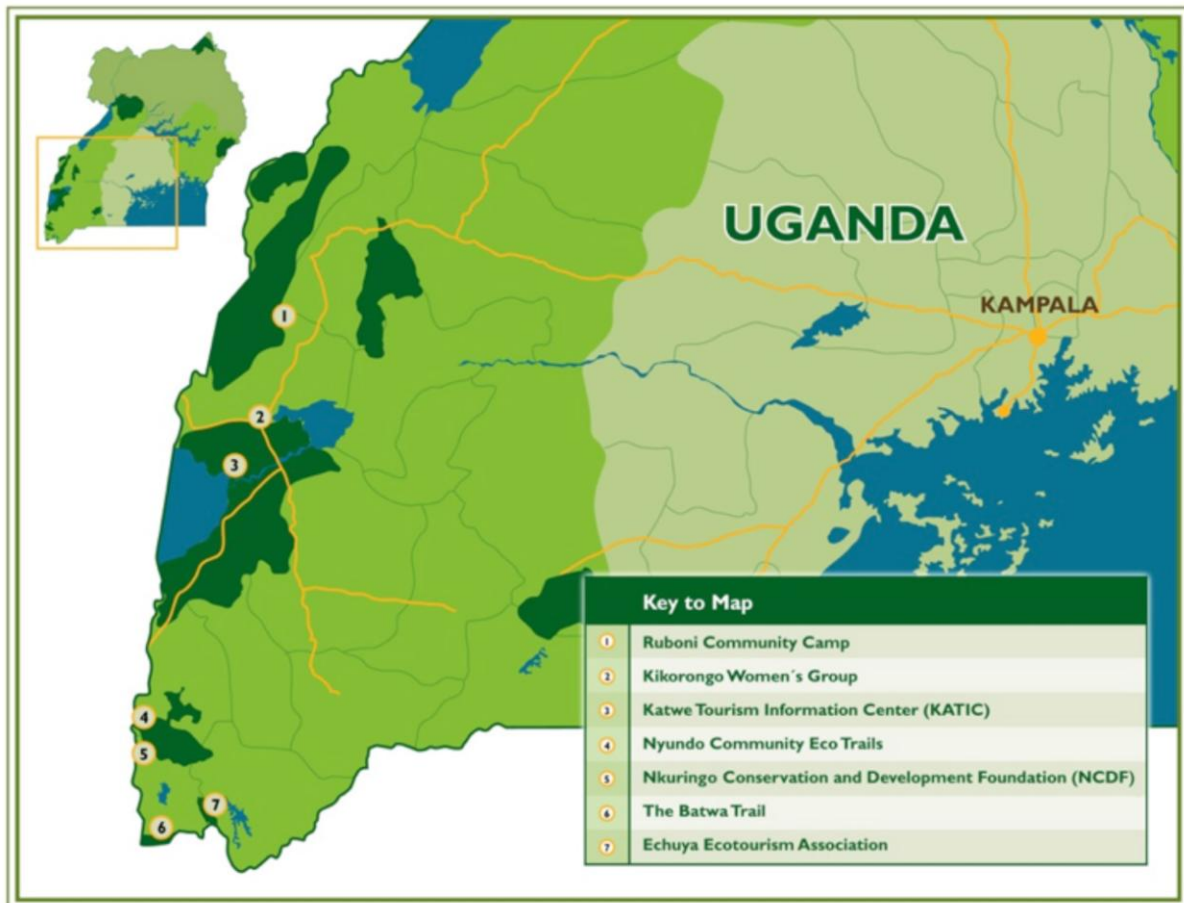
Although these CTEs were designated the programs ‘focus CTEs,’ meaning they received in-depth technical support and mentoring, USAID-STAR worked with over forty CTEs in total, providing them with training and capacity support. Many of these additional CTEs were invited to the trainings with partner NGO’s and other organizations that agreed to follow up and support their efforts after the training program. The CTEs on which the program focused its efforts, however received more direct, in-depth support and technical assistance from program staff and consultants.

The focus enterprises include:

Enterprise and Location	Products and Membership
Ruboni Community Conservation and Development Program – RMNP	Accommodation, community walks, food and beverage, craft sales and cultural dances. Membership is 50 (68% women)
Kikorongo Women Community Group – QENP	Experiential African craft workshop, Art and crafts, cultural performances. Membership is 70 people (50% women)
Katwe Tourism Information Center (KATIC) - QENP	Tours of the Kawe salt works, bird watching on lake Munyanyange, craft sales, and cultural dances. Membership is 27 (81.5% women)
Nkuringo Community Conservation and Development Foundation (NCCDF) – BINP	Accommodation, community walks, forest walk, Batwa Walks and Crafts. Voting Membership is 3,000 (28.8% women)

Echuya Bird Watching – Echuya Forest Reserve, near BINP and MGNP	Bird watching, nature walks, cultural performances
Nyundo Community Trails – BINP	Community trails and a butterfly farm.
Mgahinga Batwa Cultural Trail – MGNP	Batwa cultural trail (ethnology, Ngarama cave, cultural performances)

Map of USAID-STAR Target Community Tourism Enterprises



Following the assessment and selection of the CTEs, USAID-STAR began implementation of a community tourism development process that included multiple trainings to build the capacity of local partners, demand surveys, stakeholder forums, and marketing strategies. The aim was to promote the development of quality tourism products and increase the benefits communities receive from protected areas and therefore their support and protection of these areas.

CTEs undertook development of business plans and operational manuals (practical skills training) as a launching pad to improving business operations and performance. In particular, the program facilitated business planning and operations trainings at the regional level, through in-class training and site level technical follow-up for the programs focus CTEs. Intensive follow up was conducted with each CTE to ensure members understood and owned the business plans and the operational skills they had developed and are committed to the targets and actions set therein. The team, as part of each CTEs business plan, also helped the community define the conservation commitments and action plans for their enterprise. Additional periodic follow-up and technical assistance was also conducted through field staff and volunteers.

Business Plan Field Validation and Action Planning

	Activity	Output
Day one		
1. Setting the stage for planning	Present USAID-STAR Program brief	Raise awareness about the linkage between business planning and the broader program interventions
	Present the business planning process and its role in business management	Understanding and ownership of the process and product obtained
2. Discussion of the draft business plan information	Present the business concept book section by section	Areas for improvement identified
Day two		
	Present draft business plan proposals	CTE members understand the arrangement of the business plan document and contents
	Verification of conservation activities	Conservation activities undertaken by the CTE verified and documented
Day three		
3. Action plan development	CTE members are facilitated to develop action plans for each component	Action plan developed
4. Development of Monitoring and evaluation component	CTE members facilitated to identify ways of measuring progress in BP implementation	Input into M& E plan in obtained
Day four	Board/Executive committee, is facilitated to review, approval and adopt the Business plan as working document	Business plan implementation launched

The site level follow up was attended by a total of 79 CTE members for business planning and 72 CTE members for tourism operations validation (30% of all attendees were women) and included executive committees, board members and management. These one-on-one technical support sessions were used to further strengthen CTE members adoption and understanding of their business plans and operational skills. The meetings also helped to validate information provided in the business plans, set targets, and draw up action plans for realizing milestones. Governance and financial issues for each CTE were also discussed in the meetings and a plan for enhancing, or in some cases establishing governance and financial systems was put in place.

Operations manual validation for Mgahinga-Batwa was delayed due to the unique model of the enterprise that is managed by a consortium of government and civil society organizations. The operations manual is a “working bible” for any business/organization. It spells out policies and procedures relating to day-to-day running of the business including human resources management and development, financial management, assets management, visitor management (reservations, bookings, registration) procurement etc.

Each CTE involved in the operations manual validation learned about the importance of good operations in a business and how setting rules and responsibilities for every party (including the board) makes activities easier to execute. As part of internal capacity building, CTE representatives who attended the regional trainings (discussed in the next chapter) led most of the discussions and presented to members of the board at the three-day meeting. After reviewing and editing the operations manual, each CTE learned about environmental aspects of their business, responsible tourism, and good governance. The goal of these sessions was to take the classroom lessons and manuals developed at the regional trainings and help to institutionalize them at the CTE level with all of the members of the organization.

In addition, an assessment of financial management systems and procedures was carried out with technical assistance provided to 4 CTEs (Ruboni community Camp, Katwe Tourism Information Center, Kikorongo Women Community and Nkuringo Community Conservation and Development Foundation). The purpose of this assessment and technical assistance was to obtain hands-on information regarding the current nature of record keeping and financial management practices, if any, and work with the community to start improving these systems through tools and technical support. Improved and open financial management and record keeping ensures the maximum benefit to the community, accounting to ensure that the CTE’s commitments to conservation efforts are realized, and helps the program as well as the enterprise track its progress. An accounting consultant from the region was also employed to periodically work with the communities to help them internalize their accounting systems and provide support where needed.

The General Secretary of Katwe Tourism Information Center (KATIC) thanked USAID-STAR for asking more of the KATIC staff because now “revenue is banked everyday and the executive committee is receiving more comprehensible and organized reports.”

Specifically, the consultant:

1. Assisted in on-site implementation of the project operations systems utilizing Operations Training tools such as simple cashbook, Pearls of Uganda Receipt book, basic ledger book, basic bank book, budget control, and bank reconciliation.
2. Provided an audit and corrected mistakes, while suggesting alternatives and ways of improvement.

Participation in the Business Plan and Operations Validation

CTE Name	Total People in Business Planning	Total People in Operations Validation
Kikorongo Women Community	7	7
Katwe Tourism Information Center	8	9
Ruboni Community Camp	12	10
Nkuringo Community Conservation and Development Foundation	26	24
Echuya Ecotourism Association	8	12
Nyundo Ecotrials	12	10
Mgahinga Batwa Cultural Trail	13	n/a
Total	79	72

In addition to the ‘software’ side of CTE support (support with the technical skills to run an enterprise) the program also worked with partners to strengthen the physical assets of the CTE so as to ensure they have the greatest ability to service and benefit from tourism and the natural attractions they rely on.

Community Managed Trail Development in High Biodiversity Areas

This program, in partnership with the US Forest Service, completed trail designs and planning for Buniga Forest trail, Lake Munyanyange birdwatching trail and the Rwenzori Gateway Nyakalengijo forest exploration trails. These are all areas of high biodiversity that are managed by local communities, government, or NGO’s on the boundaries of protected areas. The design and planning was undertaken by Mr. John Neary, a Trail Planning Expert from the US Forest Service. Mr. Neary held site discussions with representatives of the community tourism enterprises and local partners (IGCP and Ecotrust), marked the trails, and worked with community members to physically open five trails, which cover about 6.3 km in length. See Annex 1 for full report.

The trail design and planning was part of the USAID-STAR technical assistance to community tourism enterprises to improve and diversify product offering at these sites. Buniga forest trail is managed by Nkuringo Community Conservation and Development Foundation under a collaborative forest management arrangement with Kisoro District Local Government (negotiated with support of USAID-STAR). Lake Munyanyange bird sanctuary is managed by Katwe Tourism Information Center in partnership with Katwe-Kabatooro

Town Council (MOU in the final stages of negotiation) and the Rwenzori Gateway Nyakalengijo forest is managed by Ecotrust in partnership with Ruboni Community Camp. Completion of the designs has set the stage for investment in development and installation of tourism infrastructure.

As part of product development and improvement, 4 of the focus CTEs (KATIC, Kikorongo Women Community, Ruboni Community Camp and Nyundo Ecotrails) received small grants funding. In addition, the Program, in partnership with the US Forest Service, co-funded through a 1:1 matching grant with ECOTRUST the construction of the Rwenzori Mountains Visitor Center. See '[Grants Program](#)' chapter for more details.



A USFS technical team also completed an assessment of the interpretation, displays and signage requirements for each of the tour products that are being offered by the CTEs. The assessment was lead by Kristen Nelson and supported by Greg and Barbara Lussier. The team held site discussions with representatives of the community tourism enterprises and local partners

undertook physical assessment of needs and made recommendations on interpretive materials and techniques for each product. The primary goal of the USFS technical assistance was to review and comment on directional and interpretative signs and displays and interpretive techniques of guided tours. A photograph and video record of the four community tourism sites in the Albertine Rift was also created (See Annex 2 for the full report).

Description of Site level Program Interventions per Conservation Area

Bwindi and Mgahinga Conservation Area (BMCA)

The USAID-STAR program identified over 10 community based tourism enterprises around BMCA. Enterprises include Buhoma-Mukono Community Development Association, Nkuringo Community Conservation and Development Foundation, Ruhija Gorilla Friends Resort, Rubugari Community Conservation Association, Nkuringo Cultural Center, Shongi Development Association, Batwa Development program, Nyundo Community Trails, Echuya community, Bwindi Orphans group, Amajambere Uwachu and Iwacu Tuzamuke Foundation. Although all the CTEs require some level of support, USAID-STAR provided direct technical support to four CTEs (described below) as well as other tourism attractions in the BMCA destination.

Batwa Cultural Trail

The Batwa Cultural Trail development in Mgahinga Gorilla National Park (MGNP) has been spearheaded by a Tourism Management Committee (TMC) composed of representatives of the Kisoro District Local Government, Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), International

Gorilla Conservation Partnership (IGCP) and the United Organization for the Development of Batwa in Uganda (UOBDU - representing the beneficiaries).



The Batwa cultural trail was developed to provide an alternative source of income for the Batwa people (who originally occupied Mgahinga Gorilla National Park) to reduce reliance

on resources from the forest. Revenue generated from the tours benefit 34 participating Batwa dancers and guides and extend economic benefits to Batwa in the Rukeri and Kabale villages of Nyarusiza Sub County, Kisoro district in Gitenderi parish and Musasa village in Rukongi Parish, as well as other Batwa traditionally connected with the Mgahinga area such as those in the Birara, Gitebe, Mperwa and Nyakabande communities. USAID-STAR provided marketing support, technical training and mentoring and improvement of the cultural content of the trail including Ngarama cave experience and an alternative short trail (3 hours versus 5-6 hours).

In partnership with IGCP, UWA, UOBDU and Kisoro District, USAID-STAR organized and facilitated the official launch of the Batwa cultural trail in MGNP. The launch was preceded by the signing of a partnership MoU between UWA, UOBDU and Kisoro District to facilitate collaboration in management of the trail and tour. The program also organized and facilitated business plan development and technical follow up aimed at enabling the TMC to understand and adopt better business performance, set targets, milestones and draw up implementation action plan for the business. The business planning follow up was also used to confirm the governance structure (part of the MOU) for implementing business activities.

The Batwa community has faced economic and social marginalization since they were required to relocate from their home in the forest when the Mgahinga Gorilla National Park was created. New laws were established permitting sustainable resource extraction from the park along with efforts to support the Batwa in projects to preserve their heritage and improve their livelihoods. After a great deal of training, anthropological research into Batwa life and tour design work, the Batwa Trail product was soft launched, with support from USAID-STAR, in July 2010.

USAID-STAR facilitated development of marketing materials, organized a tour operator familiarization (FAM) trip to the site, and promoted this unique experience to national tour operators and media outlets in Uganda. FAM

The average household income for the Batwa community in the region is less than 300,000 UGX per year (\$0.36/day). In the first 12 months of the Batwa Cultural Trail (even before its' official launch in June 2011) the community earned the equivalent of 5,330 days of income from 70 paying visitors, or the equivalent income to support almost 15 households for a year.

trips were organized to help improve community tourism enterprises, strengthen relationships between tour operators and communities, and promote awareness through press coverage of tour operators and community tourism providers. USAID-STAR efforts in marketing this product have resulted in a 100% revenue increase (over 2009 figures, when the product was soft launched). Although modest and still in its early stages, sales of the Batwa Trail tour were zero in 2009. Since the launch (July 2010 – June 2011) they generated 8,782,000 UGX in revenues (\$3,900). Fifty percent of the revenue is income for UWA and the other 50% is split between Batwa participants in the tour (guides and dancers) and fund that supports their community and conservation projects.

One of the objectives of the FAM trip was for national tour operators and media participants to review the trail experience and provide feedback. Immediately following the FAM trip a panel discussion was held by UWA, IGCP, UCOTA, UOBDU and Batwa representatives where FAM trip participants provided feedback on product readiness, improvements, and sales opportunities. Feedback included recommendations on how to enhance the tour to better fit with the market needs. Some of the key recommendations included:

- IGCP in consultation with UWA assess the requirements for developing a shorter trail and enriching the Batwa content for possible funding by USAID-STAR under the small grants program. Consideration is made for a decent rest point within 2-hours of starting the walk.
- Trail and infrastructure maintenance would be the responsibility of UWA given that the trail is on UWA land. Funds for trail maintenance would be met from the revenue collected. In the mean time, UWA was requested to ensure that the trail is maintained in good condition and the costs of maintenance would be refunded from the program once the funds are accessed. It was agreed that funds for improving the Cave shelter should be budgeted and requested for separately since it is a one-off investment.

“We aren’t selling the real Uganda if we aren’t selling this product!”

“I will be uploading information and photos to my website immediately and start selling it (Batwa Cultural Trail) this year?”

Comment from tour operator participants on FAM trip.

“These are the sort of tourism products that will attract people from all over the world,”

Peggy Bendel when referring to the idea of a Batwa Trail at the WSR in Jinja in October 2009. Ms. Bendel is a world-renowned tourism marketing consultant.

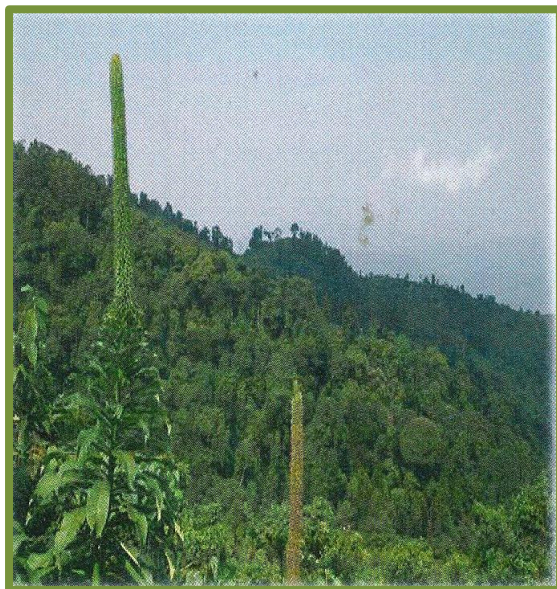
USAID-STAR and its partners also met with the Batwa community to review the feedback and develop a plan for modifications to the tour based on this information. In addition, USAID-STAR also generated media coverage for this enterprise through a national television news broadcast, and developed branding materials for the trail experience. A logo and marketing materials establish an identity for this product, stimulating a sense of ownership and pride among Batwa community and other stakeholders.

The long awaited government solicitor general legal opinion on the tripartite MoU between UWA, the district government, and the Batwa community was received after considerable

work from USAID-STAR and its partner IGCP. The MoU and official launch of the trail were signed and officially opened in June 2011.

Nkuringo Community Conservation and Development Foundation (NCCDF)

The Nkuringo community lives on the edge of Bwindi Impenetrable Forest. In 2006, IGCP helped the community to form the Nkuringo Community Conservation and Development Foundation (NCCDF). This foundation has allowed the community to access benefits from tourism through their own tourism products (such as a community walk) and become the stewards of six of the eight daily available gorilla permits for the Nkuringo gorilla family. The organization is also the co-owner of Clouds lodge, a high-end tourism lodge managed by the Uganda Safari Company. NCCDF has a total of 15,000 members (residents of the two nearby parishes), 3,000 voting members, and 270 members of the general assembly (voted in to the assembly by their peers). Of the 270 members of the general assembly, 78 (28.8%) are women and ten are Batwa representatives.



In collaboration with IGCP, USAID-STAR helped NCCDF gain a concession of the Buniga Forest—a pocket forest (1 km²) bordering BINP—and initiate tourism and conservation activities. The goal was to develop nature and bird walks in the forest to supplement the NCCDF community and while working with NCCDF to enhance their institutional management capabilities and market access for their tour products. USAID-STAR facilitated the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Kisoro District and NCCDF for a collaborative forest management pilot program. The MoU has been approved by

the District Solicitor General.

With the MoU process ongoing, USAID-STAR, in partnership with IGCP, began building the tourism capacity of NCCDF by holding a tour operator familiarization trip to Nkuringo. Six of Uganda's top tour operators, as well as three representatives from the media, participated in a panel discussion with UWA, IGCP, the local government and NCCDF to critique the product and provide tangible advice on how to make it marketable to tourists. To follow-up on the FAM trip, USAID-STAR submitted official recommendations to NCCDF and a proposed action plan.

Through IGCP, USAID-STAR provided technical assistance and funding towards development of a nature trail and associated infrastructure for the forest trail. The US-Forest Service completed design and planning for a 1 km interpretive trail and supporting infrastructure. Development of ecotourism in this pocket forest will contribute to protection of the forested area and increase revenue for the organization. USAID-STAR also supported the review and updating of NCCDF's business plan and governance structure to

incorporate the Buniga Forest product, improve business operations, management, transparency, and accountability.

During the enterprise needs assessment, it was established that the enterprise has established financial management systems and procedures and good record keeping, however they were not being used properly. There was also a general lack of internal controls and inadequate documentation of organization assets. As a result of technical assistance from USAID-STAR, procurement and financial policies and procedures manuals were developed.

The program also followed-up with one-on-one technical assistance to the organization focused on validation of their business plan and implementation of their tourism operations and management plan (as per the training programs through USAID-STAR). The business plan validation workshop was aimed at enabling board and management to understand the business better and their roles and contribution to business performance. One of the key outcomes of this process was the enterprise prioritizing and allocating funds towards rehabilitation of community walk sites and development of a commission structure for driver guides.

Nyundo Community

The Nyundo community initiated the Nyundo Nature Trails Program, which is located in the Kanungu district on the road into Buhoma and the gorilla tracking routes in the north-western section of BINP. The community manages fifteen square kilometers of community forest and has developed seven nature trails. Visitors to this community are able to learn about reforestation projects and have an opportunity to view more than 50 bird species and a variety of other flora and fauna. The trails also offer visits to caves, waterfalls, bee keeping operations, a waragi distillery (banana spirits), and other displays of local nature and culture.

Although the eco-trails are located just six kilometers from Buhoma-Bwindi park entrance and the twelve nearby lodges and guesthouses, the community received very few visitors. This was due primarily to the quality of the product and lack of marketing efforts.

USAID-STAR supported UCOTA to conduct a community tourism sensitization workshop focused on communities in Kyeshero Parish (where Nyundo lies) that have the opportunity to benefit from sustainable tourism development. In this workshop twenty-six participants (35% women) were trained on the basics of tourism and conservation.



Community members reached a consensus that their culture, forest and mountains were some of their most important tourism assets and agreed on an action plan for enhancing the tourism experiences they presently offer.

As follow-up to these awareness-building activities, USAID-STAR implemented a more formal community enterprise development process, supporting improvements to trail infrastructure, enhancing the quality of the services provided, and launching marketing initiatives. This investment increased incomes for thirty members of the group and extended

economic benefits to about two hundred people. It also helped in protecting important buffer-zone land next to BINP.

With USAID-STAR support, Nyundo completed a site level business plan as well as operations and guide training, including specialized bird-guide training. Follow-up one-on-one technical assistance was provided to ensure that the skills and plans developed in the training program were understood and owned by board, management and staff. These sessions were also attended by UWA Community Conservation Warden and 4 students of tourism on internship. In addition, the program reviewed record and financial management systems as well as developed marketing material for the CTE. As part of product development and improvement, the enterprise received a small grant for completion of the butterfly farm and initial on-site training.

Echuya Community

There are four communities (including Muko and Bufundi of Kabale district as well as Kanaba and Murola of Kisoro district) that surround Echuya Forest Reserve. The forest is known to possess world-class birding resources, however, there are currently no tourism services offered in the forest or the nearby wetland areas. Nature Uganda had been working with the communities on conservation and alternative livelihood programs but had not focused on tourism as a potential option. During the design phase Nature Uganda approached USAID-STAR to work with them on exploring the opportunities for tourism in the forest.

With support from USAID-STAR, Nature Uganda (NU) conducted four community tourism sensitization workshops (one in each community) and began gauging local interest and capacity to provide tourism services. 408 people attended (43% women) the workshops. Interest was high and tourism products that were suggested by local groups included:

- i) Bird tours with local bird guides
- ii) Nature Trails
- iii) Visitor's Center
- iv) Accommodation
- v) Handcrafts
- vi) Cultural Performances

The primary product opportunity based on market research and assessment was determined to be guided bird watching and bamboo forest walks around the Muchuya Swamp in the center of the forest and close to the main road that leads from the Gorilla parks north to Kampala. The product development plan, created with support from USAID-STAR, includes trail design and development, car parking off the main Kabale-Kisoro Road, an entry gazebo at the stairs leading to the Muchuya swamp boardwalk, and signage. An interpretive plan for the site was developed by the USFS.

As part of the programs' support to the communities and forest, trainings were conducted to facilitate development of a business plan operations training, guide training, and information on marketing and outreach. USAID-STAR also supported official registration of this community-based institution, titled Echuya Ecotourism Association, including development of its constitution, at the district. This provided the institution an organizational framework through which it could manage tourism in and around Echuya. The association was registered with the Kabale district local government and USAID-STAR also facilitated the

opening of a bank account for it. Following the formal registration of the association, USAID-STAR helped the community start negotiations with the National Forest Authority (NFA) on a memorandum of understanding for managing ecotourism in Echuya Forest.

Queen Elizabeth And Rwenzori Mountains Conservation Areas

Over 36 community-based tourism enterprises were identified around Queen Elizabeth and Rwenzori Mountains National Parks. The existence of such a large number of community based groups presented an opportunity for strengthening community participation and increasing community benefits from tourism. Based on USAID-STAR criteria for selecting and supporting CTEs, the community enterprises below were identified and supported directly. The other enterprises identified benefited from training at the regional level and a CTE marketing program described later in this document. USAID-STAR provided direct and in-depth technical support to the following CTEs:

Ruboni Community

The Ruboni Community Conservation and Development Program (RCCDP) is a community-based organization (CBO) located in Kasese District. The CBO has 27 registered members (81.5% are women) and approximately 150 household family members. RCCDP runs a range of activities that are managed by communities bordering the Rwenzori Mountains National Park (RMNP). The community posed a considerable threat to the park from deforestation for firewood and agriculture. The tourism component of RCCDP provided low-cost accommodations, community walks, nature walks, cultural dances and crafts to the limited number of tourists en-route to the central circuit of the Rwenzori Mountains. They also ran a restaurant and bar at their camp. Additional land for development of nature walks was purchased near RMNP and consisted of an area of wetland and some land that has been farmed. Although visitation was limited to the park, with increased accommodations near the park and UWA's strategy to more aggressively promote the park, potential existed for greater community benefits from tourism activities and greater conservation action from the community due to tourism.

In 2010 the Ruboni Community Conservation and Development Program generated revenue equivalent to the household income of 50 households (approximately 250 people). With help from USAID-STAR, in 2011 the enterprise made this same amount in the first 6-months of the year, before the tourism high season started!

USAID-STAR, in partnership with UCOTA, ECOTRUST and Geolodges (a prominent private sector tourism investor), worked with the community to implement multiple strategies to create alternative livelihoods through sustainable tourism in the region. USAID-STAR, through its own technical specialists, and UCOTA delivered the training curriculum mentioned in the next chapter as well as community sensitization workshops covering the potential benefits from tourism, the link with conservation and customer service.

Geolodges, in partnership with ECOTRUST, is in the final stages of building a new lodge at the edge of Ruboni Community and the boundary of Rwenzori Mountains National Park.

The lodge is on 100 acres of ECOTRUST land that acts as a buffer between the community and park. The management plan for the land called for the development of a visitor center that would service multiple purposes, one of which was to provide UWA with a facility to highlight RMNP through interpretive displays and to house their registration activities. The center was also designed to house a café and craft shop managed by the community and a location for people to gather before entering the park. Geolodges plans to use the facility (at least for the first two years) to serve as a restaurant and common area for their guests. Geolodges representatives have committed their organization to train and involve the community in this component of the operation. To support this initiative, USAID-STAR deployed a team to assess the lodge and the visitor center sites and met with project partners. USAID-STAR, ECOTRUST, and Geolodges entered into a MoU committing to raise the funds for development of the facility. Geolodges and ECOTRUST matched USAID funds in development of the Visitor Center.



USAID-STAR provided operations and management support including business plan development, tourism operations, guide training, and sales and marketing for the current product offering and additional products associated with the Rwenzori Visitor Center. USAID-STAR also provide one-on-one follow up technical assistance to the Ruboni Community to help them implement the

skills learned in the training and to enhance the governance and operations of the enterprise. Based on the operations manual, the enterprise re-advertised, interviewed and appointed staff according to the set job descriptions and hiring procedures. For the first time in the life of the enterprise, employees have signed contracts. As part of improving financial management, the program also carried out an assessment and provided mentoring on their financial management systems and procedures.

As part of sales and marketing support and skills development, USAID-STAR arranged a meeting for the manager of Ruboni Community Camp with the manager of the Kluge's Guest Farm, a sales visit of sorts. Due to the remoteness of Ruboni and low level of tourism experienced in the area, it was difficult to locate a nearby hotel owner to work with the Rubuni Community Camp. The manager/owner of Kluge's Guest Farm was happy to learn about new products in the region. Ruboni Community Camp Manager introduced the products the camp offers to the manager/owner of Kluge's Guest Farm, which is twenty minutes from Fort Portal and receives many foreign and domestic guests. The meeting helped to build the capacity of the Ruboni Community Camp manager to make other sales calls as well as build a business relationship with the Guest Farm.

As part of product development and improvement, USAID-STAR organized a group of six foreign tourists to take part in testing the new Ruboni Hill Hike and Hilltop Camping

product. Their feedback and advise on the products was collected and shared with the community. Actions were taken by the community to improve the products based on this advise. Based on the programs' technical support, the community has improved infrastructure and interpretation including investment in a second rest area for visitors, maintenance of the fire pit, and building of a pit latrine at the campsite. In addition, USAID-STAR undertook an assessment of a new product proposed by the community: "The Waterfall Walk." The enterprise benefited from a small grant, which went towards completion of construction works on the kitchen/restaurant and upgrading the ecosan toilets to water borne toilets.



As a result of USAID-STAR training, market outreach and technical support the community experienced an increase in its revenues and visitation. Many of the CTEs that USAID-STAR worked with, including Ruboni, had bookkeeping issues, which meant that the numbers of visitors and revenues were often hard to determine in early stages of working with them. Using 2010 as a base year, when USAID-STAR started working on technical issues with the enterprise, Ruboni's revenues and visitation were doubled based on comparison of 6 months of 2011 and an equivalent period in 2010. Visitation for Ruboni in 2010 was

490 with revenues of UGX 18,255,000. In the first half of 2011, Ruboni experiences almost the same visitation and revenues as the entire previous year; 493 people and UGX 18,005,850, which is equivalent to about \$7,800. This is equivalent to the annual household income of 50 households in the region. If this level of visitation and revenues is maintained for the remainder of the year (which can be expected as it did not include the high season) the business will generate the equivalent annual income of 100 households, twice the impact of the previous year.

Katwe Tourism Information Center

This community, on the shore of Lake Edward and surrounded by Queen Elizabeth National Park, is considered by UWA officials as one of the greatest poaching threats to the park. The community has been engaged in tourism through Katwe Tourism Information Center (KATIC), which offers tours of a traditional salt mining operation on Lake Katwe as well as guided bird watching on Lake Munyanyange. Both lakes are within the community and owned by the local Town Council. The main tourism attraction in the community is the traditional salt mining, which dates back to the 16th century.

As part of the enterprise development process supported by USAID-STAR, the community participated in regional trainings that included business planning, tourism operations, guide training and sales and marketing. Following these trainings, the enterprise received one-on-one technical follow up to help them implement and socialize the business plan and operations manuals into their business. A local financial consultant (from Kasese) was also hired to conduct hands-on training to key KATIC staff involved in financial management.

Responding to the need to improve their financial management, the KATIC recruited a financial manager for the organization. The consultants training and the new staff member helped to improve the financial management, bookkeeping, and reporting for the organization.

To expand on the enterprise training program, USAID-STAR supported Nature Uganda to deliver an in-depth bird-guide training program to strengthen the ability to service the bird watching market and facilitated KATIC's application for a Peace Corp Volunteer, whom they will host starting October 2011. The community contributed to upgrading the accommodation facility available for the Peace Corps Volunteer and improved electrical access to the visitor center.

To protect Lake Munyanyange as a bird sanctuary and improve bird watching experiences, USAID-STAR facilitated consultative meetings between KATIC and Katwe-Kabatooro Town Council to develop a memorandum of understanding for management of the lake. Although after the completion of this project, the parties signed the MOU with UWA witnessing the signing in September 2011.



In partnership with US-Forest Service, USAID-STAR undertook to develop a plan, designs, and costing for the infrastructure needed around the lake (boardwalk and fencing) and an assessment of the tour interpretation, display and signage requirements for all the products provided. Implementation of these will be carried out by the follow-on bridging project. The enterprise has also benefited from a small grant, which was used for construction of a resting shelter and washrooms to cater for

increased visitation and to encourage people to stay longer in the area.

As part of the sales and marketing support, USAID-STAR organized and facilitated a sales trip for the KATIC Director and two guides to four lodges in and around QENP. Feedback from the lodges was positive and one lodge manager asked for a custom tour (incorporating the salt lake, birding, and cultural performances within a 3-hour time frame) to meet their clients' needs. KATIC staff vowed to continue to build on the relationships created.

The Kikorongo Women Community (KWC) Group

The Kikorongo Women's Group is a community-based organization (CBO) in Katwe sub-county (Kasese District). The focus of this group is on conservation and livelihood improvement. The enterprise' activities are focused on cultural tourism, including an African crafts workshop, craft merchandising, cultural music, dance, and drama performances. Similar to the work done in other

In 9-months since this community tourism enterprise started receiving visitors, the community has made the equivalent of 12-years of household income, with growth in visitation continuing.

communities, USAID-STAR provided intensive training as well as one-on-one site level business plan and financial management follow-up. Seven executive committee members, of whom 71.4% were women, worked with USAID-STAR staff in this effort.



To support marketing efforts, USAID-STAR recorded video footage and still pictures of the community's cultural performances and the African crafts workshop. These were then developed into a short video presentation and printed sell sheets (promotional fact sheets) for the community. Building on this effort, USAID-STAR organized and facilitated a marketing trip for the KWC chairlady to seven lodges in and around Queen Elizabeth National Park. The trip involved

meeting with lodge managers to introduce the group and present their products and services. The presentation included an explanation of their offer, tariff structure, group photo album, and a video of the activities. Although the product is still early in development, several lodges agreed to work with KWC on their cultural dances as well as promote the African crafts workshop to their guests.

With support from USAID-STAR, KWC formalized its relationship, through the signing of a sales agreement, with Red Chili Tour Safari Company and Simba Lodge (near QENP). This sales agreement defined how the entities would work together including formal agreements on pricing, cancelation policies, etc. The KWC product is now part of the standard QENP tour for Red Chili Tour Safari Company.

KWC launched its tourism enterprise, with support from USAID-STAR, and started receiving visitors in September 2010. In the following 9-months (through June 2011) the enterprise received 243 paying visitors generating UGX 4,220,000 (\$1,850) from its tourism activities. This is equivalent to 4,262 days of mean household income or household incomes for about 12 households. It should be noted that these figures are for a 9-month start-up period only and do not include the tourism high season for the region (June-August).

As part of product improvement and diversification support, the enterprise was awarded a small grant to be used to help with construction of a Cultural Center in Kikorongo village. The KWC had previously rented space for their activities and tourism offerings. The Cultural Center will serve as the venue for the African crafts workshop, craft sales, dance performances (when not at lodges), meetings, and office space for the



organization. The Cultural Center will help the community enterprise receive direct booking, retain a greater proportion of its revenues, and increase its market base.

At the request of KWC and in an effort to expand the enterprises' product offer, USAID-STAR carried out a "test run" of the proposed 'Percussion Workshop.' This product offers visitors a chance to learn about the instruments that the Bakonzo tribe uses to celebrate weddings and traditional ceremonies as well as play them. USAID-STAR, through the leadership of USFS, also carried out an assessment of interpretive, displays and signage requirements for the new Cultural Center.

Bulemba-Ihandiro Cultural Trail



The Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and the Rwenzori Mountains Cultural Values Conservation Association (RWeMCCA) is implementing a cultural values project aimed at conserving biodiversity through culture. The project focuses on promoting Bakonzo cultural values, particularly the Ihandiro-Bulemba burial site of the first King of the Rwenzururu Kingdom. To facilitate public access to the burial site and provide

community benefits from the annual ritual event commemorating the death of the first King, which attracts more than 200 visitors from Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, a cultural trail is a possible tourism product. The Bulemba sacred site is the most important of all the 12 Bakonzo cultural sites. The infrastructure along the trail currently includes a museum under construction, which is expected to house Bakonzo relics.

USAID-STAR conducted a field assessment of the product and determined that the potential for the product to be a viable/profitable tourism experience is low. Although the experience may not be a viable tourism product, the significance the Bakonzo people attach to the burial site and the improved relations the trail could create among the community and the park, made a strong case for investment in the trail for conservation rather than business reasons. The principal purpose was to improve relations between the park and communities by recognizing the value of the local culture and improving access for the community to the site. USAID-STAR supported the trail through the small grant funds, which were combined with funds from other partners to improve access for the community to the site.

Murchison Falls National Park And Budongo Forest Reserve Conservation Area

While USAID-STAR was not significantly active in the Murchinson Falls National Park and Budongo Forest Reserve Conservation Areas, the project team conducted a tourism product assessment in the area to determine viability of existing community tourism enterprises and to support efforts through the USAID-STAR and UCOTA enterprise training program (see

next chapter). USAID_STAR also provided assistance to the Jane Goodall Institute to enhance the Busingiro campsite near Budongo Forest Reserve. In addition community tourism enterprises in the region are receiving marketing and market access support through the Pearls of Uganda program (described later in this document).

Busingiro Camp – Budongo Forest Reserve



To enhance the tourism product offer of the ‘Royal Mile’ in Bodongo Forest Reserve and to attract greater tourism visitation to the region, the Jane Goodall Institute (JGI) was supported by USAID-STAR to improve a campsite at Busingiro. The site attracts visitors interested in chimpanzees and bird watching. With its proximity to the ‘Royal Mile,’ a prime bird watching site, provision of basic accommodations will help to make the destination more attractive to visitors. The site,

in addition to being an ecotourism site, also has an education center where pupils from nearby primary schools come for environmental education.

Specific outcomes at the improvements to the camp featured landscaping of the campsite, including establishment of a living hedge to afford privacy to the visitors and planting of an appropriate lawn, picnic tables, improved accommodation huts (re-thatched, repainted, and improved ventilation). An existing borehole was repaired and a roof water harvesting system installed to augment the borehole. In order to distribute the water to the camp showers and kitchen, a water tank, water pump and associated piping was installed. The showers were also fitted with a solar water heater. The existing wood fuel cooking facility was replaced by a small self-service kitchen fitted with a gas stove. Basic cooking utensils were also purchased for use by tourists or tour operators. JGI also developed and distributed brochures advertising the newly developed amenities to tour operators, in local hotels and at the park headquarters.

2. TRAINING & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Results (Also see Enterprise Development):

- *1,222 individuals trained*
- *42 community tourism enterprises completing 144 hours of training in tourism management and operations*
- *103 support organizations participating in training with communities*
- *Enhanced revenues and conservation outcomes*

Training is perhaps the most important key to unlocking tourism's potential in Uganda. Significant opportunities to promote biodiversity conservation, job creation, and economic development through tourism exist in Uganda, yet will not be fully realized unless major training gaps are addressed. Many industry experts feel that a largely unskilled tourism workforce, and by extension poor service quality, is the greatest hindrance to

tourism development in Uganda. For example, the directors of the Uganda Tourism Association, Uganda Hotels Association and community groups indicated that training is their highest concern when consulted during the program's design phase. At the WSR in Jinja in October 2009 when all of the stakeholders came together for strategic planning, improved standards and training was one of the common goals supported by everyone.

Understanding that training had to be an important piece of the program's efforts, USAID-STAR spent time at the beginning of the program to understand the training needs in the sector, the institutions, their capacity, and gaps that exist in training provided and training needed. This information was compiled into two reports:

- The Training Needs Assessment Report of December 2009 provided a broad overview of the tourism and hospitality training situation, both at the national level and in the Albertine Rift. It included information about key training challenges and gaps, a brief summary of some of the training institutions and programs, the needs from the sector, and opportunities for USAID-STAR interventions (see Annex 3).
- The Training Strategy of January 2010 provided a blueprint for the program's tourism training activities over the life of the project. It is based upon field assessments and extensive interviews with representatives of Ugandan training institutions, communities, NGOs, businesses, and government bodies. One of the most notable findings was the country's community tourism association, UCOTA, which offers a wide range of community-oriented support and training courses. UCOTA demonstrated the ability to access and understand communities that border protected areas in a way that other organizations lacked. (see Annex 4).

Based on the above reports, USAID-STAR found three fundamental problems in the tourism training sector: i) glaring deficiencies of the training institutions and their curriculums, some related to human resources, as most instructors did not have industry experience nor had they been trained to teach; ii) the lack of physical resources, especially in terms of access to textbooks, the internet, transport for field trips, and practical training equipment, and; iii) a lack of coordination between the training institutions and the tourism industry, resulting in

some significant skills gaps between what businesses need in staff and the training they receive.

Based on the Training Needs Assessment Report and the Training Strategy, the program worked with partners to conduct a suite of trainings to both initiate work with communities and other stakeholders and to test partner curriculums, methodologies, and abilities. After this initial testing, USAID-STAR's Training and Workforce Development Plan was developed (Annex 5). In line with USAID-STAR's main objectives and conservation strategies, training was primarily based on supporting the communities targeted by the program and others that surround protected areas.

USAID-STAR realized that success in the tourism industry would be based on a network of support and strong sales and marketing channels, which existed outside of the community level (see Sales and Marketing section of this report). Complementary to supporting communities, USAID-STAR reinforced a network of support for these communities by working with local NGOs to improve their institutions' training capacity (train-the-trainer, joint curriculum development, and staff from NGO's that support communities attending training). The program focused activities and resources on enhancing the training capacity and curriculums of UCOTA and Nature Uganda with the goal that these institutions could continue using the training programs beyond the life of the project.

USAID-STAR's Training Plan worked on two levels:

- Level 1 - Community Tourism Enterprise Training Program: delivered to CTEs that lie within the Albertine Rift, including those receiving technical support from USAID-STAR. The program consisted of six modules: Sustainable Tourism Concept Development for the Small Grants Program and Business Conceptualization and Business Planning, Tourism Operations Planning and Management, Tour Planning and Guide Training, Sales and Marketing, Institutional Governance. Each module produced particular outputs such as a business plan or an operations manual as well as providing participants the practical skills and significant follow-up technical support to implement them. The curriculum and lesson plans were developed in a way that conservation education was embedded throughout.
- Level 2 - Train-the-Trainers: delivered for project partners focused on those institutions that support CTE development in the Albertine Rift. USAID-STAR worked with Nature Uganda to enhance its curriculum on bird-guide training and extensively with UCOTA to build off of Solimar Internationals' Community Tourism Enterprise Development Program curriculum to localize it for use with UCOTA and its community partners.

Over the life of the program, USAID-STAR worked with UCOTA to improve its core activities, one of which was training. The program supported UCOTA learning and ultimately owning the training curriculum for community enterprises. Support from USAID-STAR concerning the regional trainings included review of modules, budgets, logistics, and training techniques, resulting with UCOTA being more effective in its work with communities as well as improving its own capacity to develop proposals and secure more funding. The components of the training program were as follows:

Training of Trainers: Module 1 - Community Tourism Enterprise Concepts

The first training, a 2-day training of trainers on Community Tourism Enterprise Concepts was held November 9-10 2010 in Kampala. Twelve participating trainers representing successful CTE practitioners, community and conservation NGOs, government institutions and vocational training schools attended. Below is the curriculum of the topics that were covered:

Lesson	Learning Objectives
USAID-STAR/UCOTA Community Tourism Enterprise Development Training Program Introduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 3 Core Facets of CTEDTP: Tourism Industry, Conservation and Communities 2. 5 Training Modules, topics, why, logistics/rules 3. 3Ps Training Methodology and the Production Workbook
The Tourism Sector and Needs of CTEs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be able to describe what activities tourists like to do in their region 2. Participants will be able to describe how tourists use tour operators to organize and plan their trip to Uganda 3. Participants will be able to describe why tour operators aren't currently selling their products
Conservation and Community Needs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be able to describe the conservation threats to Uganda and specific protected area 2. Participants will be able to link the needs in the community that are causing the conservation threats to Uganda 3. Participants will understand that if this continues, community's needs will only worsen
Conservation and Community Strategies for Community Tourism Enterprises	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be able to describe the 5 conservation strategies for sustainable tourism enterprises and give local examples of each 2. Participants will be able to describe the 3 ways community tourism enterprises help communities and give examples of each

Over the two days, trainer participants worked through course material making adjustments, additions and annexing examples that pertain specifically to Uganda. Participants created and practiced delivering lessons on the above topics while integrating new pedagogical techniques. A follow up survey was conducted and the results below summarize what participants learned.

Participants ranked from 1-5 their perceived level of understanding of the following topics pre and post training. One (1) was minimal understanding, which five (5) was the maximum level of understanding. The final column represents the average percentage increase in understanding.

Topic	Pre	Post	%
Specific conservation threats in Uganda	4.25	4.777	10.5%
Strategies for community tourism enterprises to reduce threats	3.875	4.333	9.16%
How the tourism industry functions in Uganda	3.875	4.444	11.39%
The tourism industry's concerns with community tourism	3.625	3.777	3.05%
The links between conservation, communities and tourism	4	4.777	15.55%
Training methodologies to engage communities	3.5	4.333	16.67%
How to design curriculums and lesson plans for communities	2.75	3.888	22.78%



Participant evaluations also asked for narrative responses. When asked what part of the training the participants found most beneficial, the most listed answer was how to design lesson plans and the “3 P” teaching methodology. The second most listed topic was the linkage or balance between communities, conservation and tourism in Uganda. When asked what part of the training the participants found least beneficial, most left this section blank, but some listed the tourism

industry's concerns with community tourism products. This was partly expected seeing as how most, if not all, community tourism projects to date had been developed by conservation organizations for the end benefit of conservation with less emphasis on market viability. The key issue with the lack of success in these projects was that the tourism industry was not fully understood by the enterprises. This was addressed at the following training of trainers: **Module 2 Business Planning.**

Many trainers mentioned that they would be working to implement similar trainings at their own institutions. They were all eager to spread their new knowledge to their students and others. As these trainings continued, USAID-STAR saw the results of what the improved capacity was having on the participants. One of the participants of the training of trainers, someone that came to USAID-STAR as a volunteer, was hired as a Wildlife Officer with the Ministry of Tourism. This trainer believed that his experience with the program helped him become more competitive for this position.

Community Trainings: Module 1 - Community Tourism Enterprise Concepts

Module 1 community trainings were 1-day long workshops held adjacent to USAID-STAR's five focus protected areas (Murchison Falls, Rwenzori Mountains, Queen Elizabeth, Bwindi Impenetrable and Mgahinga Gorilla National Parks). Below are the attendance statistics for each location:

Protected Area	Participants (M/F)	Organizations	Special Guests
Murchison Falls NP	25 (15/10)	21	UWA, LC-CDO, JGI, ECOTRUST
Rwenzori Mountain NP	49 (42/7)	40	UWA, WCS, BTC
Queen Elizabeth NP	37 (18/19)	23	UWA, ECOTRUST, NU, Katara
Bwindi Impenetrable NP	24 (17/7)	17	UWA, CTPH, LC III Kihihi
Mgahinga Gorilla NP	26 (19/7)	19	UWA, UOBDU, Heritage Lodges

Trainings were lead by UCOTA trainers based on the skills they developed during the TOT workshops and were assisted by other TOT participants that travelled to support the community-level trainings. USAID-STAR’s Training Specialist observed the trainings, helping trainers on difficult topics and maintaining the flow of the content as well as providing logistics support. The trainings followed a similar curriculum as listed for the training of trainers except that after each lesson participants spent time filling out their own ‘Community Tourism Enterprise Concept’ workbook that applied knowledge from the trainings to each participant’s specific enterprise. Participants were informed that attendance at the subsequent trainings was contingent upon their submission of their finalized workbooks. Over forty (40) workbooks were submitted by community tourism enterprises from the Albertine Rift. The evaluation results chart below summarizes what participants learned in Module 1.

Participants ranked from (1-5) their perceived level of understanding on the following topics Pre and Post training. The final column represents the percentage increase in understanding.

Topic	Pre	Post	%
Specific conservation threats in Uganda	3.34	3.86	10.7%
Strategies for community tourism enterprises to reduce threats	2.86	3.7	16.81%
How the tourism industry functions in Uganda	2.54	3.43	17.76%
The tourism industry’s concerns with community tourism	2.49	3.41	18.41%
The links between conservation, communities and tourism	2.82	3.75	18.60%

Empirical Findings: Module 1 - Community Tourism Enterprise Concepts Trainings

Participants at the TOT and community training level had similar patterns in their level of understanding of the various topics discussed. Both groups were far more familiar with conservation language and practical issues compared to tourism markets and business needs.

This presented evidence as to why nearly all of the community tourism enterprises in Uganda were unsustainable as businesses as well as the need for a more market-based approach to ensure that tourism, as a conservation strategy, is successful.

In all trainings, participants were reluctant to receive the criticisms that the private tourism sector, i.e. operators and accommodation providers, had about community tourism enterprises to the point of mentioning in their evaluations that this was the least beneficial aspect of the training. Interestingly, this is also the topic in the pre-training surveys that scored the lowest level of understanding from all participants; a 3.6 for the training of trainers and 2.49 for the community trainings, whereas familiarity with conservation threats scored a 4.25 and 3.34 respectively. Many conservation stakeholders had implemented tourism as a strategy in Uganda, however both the practitioners and beneficiaries of these programs had a lower understanding of tourism and business than conservation. This was the reason why community tourism enterprises had faced difficulties in their long-term sustainability in Uganda. To have a positive and significant impact on conservation in the future, community tourism enterprises needed to both understand conservation threats and mitigation as well as tourism business and operations. This finding was what the USAID-STAR/UCOTA CTE Development Training Program sought to address.

Training of Trainers: Module 2 - Business Planning



This was a 3-day course delivered to the same group of USAID-STAR’s trainers plus 2 new additions from the Private Sector Foundation of Uganda and a consulting group, Tourism Alumni Inc. from the Albertine Rift. Over the course of three days, participants worked through lesson plans about each stage of the business planning process as well as case studies from another GSTA project in Ethiopia, which had already developed community tourism enterprise business plans. Below is the curriculum of the topics covered:

Lesson	Contents/ Learning Objectives
LP 1: Business Planning Introduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will review the main points covered in their Concept Workbooks, identifying the links between the tourism sector, conservation and community needs. 2. Participants will review the main concerns of tour operators with community tourism enterprises. 3. Participants will be able to describe the various uses and components of a business plan. 4. Participants will be able to describe why a business plan will begin to respond to the concerns of tour operators with community tourism enterprises, helping them to strengthen the links between tourism,

	conservation and community benefits.
LP 2.1: Site Description, Needs and Opportunities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be able to write the details of their site and the background of their project 2. Participants will be able to define the specific needs that exist in their communities and nearby conservation. 3. Participants will be able to describe the opportunities (strategies) for their business to fulfill some of the identified needs.
LP 2.2: Product, Services and Organization Description	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be able to give a description of their organization with the necessary details. 2. Participants will be able to give a description of their product with the necessary details that they need to include.
LP 3: Tourism Market Analysis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be able to describe what the term market means 2. Participants will be able to discuss market trends at various levels for their product 3. Participants will be able to describe the primary markets for their products by their key drivers and their metrics
LP 4: Setting your product apart from the competition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be able to describe the 5 forces of competition 2. Participants will be able to define competitive advantage
LP 5: Sales and Marketing Strategy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be able to describe the 4 P's used in creating their strategic positioning 2. Participants will be able to describe the marketing options available to communicate with the specific sales channels they should use for each target market segment
LP 6: Operations Considerations and Community Conservation benefits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be able to describe the various operational considerations in planning a business 2. Participants will be able to link the operational considerations with their targeted community and conservation benefits
LP 7: Financial Model	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be able to describe what financial projections are. 2. Participants will be able to describe why financial projections are important. 3. Participants will be able to define the key-terms when dealing with business financials. 4. Participants will understand the basis for creating a projected income statement 5. Participants will know how to collect financial data to use in projections. 6. Participants will understand what the important financial concerns are for CTEs.

The training of trainers Module 2: Business Planning began to address many of the issues that community tourism enterprises faced, falling in line with the concerns that the private tourism sector had, which were covered in Module 1 and reviewed again in Module 2. The below pre and post training survey and evaluation results demonstrate participants initial lack

of understanding of business planning topics and the training's success in increasing the level of understanding.

Participants ranked from (1-5) their perceived level of the following topics pre and post training. The final column represents the average percentage increase in understanding.

Topics	Pre	Post	%
Community Tourism Product Development	3	4.11	22%
Conducting Market Analysis in the Tourism Industry	2.375	3.8	29%
The Five Types of Competition in Business Planning	2	4.3	46%
Operations Planning with legal and insurance needs	1.625	3.4	36%
Setting up sales channels and marketing tourism in Uganda	2.375	3.7	27%
Defining the correct target market	2.375	4.1	35%
Creating financial projections	2.5	3.5	20%

The pre-training levels of understanding of business planning topics were significantly lower than those in the initial concept training, with the average level of understanding in the first module having been more conservation and community development focused. The variance was an average score of 3.7 for Module 1 and a 2.3 for Module 2 topics. In addition, the average percentage increase in understanding of Module 2 topics was far greater than that of Module 1, 30% compared with 12% respectively. Both of these points address the issue that these community tourism development practitioners have not been receiving or delivering strong tourism business training. The large increase in perceived understanding shows that participants are addressing new topics in these trainings, not just improving upon existing knowledge.

Throughout the 3-day course participants shared their personal experiences in working with community tourism enterprise development in Uganda revealing a multitude of conflicts between sustainable business practices and local community cultural norms. These are summarized in the below table:

	Sustainable Business Practices	Ugandan Community Cultural Norms
Market Analysis	Products and services are created and refined based upon the demand of different clientele	In certain instances, communities do not want to change based upon what the client wants, whether it be a matter of pride or misunderstanding. A compromise needs to happen where the community adheres to their culture while still being able to provide products and services the client will enjoy or choose not to provide that service due to cultural reasons.
Competition Analysis	Products and services are created and refined based upon their competitive advantages, creating a unique product or service	In many instances if one person is successful in creating and selling a product or services many others will directly copy, selling the exact same thing. When one person is more competitive than others, the community works against that person, hurting the local tourism industry overall. People need to understand that uniqueness is an important part of their products and that the more successful, unique products in their community, the better off everyone will be.
Sales and Marketing	Sales and marketing strategies need to be tailored to the specific target markets one is trying to reach. The proper promotional materials and placement of these needs to be applicable to the market at hand, in Uganda, this is based on tour operators and lodges.	Many communities do not understand how the tourism industry works here and have skeptical views of tour operators and lodges. They are defensive concerning their own products and think that the tour operators owe them something, as if they were development organizations. Communities need to learn how to work with the private sector, while understanding that it will not be giving handouts, but that it is running a business to make profits.
Operations	Staff, training and communication systems need to be designed to provide quality service at the lowest cost to the business	In many communities there is overwhelming pressure to employ as many people as possible, opening up opportunities to everyone. But as this happens, people are hired that do not need to be, costing the business too much money and making it unsustainable. Also, in the instance of guides, as everyone is given the opportunity the time for training and practice decreases significantly. The business ends up having to rotate too many guides that get little practice and training. Also, difficult communication between communities and tourists often destroy the businesses reputation from a reliability standpoint. Community tourism businesses need to learn how to communicate to the community about these issues so they understand and are comfortable with the business employing sustainably. The business also needs to maintain consistent cell phone and email communication with clients.

Financial Projections	Businesses should use financial projection to gauge the feasibility of their business in terms of the bottom line. If a business operation cannot be financially sustainable, it will not be able to contribute to conservation or the community. Listing out all real costs and projecting visitor numbers is key to success. Depreciation needs to be done to maintain quality overtime.	There is nearly a complete absence of the concepts of financial projections and depreciation. Most businesses have no idea of their profit margins when setting prices. The misperception of certain costs like communication, working capital and marketing all negatively affect community tourism businesses. Communities need to become more comfortable with these basic calculations while implementing a depreciation scheme to replace assets when needed.
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Community Training: Module 2 - Business Planning



After the completion of the TOT, three 5-day community trainings in business planning were held, one in the Murchison Falls/Bodongo Forest Conservation region, one in the Queen/Rwenzori Conservation region, and the last in the Bwindi/Mgahinga Conservation region. These trainings used the adjusted lesson plans that were the outcomes of the TOT program (base curriculum adjusted by participants for Ugandan use). The lesson plans and their learning objectives are captured below.

Lesson Plan	Contents/ Learning Objectives
LP 1: Business Planning Introduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will review the main points covered in their Concept Workbooks, identifying the links between the tourism sector, conservation and community needs. 2. Participants will review the main concerns of tour operators with community tourism enterprises. 3. Participants will be able to describe the various uses and components of a business plan. 4. Participants will be able to describe why a business plan will begin to respond to the concerns of tour operators with community tourism enterprises, helping them to strengthen the links between tourism, conservation and community benefits.
LP 2.1: Site Description, Needs and Opportunities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be able to write the details of their site and the background of their project 2. Participants will be able to define the specific needs that exist in their communities and nearby conservation.

	3. Participants will be able to describe the opportunities (strategies) for their business to fulfill some of the identified needs.
LP 2.2: Product, Services and Organization Description	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be able to give a description of their organization with the necessary details. 2. Participants will be able to give a description of their product with the necessary details that they need to include.
LP 3: Tourism Market Analysis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be able to describe what the term market means 2. Participants will be able to discuss market trends at various levels for their product 3. Participants will be able to describe the primary markets for their products by their key drivers and their metrics
LP 4: Setting your product apart from the competition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be able to describe the 5 forces of competition 2. Participants will be able to define competitive advantage
LP 5: Sales and Marketing Strategy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be able to describe the 4 P's used in creating their strategic positioning 2. Participants will be able to describe the marketing options available to communicate with the specific sales channels they should use for each target market segment
LP 6: Operations Considerations and Community Conservation benefits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be able to describe the various operational considerations in planning a business 2. Participants will be able to link the operational considerations with their targeted community and conservation benefits
LP 7: Financial Model	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be able to describe what financial projections are. 2. Participants will be able to describe why financial projections are important. 3. Participants will be able to define the key-terms when dealing with financials. 4. Participants will understand how to create a projected income statement 5. Participants will know how to collect financial data to use in projections. 6. Participants will understand the important financial concerns for CTEs.

Different from the first training module, where separate trainings were held at the national park level, the Business Planning Module combined groups within regions as seen in the chart below:

Protected Area	Number Attended	M/F
Queen Elizabeth Conservation Area (Jan 31- Feb 4 2011)	21	13/8
Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Area (Feb 28- Mar 4 2011)	20	13/7
Murchison Falls Conservation Area (April 10-14 2011)	27	21/6

Empirical Findings: Module 2 - Business Planning

The community trainings addressed many of the challenges that community tourism enterprises experienced in building a successful enterprise. Many of these issues were also addressed as concerns of the tourism private sector, which were initially discussed with communities in Module 1. The pre and post training survey and evaluation results highlighted below demonstrate participants' initial lack of understanding of business topics and the training's success in increasing their level of understanding.

Participants ranked (1-5) their perceived level of understanding on the following topics pre and post training. The final column represents the percentage increase in understanding.

Topics	Pre	Post	%
Community tourism product development	2.42	4.12	34%
Conducting market analysis in the tourism industry	1.9	3.88	40%
The five aspects of competition in business	1.96	3.83	42%
Operations planning with staffing, legal and communication needs	2.16	3.07	29%
Setting up sales channels and marketing tourism in Uganda	1.86	3.53	32%
Understanding different tourism target market segments	2.60	4.0	47%
Creating a projected income statement with depreciation costs	1.48	3.38	30%

The pre-training levels of understanding of business topics were significantly lower than those in the initial concept training, which focused more on conservation and community development needs than business. The average level of understanding in pre-training surveys was 3.7 for Module 1 and 2.1 for Module 2 topics. The average percentage increase in understanding measured by a post-training evaluation for Module 2 topics was far greater than that of Module 1, 36% compared to 12% respectively. Both of these points address the issue that the community tourism development practitioners had not been receiving strong tourism business training and had limited understanding of business operations.

The large increase in perceived understanding shows that participants were addressing new topics in these trainings, not just improving upon existing knowledge. As with Module 1 (Community Tourism Enterprise Concepts) participants were required to fill in a workbook throughout the business training, complete and submit it within three-weeks of the training. The workbooks were in question and answer format, allowing community members to answer questions relating to their businesses and in doing so build their business plans. Over forty (40) Business Plan Workbooks were submitted by community tourism enterprises from across the Albertine Rift. Both the Business Plan Workbook and summary of submissions can be found in Annex 6.

Throughout the 5-day courses at each regional level, participants shared their personal experiences in working with community tourism enterprises in Uganda, revealing a multitude

of deficiencies of community tourism enterprises in terms of best practices for tourism businesses. These are summarized in the following table:

	Sustainable Business Practice	Ugandan Community Cultural Norms
Market Analysis	Products and services are created and refined based upon the demand of different clientele	In most cases, communities had never addressed nor were aware of the variations of the likes and dislikes (key drivers) of the target market segments in Uganda. Most had never taken the time nor knew how to research the potential of their product ideas based on market research.
Competition Analysis	Products and services are created and refined based upon their competitive advantages, creating a unique product or service	It was found that most groups had very little grasp of what competition existed for their products. With a very narrow understanding of business competition, most groups either claimed to have no competition at all, or, believed that anybody making money in tourism was their competition.
Sales and Marketing	Sales and marketing strategies need to be tailored to the specific target markets one is trying to reach. The proper promotional materials and placement of these needs to be applicable to the market at hand, in Uganda, this is based on tour operators and lodges.	Many communities did not understand how the tourism industry works in Uganda and have skeptical views of tour operators and lodges viewing them as competition rather than sales outlets. This is largely due to CTEs' negative perceptions of driver-guides who expect commission, another concept that the communities did not understand. Prior to the training, communities had a limited grasp of marketing strategies, specifically concerning the placement of promotional materials.
Operations	Staff, training and communication systems need to be designed to provide quality service at the lowest cost to the business.	In many communities there is overwhelming pressure to employ as many people as possible, opening up opportunities to everyone. But as this happens, people are hired that do not need to be, costing the business too much money and making it unsustainable. Consistent and reliable phone access is not a priority, decreasing their reliability for bookings, etc.
Financial Projections	Businesses should use financial projection to gauge the feasibility of their business in terms of the bottom line. If a business operation cannot be financially sustainable, it will not be able to contribute to conservation or the community.	There is nearly a complete absence of the concepts of financial projections and depreciation. Most businesses had no idea of their profit margins when setting prices. They cannot tell you if they made a profit or a loss the prior month nor do they have any recordings of their sales or expenses, making projections difficult. The misperception of certain costs like communication, working capital and marketing all negatively affect community businesses.

Training of Trainers: Module 3 - Tourism Operations Training

A 3-day training of trainers was held to review and refine the lesson plans for Module 3: Tourism Operations as was done in the prior two trainings of trainers.⁴ The lesson plans and learning objectives are captured below:

Lesson	Contents/ Learning Objectives
Business Operations Introduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will know what business operations are 2. Participants will know what the weaknesses are in their business operations 3. Participants will understand how having organized business operations makes their job easier and their business more sustainable
Manager and Staff Job Descriptions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The importance of job descriptions 2. The 3 main parts of a job descriptions 3. The Skills, Requirements and Responsibilities of Managers 4. How to communicate to the community the requirements for the positions 5. How to write interviews for the position and select and hire staff
Staff Checklists	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How to design checklists that the staff will use to complete tasks 2. To consider within the checklists those small “details” that will make the difference between a good and an excellent service 3. The role of the Manager in teaching and ensuring the staff use checklists
Staff and Vendor Communications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Managers will know what information needs to be communicated to their workers, how to communicate the information and when 5. Managers will know to whom, how and when they need to communicate important information
Property Policies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know how to take initial and follow-up inventory of equipment 2. Know how to ensure responsibility when someone needs equipment to provide their service 3. Establish policies in the enterprise if equipment is damaged or stolen by staff.
Staff Code of Conduct	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create code of conduct within the enterprise to promote respect between all the employees to create a healthy work environment for the employees 2. Know how the manager can best enforce a code of conduct
Customer Service	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why customer service is so important in tourism 2. The concept of a “client-focused” enterprise 3. The potential negative impacts of bad customer service 4. Good customer service skills, including: body language, establishing personal relationships, and cultural communication considerations 5. How to handle customer complaints

⁴ After assessing the original objectives of the training of training courses, USAID-STAR made a decision to reconsider who participates in these trainings. Originally, representatives from regional vocational schools had been invited to attend the trainings, but after seeing a large gap in capacity levels and focus between these regional partners and those who worked at a more national level based in Kampala, a change needed to be made. USAID-STAR therefore decided that it would be more effective and beneficial for the regional-level institutions to include them in a separate capacity building program geared more towards their work and more aligned with their capacity levels, instead of fitting them into the current program. These institutions were notified of this change.

Reservation Policies and Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design a Reservation, Payment and Cancellation Policy according to the needs of the enterprise. 2. Understand the importance of having these policies in the enterprise 3. Communicate in a clear way to the client this policies
Client Feedback Forms	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the importance of gathering client feedback to improve their tourism products and services 2. Develop a client survey to gather feedback for their ecotourism enterprise 3. Develop a clear strategy for communicating to staff both the positive feedback (to acknowledge and celebrate staff service) and the negative feedback (to correct problems that need to be addressed)
Emergency Policies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss and identify the possible emergencies in a region and product 2. Write an emergency plan and include it in the Operational Manual according to the contingencies that could occur in your region 3. Procedures to follow in case of different types of emergencies 4. List the equipment needed in case of an emergency
Responsible Tourism Policies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design a responsible tourism policy code of conduct 2. Require all the members of the staff follow the responsible tourism policy 3. Teach the all members of the staff to apply this policies with the clients
Financial Procedures Level 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure the Manager and the Administrator practice transparent financial procedures in all enterprise transactions 2. Understand the importance of recording financial transactions on paper 3. Ensure that all sales receive a properly filled sales receipt 4. Ensure that all expenses have a properly filled vendor receipt or payment voucher
Financial Procedures Level 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the reason to use the cash book and bank account book in tracking financial transactions 2. Understand how to use the cash book and bank account book by filling it in based on financial transaction records including receipts and payment vouchers 3. Understand how to enter sales, expenses and transfers between the cash book and bank account book
Financial Procedures Level 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the benefits of doing monthly financial reports 2. Understand the type of information included in a financial report and why it is included 3. Understand how to create a monthly financial report based on the information found in the cashbook and bank account book. 4. Understand how to analyze a monthly financial report to gage the health and success of their business and practices.

Community Trainings: Module 3 - Tourism Operations Training

The Tourism Operations Training was led by UCOTA trainers that attended the TOT workshop in Kampala. The trainings, that were also attended by USAID-STAR technical staff, followed a similar approach as previous trainings with participants spending time filling out their own Community Tourism Enterprise Operations Plan Workbook that applied knowledge from the trainings to their specific enterprises (Operations Plan Workbook can be

found in Annex 6). Participants were informed that attendances at the subsequent trainings were contingent upon their submission of their finalized training workbooks, just as completion and submission of their business plan work books was required for their participation in Module 3. Managers, and in some instances finance assistants, were invited to attend this training module. The information provided below shows total attendance for Module 3.

Region	Number Attended	M/F
Murchison Falls Conservation Area (March 14-18)	10	6/4
Queen Elizabeth Conservation Area (March 28- April 1)	20	12/8
Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Area (April 4-8)	17	12/5

Participants ranked (1-5) their perceived level of understanding in the following topics Pre and Post training. The final column represents the average percentage increase in understanding.

Topics	Pre	Post	%
Managing a community tourism enterprise	2.4	3.9	29%
Managing reservation systems when working with tour operators	1.7	3.9	44%
Managing staff to provide good customer service	2.2	4.2	40%
Creating an effective job description	1.9	3.8	38%
Customer service handling in tourism	2.6	4.2	32%
Financial management and cash handling for transparency	2.5	3.6	21%
Effective team communications	2.4	3.8	27%
Managing staff and their work	2.7	4.0	26%

The percentage increase in perceived understanding from before the Tourism Operations Training was very high compared to Module 1 and near Module 2 levels. The average increase in understanding was around 30%. The topics covered in Operations Training seemed much more familiar to the participants than the Business Planning topics, but there was still a significant gain in understanding. Throughout the operations training it was discussed that many participants were aware of the various procedures but did not understand why they were so important and therefore did not implement them. Almost all of the lesson plans began with why each set of procedures was important, which was very useful to change perceptions and reassert their importance for the enterprise managers. The training was again very practical, helping enterprise managers to apply the topics covered to their own

businesses. One-on-one technical follow up support was also provided to the communities after the trainings to help implement what they learned in the trainings.

Module 4 - Interpretive Tour Planning and Guide Training

As with previous modules a TOT was conducted prior to community tourism enterprise training and UCOTA led the trainings in the field. Through initial surveys it was found that the majority of community tourism stakeholders had not been exposed to the ideas of interpretive guiding and were only familiar with traditional guiding practices. Due to this observation, Module 4 focused more on teaching the goals and tools for good interpretive tours, instead of moving directly into guide practices. Interpretative guiding, which is the use of a variety of communication techniques to translate technical knowledge into terms and ideas non-scientists can understand, is meant to enhance the client experience on a tour. Instead of just following and listening, the client is encouraged to participate and contribute to the tour. In the end, interpretive tours are more likely to result in impassioned and empowered tourists who are motivated to take action or donate for the cause of conservation and community development.

Lesson Plans	Contents/ Learning Objectives
1. Introduction to Interpretation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will understand the reasons why tourists take guided tours and participant in community activities 2. Participants will understand the difference between traditional and interpretive tours 3. Participants will understand the objectives of interpretation
2. Creating an Inventory of Tours and Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be able to do an inventory for each of their tours and activities 2. Participants will know where and how to gather more research on their tours and activities 3. Participants will know how to use the inventory as a useful tool in choosing a topic and message for tours
3. Having a Good “Message” for every tour	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will understand what a “message” is and why it is important 2. Participants will know how to write a “message” for any tour or activity based on the 3 Levels of Interpretation Goals
3.1 Having a Good “Conservation Action” for every Tour	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Participants will understand what a “Conservation Action” is and why it is important 4. Participants will know how to write a “Conservation Action” for any tour or activity based on the 3 Levels of Interpretation Goals
4. Creating a Tour Outline	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will know what to include in a tour outline 2. Participants will know what the principles of a good tour includes 3. Participants will know how to ensure all stops link to their Message
5. Interpretive Guiding Skill: Asking Questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will understand the principles of Interpretive Guiding Skills, and the specifics we will address in the course 2. Participants will understand how to asking relevant questions involves the visitor 3. Participants will know the three major types of questions and how to use them
6. Interpretive Guiding Skill: Using the Senses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will understand how using all 5 senses makes tours and activities more engaging 2. Participants will know: how to include sensory experiences into their tour 3. Participants will know how to improve the sensory experience with props

7. Interpretive Guiding Skill: Story Telling	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will understand the purpose of story telling in tours and activities 2. Participants will know 4 different types of stories to tell and their different effects on the audience 3. Participants will know how to integrate story telling into their tours and activities
8. Creating a POW for your Tour or Activity Introduction and Creative Transitions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will know what a POW is and what it is for 2. Participants will know how to choose a POW from their various interpretation skills and ideas 3. Participants will know how to keep tours interesting with creative transitions

Interpretive Tour Planning and Guide Training was delivered at a 5-day training in the three core regions of the Albertine Rift where the program operates. The training program received the submission of Operations Manuals from 39 enterprises, all of which were allowed to send their manager and head guide to the Module 4 training. As in previous modules, enterprises worked through their personal workbook while going through the training program, filling out the interpretive tour details for each of their products and completing it upon return to their corresponding communities.

Protected Area	Number Attended	M/F
Murchison Falls Conservation Area (May 2-6)	16 from 8 enterprises	10/6
Queen Elizabeth Conservation Area (May 9- May 13)	25 from 16 enterprises	17/8
Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Area (May 23- May 27)	29 from 17 enterprises	21/8

After the training, participants completed an evaluation form in which they were asked to rank their level of understanding of topics covered as a result of the training. The following chart lists the topics in questions and the average rank and percentage increase of participants across the three regions.

Topics	Pre	Post	%
Designing tours based on a particular message	2.1	4.0	37%
Creating a message to unify stops and objectives of a tour	2.3	4.1	35%
Selecting interesting interpretive information and researching it	2.1	3.8	33%
The difference between interpretive and traditional tours	2.1	4.3	44%
The goals of interpretation	2.2	4.1	38%
The various techniques of interpretation	1.8	3.9	40%

As with previous trainings, there was a substantial increase in perceived understanding of materials covered in Module 4. The Tour Planning and Guide Training Module was a shift in content and subject matter from previous trainings, which were more enterprise management focused. Module 4 required more creativity, and some may say artistry, on the part of the community, which proved to be just as challenging as previous modules. For each product participants were asked to create an overall message that encompassed the main educational, empathy and empowerment objectives as well as an accompanying conservation action that the client could act upon. Then the participants wrote down each stop along the tour, how that

stop related to the message, the primary learning point and possible interpretation techniques that could be used to communicate the information to the client. Many enterprises had never written down or even considered using specific stops for their tours prior to this training. Enterprises now understood the need to better organize a tour for a higher quality product so that the results would be happier clients, higher revenues and improved conservation.

Module 5 - Sales and Marketing

The final training module of the Program was a combination of in-classroom training, practical networking, regional product launches, membership drives for the UCOTA and Pearls of Uganda Program, and a graduation ceremony for participants. For the Pearls of Uganda launch, public and private sector stakeholders from the region were invited to attend. This included local government, conservation agency representatives, local accommodation managers and tour providers. Bringing these representatives together brought a lot of exposure to the community enterprises, allowed them to network with possible business partners and show the strength of their constituency to local government. Having this audience also allowed UCOTA to begin a dialogue with local governments on the role they played in supporting community enterprises and advocating for improved support and assistance programs. In this final training, the importance of good public relations and communications was highlighted as a vital aspect of marketing in addition to more traditional promotional materials. Below are the topics covered.

Lesson Plan	Contents/ Learning Objectives
1. The First Impression	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will understand the First Impression in tourism marketing 2. Participants will understand the types of tourists that learn about Uganda and community tourism 3. Participants will understand the international tourism value chain and how to use internet search engines to research them 4. Participants will understand how marketing collateral is designed and the information included to attract these key drivers so potential clients decide to book
2. UCOTA Membership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will learn what UCOTA is and its main objectives 2. Participants will learn the main activities of each main objective including capacity building, advocacy, networking, marketing, fundraising and conservation 3. Participants will learn membership requirements and processes
3. Pearls of Uganda	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will learn about the strategy of the Pearls of Uganda program 2. Participants will understand the marketing benefits of the Pearls of Uganda program 3. Participants will know how to apply and meet the requirements of the Pearls of Uganda program

Most community tourism enterprises listed marketing assistance as one of their greatest needs. This comes as no surprise as the complexity of tourism marketing includes the challenges of staying up to date on new media technology innovations and communicating to reach target markets on the other side of the globe that have different cultures, standards and languages. Small businesses also, invariably, have very limited funds for effective marketing

and promotion. It is for these reasons that USAID-STAR focused a large portion of its efforts on collective marketing at the national level through UCOTA and the Pearls of Uganda program rather than individual and community level marketing. A large part of the training was to teach the community enterprises about the Pearls of Uganda program and how they could most effectively benefit from it. By including local stakeholders, the training not only taught participants about the tourism value chain but fostered linkages by providing a networking space between products and their potential sales outlets. As a result of the training many community enterprises made contacts with local lodges and tour operators and initiated sales negotiations. The charts below show the enterprise and local stakeholders that attended Module 5.

Participants per Conservation Area	Number Attended	M/F
Murchison Falls Conservation Area (Jul 4-Jul 5)	14 from 9 enterprises	9/5
Queen Elizabeth Conservation Area (Jun 27-28)	32 from 17 enterprises	22/10
Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Area (Jun 30-Jul 31)	28 from 16 enterprises	18/10

Local Stakeholders per Conservation Area	Number Attended	M/F
Murchison Falls Conservation Area (Jul 4-Jul 5)	18	11/7
Queen Elizabeth Conservation Area (Jun 27-28)	31	21/10
Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Area (Jun 30-Jul 31)	25	24/1

Participants completed an evaluation, ranking their understanding Pre and Post training of topics covered in Module 5. The final column represents the average percentage increase in understanding.

Topics	Pre	Post	%
Setting up sales channels in Uganda and internationally	1.4	3.5	41%
Marketing materials dos and don'ts	1.6	3.5	39%
Marketing beyond promotion	1.5	3.6	42%
Uses of the press and non-traditional networks to increase sales	1.8	3.3	29%



Respondents were very receptive to the training. After delivering the presentations on the Pearls of Uganda program and UCOTA membership, 100% of the participating enterprises were interested and signed up to go through the application process. The final workbook that participants completed was a content collection document that was then used to develop the web and print copy for the Pearls of Uganda promotional materials. It was also used for other marketing materials, such as brochures, for each business.

Bird Guide Trainings

USAID-STAR worked closely with Nature Uganda (NU) on specific bird-guide training for select communities in response to the common goal of product development. The program supported NU in facilitating two bird-guide trainings, one for the western region and the other in the southern region of the Albertine Rift. Representative guides from CTEs in the area with high birding potential participated from both regions. The modules included the basics of guiding and tourism along with bird identification, physiology, habitats, and behavior. Guides were also trained on customer and equipment handling specific to birders and bird guiding necessities.

Bird-guide trainings are part of a larger effort to increase birding tourism to Uganda. These birding sites, including Echuya Forest and Katwe lakes, have levels of high biodiversity but are outside of the national park system. Bird tourism is therefore an excellent way to provide alternative conservation of these areas and improved income to surrounding communities. According to a study conducted by Nature Uganda, the average bird watching tourist spends about four times as much money in Uganda as the average general nature tourists.

ATLAS Conference Abstract Selection

The scientific committee of ATLAS, The Association for Travel and Leisure Education, selected an abstract submitted by USAID-STAR's Training Specialist that was presented at the ATLAS Africa global conference in June 2011 in Kampala. The conference was titled: *Sustainable Tourism and Environmental Education, A Natural Link* and focused on the role of sustainable tourism development as an enabler for increased conservation awareness. The selected abstract was titled: *"An Empirical Study of Community Tourism Development in Uganda and a Framework for an Improved Integrated Approach."* It details the specific work of the USAID-STAR program in building capacity in sustainable tourism development to benefit conservation initiatives. It was presented and well received.

Increased Participation of Peace Corps Volunteers

USAID-STAR has promoted interagency collaboration from the very first days of project design. When supporting the Friend-a-Gorilla program, USAID-STAR worked with a Peace Corps volunteer based in Queen Elizabeth National Park to assist in hosting the Los Angeles celebrities. Since the inception of the Training Program, USAID-STAR engaged three Peace Corps Volunteers in the Albertine Rift. These volunteers attended the trainings with their local counterparts and assisted with on-site follow-up and day-to-day capacity building with the businesses where they were based. The Training Program provided these volunteers with a structured framework to use in assisting the communities where they work. USAID-STAR developed scopes of work for three volunteers to work on community outreach efforts with the follow-on bridging project. These volunteers are expected to arrive at their sites in October 2011.

Training Program Conclusions

The USAID-STAR's training program was developed in response to the demands of the system, as determined at the WSR workshop in Jinja in October 2009. It is also based on an

internal assessment of the workforce development needs of the region and a thorough assessment of local partners' approaches to community tourism development. The main gap was a lack of market-based approaches to enterprise development as well as a lack of general institutionalized and documented approaches to supporting community tourism. From these discoveries the Community Tourism Enterprise Development Training Program was designed, which paired capacity building of local partner organizations to support community tourism (UCOTA staff and other organizations) with community level trainings.

USAID-STAR and UCOTA completed this five-module training program over the course of 9-months ending in July 2011. The program delivered 68 days (544 hours) of training spread amount different sites within the Albertine Rift Valley. The training reached over 300 participants, from 60 community tourism enterprises and 103 supporting organizations (local NGO's, etc.). A total of 42 enterprises completed the entire program, receiving over 144 hours of training per participant as well as one-on-one follow up technical assistance from USAID-STAR staff and supporting organizations. In addition to the in-depth training provided by the program to 300 people, other shorter trainings, such as bird guiding, etc. were conducted. In total 1,222 individuals were trained through the program, of which 392 were women.

During the final module of the in-depth CTE training, participants filled out an evaluation of the overall Training Program. They were asked about the content of the trainings in terms of what was valuable and what was new information and requested to suggest areas of improvement. While respondents were emphatic about how valuable the entire program was, a large majority listed business planning as the most valuable and containing the most new information. Respondents also solicited more follow-up assistance and post-training site visits.

Overall the training program was a huge success. The "competitive" process, requiring submission of homework after each module to be eligible for the next module was very effective in identifying those groups that were serious about running effective enterprises from those that were not. Though the written evaluations and numbers show an improvement in understanding of content, they do not capture all of the positive changes observed in the individuals throughout the 9-month program.

The level of confidence, professionalism and leadership that grew out of these programs was tangible. Young women who would barely speak in the beginning of the program were standing their ground and speaking out at the end. Managers who did not understand their roles became empowered in their role and strong sales people in the private sector networking event at the end of the program. Competing entrepreneurs, who initially were non-communicative with each other, became close friends and began seeing one another more as partners in promoting sustainable tourism than competitors. The transition of these groups from simply community-based organizations to stronger community tourism enterprises with the skills to manage these businesses is highlighted by the fact that participants are now asking for advice on how to bring in more clients and be more profitable instead of asking for grants and subsidies. The following chart gives examples of the applications of business tools learned from each module as well as conservation efforts that have resulted.

Module	Application of Business Tools	Resulting Conservation Efforts
Community Tourism Enterprise Concepts	The Participatory Environmental Management Association, PEMA, learned how tourism could supply sustainable income to its members and is therefore developing a forest walk, tree planting products and more.	Tourism revenues from forest activities will provide alternative livelihoods for members who may otherwise turn to timber cutting. These new guides and other members will look to protect the forest seeing it as a vital asset to their new work.
Business Planning	ACOLFA, Alimugonza Communal Forest Land Association, MFNP, turned its tree-planting project into an actual tour where guests participate after learning about the key drivers of target markets and the key components of a good product.	Tourists that take the tree-planting tour participate in planting a tree and paying a small fee to cover its maintenance until it is strong enough to be moved to the forest. More re-forestation will occur with this new product while also providing alternative livelihoods from forest extractions.
Operations Planning	Ruboni Community Camp, RMNP, overhauled its HR policies, requiring staff to go through an interview process and redefining roles based on needs.	New job descriptions for guides include a level of forest monitoring to track obedience of protected area policy. Other job descriptions improve the maintenance of Ruboni's products, improving quality and thus increasing revenue for conservation.
Interpretive Tour Planning and Guide Training	Mutanda Eco-Tourism Community Campsite has included messages and conservation actions in their tours to motivate their guests to contribute to the local projects such as conservation education in local schools.	By improving the tour experience and knowing how to explain an exciting conservation project, the community will be able to raise more funds and contributions for their work, including more conservation education for youth.
Sales and Marketing	Networking between AMA, Abanya-Rwenzori Mountaineering Association, RMNP, and Kluges Guest Farm has resulted in sales talks where Kluges wants to send its guests with AMA.	AMA learned how being a locally owned sustainable tourism provider was appetizing to Kluge's guests. They will continue working to spread sustainable tourism and continue their conservation work because they know that is what the market is looking for.

A complete compilation of all community tourism enterprise concepts, business plans, operations manuals, interpretive tour plans and marketing content are available in Annex 6. Accompanying these is a complete toolkit that includes revised lesson plans for all 5 modules along with accompanying data sheets, student workbooks and curriculum suggestions (Annex 7). As a result of the training of trainers, there are several trainers who now know how to teach community tourism enterprise development including 2 expert trainers housed within UCOTA who have delivered all lesson plans 3 complete times plus the initial TOT sessions.

When UCOTA's Executive Director, Helen Lubowa, observed one of her trainers when she accompanied the team on the final field trainings, she said she was "amazed" at how much they had learned and how their training and public speaking skills had improved.

UCOTA's work is not finished. They will continue to follow-up with the training participants to increase UCOTA's membership and to sign-up those that are ready for the Pearls of Uganda promotional program. Multiple local stakeholders have been asking about hiring UCOTA for trainings to help different community tourism enterprises throughout the Albertine Rift and beyond. The Community Tourism Enterprise Development Training Program has not just improved the business acumen of 42 enterprises, it has improved the standards and increased the expectations for how community tourism enterprise development is conducted in Uganda and many more are now hoping to join the trend through the skills that UCOTA now possesses.

3. SALES AND MARKETING

Results:

- *Identification of a new bird species for Uganda*
- *Launch of the 'Pearls of Uganda' program, supporting over 30 community tourism enterprises and supported by 120 private sector members. The program was recognized for its innovation in linking community tourism enterprises to tourism markets.*
- *Outreach and promotion of Uganda to over 200 international tour operators*
- *'Oh Uganda' song about the parks of Uganda reaches millions of Ugandans*
- *23% increase in domestic tourism visitation to Queen Elizabeth National Park*
- *Through public-private partnerships and collaboration, USAID-STAR published promotional materials for parks and the country to boost park visitation and revenues*

Improved marketing was also one of the 12 common goals established by the tourism stakeholders participating in the Jinja WSR in 2009. The USAID-STAR Tourism Enterprise Development approach aimed to promote the development of quality tourism products, especially community tourism products, in and around targeted high-biodiversity areas with the goal to increase revenues and support better conservation. Sales and marketing are vital components of successful tourism enterprises and destinations. Historically, communities have been taught about the economic benefits that they can derive from conserving biodiversity, including starting tourism businesses; however tourism products are often developed with little attention given to marketing and market

connectivity, a critical component to successful businesses. The USAID-STAR program, responding to the needs of the system and building on its enterprise development efforts, launched a number of initiatives to support the market connectivity of community tourism products as well as targeted niche market campaigns to help promote the biodiversity assets of the region.

Tourism Market Research

USAID-STAR conducted a survey of top Ugandan tour operators that focused on community tourism and general product offerings in the Albertine Rift. The survey gauged both the reasons for the lack of community products in tour packages and tour operators' specific product demands for tourism in the region and nationally. The report findings served as a guiding instrument in the product development and promotional choices of the USAID-STAR project. The survey was shared with UCOTA and other interested parties to help develop product offerings and training curricula. It also served as a guide in the design and development of Pearls of Uganda and other outreach programs.

To gather information on the international tourism market, USAID-STAR conducted an international tour operator survey on the perceptions and demand for Uganda as a tourism destination with specific questions on bird watching in the country. Based on stakeholder consultation and market assessment, USAID-STAR believed bird watching to be a strong potential market niche for Uganda. The response was in strong favor of wanting more information about Uganda, better connections to tourism businesses in Uganda, and an increase in tours to the country. For the bird market specifically, prime birding generally

occurs in areas of high biological significance where community members serve as guides and stewards, economically benefitting from tourism and promoting conservation. Based on the international operator survey, USAID-STAR partnered with Nature Uganda (NU) and UTB to design and implement a marketing strategy to promote bird tourism in Uganda as well as support better information dissemination to potential tourism markets. These efforts are described in greater detail later in this chapter.

Bird-Watching Tourism



In the early stages of the USAID-STAR program, partner Nature Uganda identified the need to compile a photographic inventory of the birds of Uganda to provide a resource to educate both local residents and international guests. To support this effort, USAID-STAR sponsored a field trip to collect information and photographs about the birds of the Albertine Rift. The team traveled to Rwenzori Mountains National Park, Murchison Falls National Park, Semliki Wildlife Reserve, National Park, Kibale National Park, and the Budongo Forest Reserve. During the trip over 5,000 photographs of 150 species were taken.

In 2009, Nature Uganda had sponsored a similar trip that covered the southern end of the Albertine Rift (Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Echuya, Nyamuro, Queen Elizabeth National Park) where over 250 species were photographed. With the successful completion of this second field trip, a collective total of over 400 species were photographed. The content and photographs collected have been used, and will be used for years to come, for public awareness campaigns and promotional materials for tourism and bird enthusiasts.

One of the most exciting outcomes of this field trip was the discovery and recording of a new bird species for Uganda. The Orange-checked Waxbill (see photo above)—previously endemic to the Democratic Republic of Congo and the western part of Rwanda—was spotted near Bumaga Village in the Semliki Valley. The discovery of this species marks an exciting

addition to a growing list of birds found in Uganda and was published in *Scopus*, an East African ornithology journal published by the Eastern Africa Natural History Society.



In addition, USAID-STAR in partnership with Nature Uganda and Visual Effects Ltd (a design, layout, and printing company)—produced and distributed 3,000 desktop calendars to Nature Uganda members from the Albertine Rift, including over 140 schools and training institutions, 150 tour operators and hotel owners, government institutions, media houses, some targeted USA based birding specialized tour operators, and over 1,000 tourism stakeholders. This was a concerted effort to raise awareness of the importance of bird species to

the country. The photographs chosen for the calendar highlight some of the flagship species of the Albertine Rift and reflect the rarity, endemism, cultural connections, and tourism potential these species bring to the country.

USAID-STAR developed a concept strategy to promote birding tourism in Uganda and validated it with Nature Uganda. The Birding Uganda marketing strategy, another response to the common goals of the sector established in Jinja in October 2009, defines key methods of increasing birding tourism to Uganda including the development of a birding web portal, press releases, international tour operator outreach, social and viral marketing and special events.

'Uganda Birding' is a product development and marketing campaign designed in close partnership with Nature Uganda, Uganda Tourism Board, Uganda Bird Guides Club, Uganda Safari Guides Association, UWA and other industry stakeholders to promote Uganda as a leading birding tourism destination. With over 1,040 species and 32 endemic species, Uganda is a birdwatcher's paradise.



International market trends, along with industry research, shows that there is great potential for birding in Uganda. A survey of international birding tour operators conducted by USAID-STAR, showed that 83% of those who did not currently offer bird watching tours to Uganda stated that they would consider doing so in the future. In a 2008 study presented by Nature Uganda, the average birder in Uganda spends \$3,000 per trip, as compared to the average safari traveler to Uganda that spends about \$700 per trip. This correlates with the US bird watching market that spends \$2,000 to \$4,000 on average per trip.⁵

The Uganda Birding campaign aimed to increase birding tourism to Uganda through the development of a birding web portal, press releases, international tour operator outreach, collateral materials for use at international trade shows, social and viral marketing as well as support of special events such as Bird Birding Day. The Uganda Birding campaign was intended to put Uganda on the map in an effort to increase sustainable levels of visitation to key birding sites and generate revenue for protected areas, tour guides, lodges, and tour operators offering birding packages.

Bird Watching Tourism Activities

USAID-STAR helped to establish a Bird Tourism Working Committee led by UTB with members including Nature Uganda, UWA, AUTO, NFA, USAGA, Uganda Bird Guides Club and select tour operators. The goal of the committee was to strengthen the bird tourism sector through a number of activities that are described below.

Rapid Assessment of Birding Tourism Sector Needs in the Albertine Rift

Johnnie Kamugisha is one of the top bird watching guide trainers in Uganda and President of the Bird Guides Club. He has exposure to the demands of international tour operators, has traveled to trade shows and events to represent Uganda, and has been a leading trainer for

⁵ Birding in the United States: A Demographic and Economic Analysis. US Fish & Wildlife Service 2009

bird guides in Uganda. Johnnie was recruited by USAID-STAR to conduct a rapid assessment of birding tourism sector in order to determine priority areas of focus in the Albertine Rift.

Key findings of the assessment report, organized by protected area, are as follows (also see Annex 8 for full report):

Murchison Falls National Park

- Regular maintenance of trails is needed, as they are often impassable.

The Royal Mile

- Benches for resting points along the trail
- Shades along the trails for shelter from rain

Semliki National Park

- Regular maintenance of trails as they are often impassable
- Repair of tree houses for bird observation or building of new ones
- Resting benches along the trails
- Shades along the trails for shelter in case of rain

Queen Elizabeth National Park needs

- Developing an access road around Lake Kikorongo
- Rebuilding bird hides
- Building a platform at Lake Munyanyange (Katwe)
- Reconstruction of trails across the Kazinga Channel that linked with the Ishasha road

Bwindi Impenetrable National Park needs

- Regular maintenance of trails most especially in the Ruhija area
- Resting benches along the trails
- Shades along the trails for shelter in case of rain

Echuya Forest needs

- Development of trail system

Mgahinga Gorilla National Park needs

- Resting benches along the trails.
- Shades along the trails for shelter in case of rain
- Repairing of the existing shades/rest stops.

Rwenzori Mountains National Park needs

- UWA should begin to allow day-trips to access the park for birding as currently only mountaineers buying multi-day trips can enter some of the key birding sites.

Development of Birding Tourism Marketing Content

USAID-STAR, in collaboration with Johnnie Kamugisha, also developed a custom photo database and written descriptions for use on the birding website and other promotional needs.

Development of National Birding Tourism Check-List

One of the most important resources for bird watching destinations is a bird check-list.

USAID-STAR developed an official national bird check-list, in collaboration with Johnnie Kamugisha, which includes species within the Albertine Rift of Uganda. This official list is published on the Uganda birding website made available to travelers and travel planners.

Birding Uganda Website

In partnership with the Birding Tourism Working Committee, USAID-STAR developed and launched a national birding website with special focus on the Albertine Rift www.birding-uganda.com. The website is managed by the UTB with support from USAID-STAR and the Committee. The website is unique as no other country on the African continent and only two to three other countries in the world have such a comprehensive online guide dedicated to bird watching. One of the comparable websites for this program was a Guyana Birding (www.guyanabirding.com) supported by USAID. Some of the birding operators listed on the site have already experienced an increase in enquiries as a result of the site, launched in July 2011.



In addition to the birding website USAID-STAR conducted the following to promote bird watching tourism in the country:

- A birding tourism advertisement in the Destination Uganda 2011/12 guide.
- A birding tourism advertisement and birding hot spots article in UTB’s national birding magazine. The USAID-STAR also provided editorial support and advice to UTB in development of this publication. The magazine is distributed at the world’s largest birding show, the British Bird Fair, as well as other key travel trade events.
- Birding Tourism stickers to promote birding as a means of supporting biodiversity conservation.
- Development of preliminary birding tour operator criteria and selection of 15 specialty birding tour operators for pilot phase of the birding tourism launch (See below for details).



The Birding Tourism Working Committee, developed criteria and selected a pilot group of specialty birding tour operators. The criteria are on the left side of the table below and the selected operators are on the right.

Criteria	Pilot Group of Tour Operators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Have participated in British Bird Fair or other national birding tourism activities in the past 10 years</i> b. <i>Have been a supporter and mentor of the birding sector</i> c. <i>Demonstrate that they utilize the specialty bird watching equipment (scopes/binoculars, specialty vehicles, books, checklists)</i> d. <i>Utilize USAGA trained guides that are members of Uganda Bird Guides Club</i> e. <i>Have a proven track record and references from past clients</i> f. <i>Member of AUTO</i> g. <i>Member of bird related clubs and associations</i> h. <i>Legally comply with Ministry of Tourism operating guidelines</i> i. <i>Have been vetted and verified by the Birding Working Committee including representatives of AUTO, NU, Uganda Bird Guides Club, USAGA, USAID-STAR and UTB as qualifying for the pilot group of specialty birding tour operators. UTB had the final sign-off authority in which operators were chosen.</i> 	<p><i>(Recommended by the working committee that met minimum of 80% of the criteria and selected for the first phase of marketing)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access Uganda 2. Africa Adventure Safaris 3. Avian Watch Uganda 4. Birding in Paradise Safaris 5. Bunyoni Safaris Ltd. 6. Churchill Safaris and Travel 7. Classic Africa Safaris 8. Escape Tours and Safari 9. Hoopoe Tours and Travel Ltd. 10. Lake Kitandara Tours and Travel 11. Livingston African Safaris 12. The Far Horizons 13. Uganda Safari Company 14. Venture Uganda 15. Wild Frontiers / G&C

Publications and Promotional Materials

Discover Uganda 2011/12

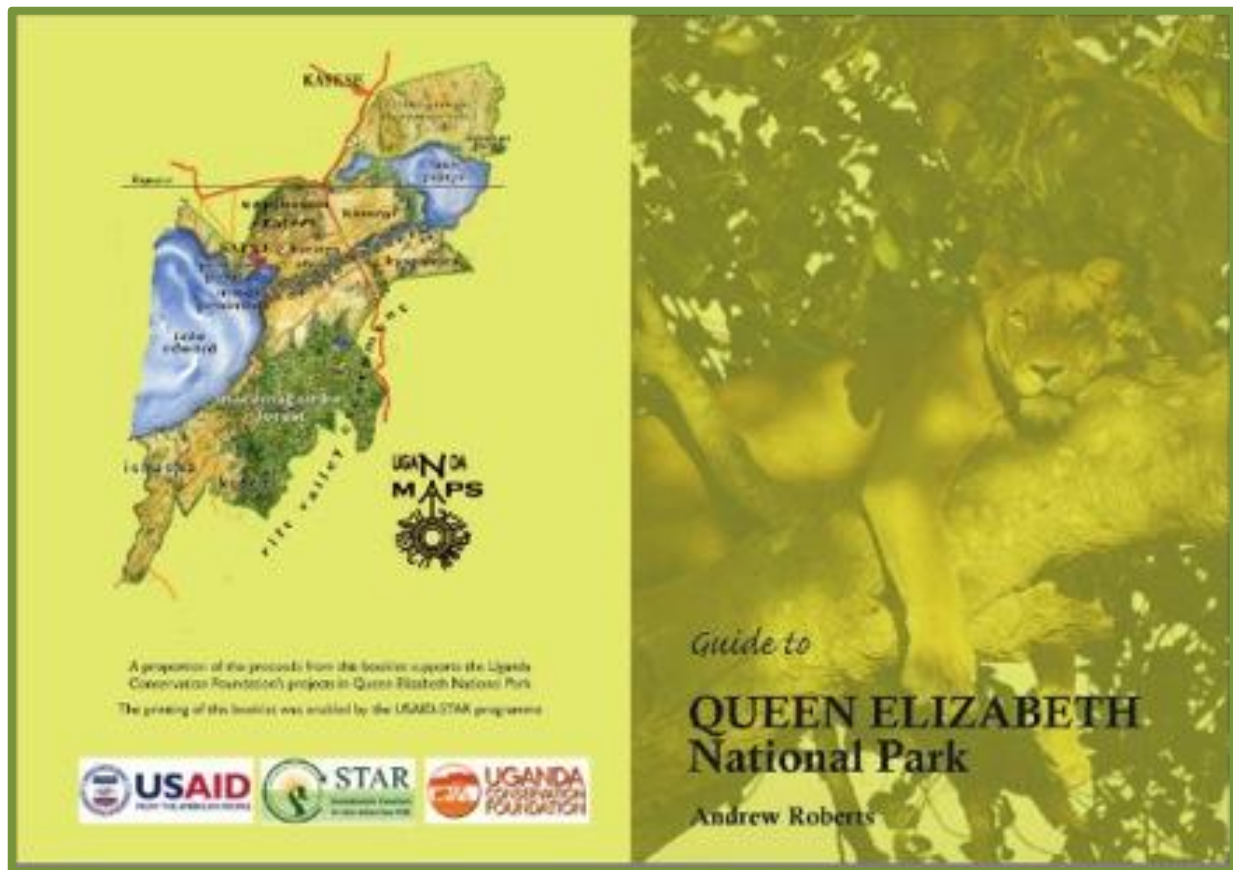
Discover Uganda 2011/12 is a 56-page print publication that highlights Uganda as a tourism destination, with a specific focus on its National Parks. USAID-STAR worked with the Uganda Tourism Board (UTB), Land-and-Marine (a publishing company and industry leader), and tourism stakeholders in Uganda to plan and fundraise for development of the publication. USAID-STAR, as part of its capacity building efforts with UTB, raised \$30,000 from fifteen (15) Ugandan tourism private sector entities to publish 10,000 copies of the guide. As the publication describes Uganda as a travel destination, the travel options in the country, and the parks and protected areas people can visit, it helps to facilitate greater visitation to Uganda and its protected areas.

The publication was distributed at the British Bird Fair in August 2011 (the largest fair of its kind in the world), sent to Ugandan Embassies in major tourism source markets (e.g. UK and USA), and mailed to over 200 tour operators in North America along with information about bird tourism and *Pearls of Uganda* (see section below). Sixty-three (63) tour operators requested more information and assistance in connecting to tourism businesses in Uganda. Through UTB and AUTO the publication will also be distributed at the World Travel Mart in London in November and trade fairs in Spain, Japan, and Tanzania. It is also available at UTB and AUTO offices for Ugandan tourism businesses to pick up and use for their own promotional purposes. The development of the publication was a direct result of USAID-STAR's response to the expressed needs of the sector to better promote Uganda and its natural assets to tourism markets.

Queen Elizabeth National Park Guidebook Partnership with Andrew Roberts

USAID-STAR partnered with Uganda's most renowned travel writer, Andrew Roberts, to co-publish a travel guide for Queen Elizabeth National Park. This book is the first of its kind for Uganda and is designed to help educate residents and international travelers about tourism, communities and conservation and its importance to protected areas within the Albertine Rift. The forty-page book about the park is now available for sale in major outlets and stores in Uganda. A percentage of proceeds from the book sales will go to the Uganda Conservation Foundation.

Andrew Roberts was a natural choice for the partnership as he is editor of *Bradt Travel Guide* and author of number of leading travel books, including *Uganda's Great Rift Valley*, and a series of popular maps of Uganda's parks. He not only has the writing skills but also the name and reputation to help market the book to the target readers. The book was published in June 2011 and is now available for sale in outlets around Uganda.



Front and back cover of guide

Pearls of Uganda

This program is a product development and marketing initiative designed in close partnership with UCOTA to promote Uganda as a world-class nature and cultural tourism destination

and greater visitation to community tourism experiences near the protected areas. Uganda's safari tourism products face fierce competition from Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, and even Rwanda. The strategy of the 'Pearls of Uganda' program is to integrate local communities and Uganda's rich culture into the tourism product being offered to help compete for the experiential and cultural traveler – one of the fastest growing markets in the tourism industry.

Sales for community tourism enterprises in Uganda will primarily come from Ugandan-based tourism intermediaries (tour operators and accommodations) and individual travelers. Therefore USAID-STAR designed a 'Pearls of Uganda' marketing program to link community tourism products to regional lodges/hotels, national tour operators and international markets. This includes matching community enterprises with local lodges/hotels through a mentoring program in which lodges 'friend' a community and commit to support the enterprise through sales and technical or financial assistance. In return, the private sector



partner (a lodge for example) receives a level of marketing benefits at a national and international level as well as indirect benefits including improved relationships with the communities that surround where businesses operate, positive press for clients and improved conservation. Communities receive the support committed from the private sector partner as well as a new level of empowerment through engagement in the larger tourism industry.

Marketing is the most difficult aspect for communities trying to work in the tourism sphere as it requires an ongoing understanding of tourism market trends and market relationships along the value chain. The Tour Operator Survey conducted by USAID-STAR in 2010 found that lack of information and knowledge about community tourism products was a main reason for not selling them. The goal was therefore to focus promotion of community tourism experiences at a national, centralized level (through UCOTA) to provide economies of scale on behalf of community enterprises.

There are over thirty (30) community tourism products, known as ‘pearls’ who are supported through the *Pearls of Uganda* program. Such attractions and offerings include cultural dance performances, interpretive community and nature walks, community home-stays, and handicraft production. ‘Pearls supporters’ (lodges and tour operators) who have committed to promote the cultural tourism products in the *Pearls of Uganda* program include over one hundred and twenty (120) lodges, hotels and tour operators within Uganda.



Early successes in the program include community tourism products such as the Kikorongo Women’s Group which has shown significant increase in revenue and has signed several sales contracts with tour operators and lodges through the promotional efforts of *Pearls of Uganda*. Tour operators and lodges have also stated that they have received increased inquiries as a result of the program efforts. *Pearls of Uganda* was also featured in the March issues of Business Today magazine.

Overview of Pearls of Uganda Marketing Activities

The *Pearls of Uganda* marketing strategy was developed in January 2011 to outline the short and long-term roadmap of the promotional initiative for UCOTA. The program website (www.pearlsofuganda.org) was launched in March 2011. In the first four months since its launch the website has received over 3,800 visitors from 76 countries. The average time spent on the site was over five minutes, which is a significant amount of time for web visitors and indicates the level of interest and usefulness of the site for potential travelers. After the home page, the second most visited page was the ‘plan your trip’ page.



Membership plaques with built-in brochure racks and sales manuals that provide promotional information about each of the community tourism enterprises have been designed and developed in partnership with local artisans. These have been distributed to all ‘supporters’ of the program and other

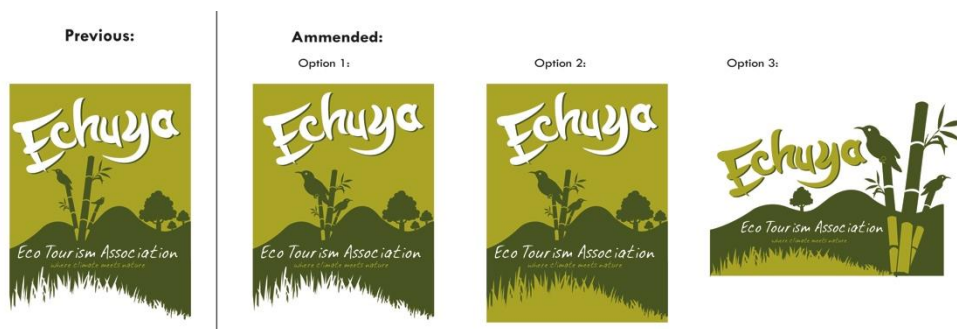
sales outlets to promote the products offered by the program. The program has also been promoted through cooperative efforts between USAID-STAR and UTB with advertising in the national Destination Uganda 2011/12 publication and the UTB birding Uganda publication.

Community Tourism Enterprise Promotion

There has been significant focus on marketing, public relations and sales support for all USAID-STAR CTEs, through individual customized tactics as well as via the *Pearls of Uganda* program. Some of the key activities included:

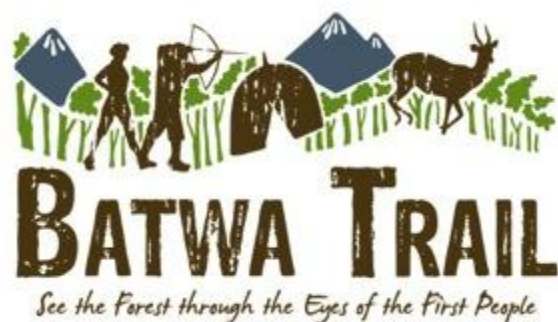
Brand Development for Three CTEs

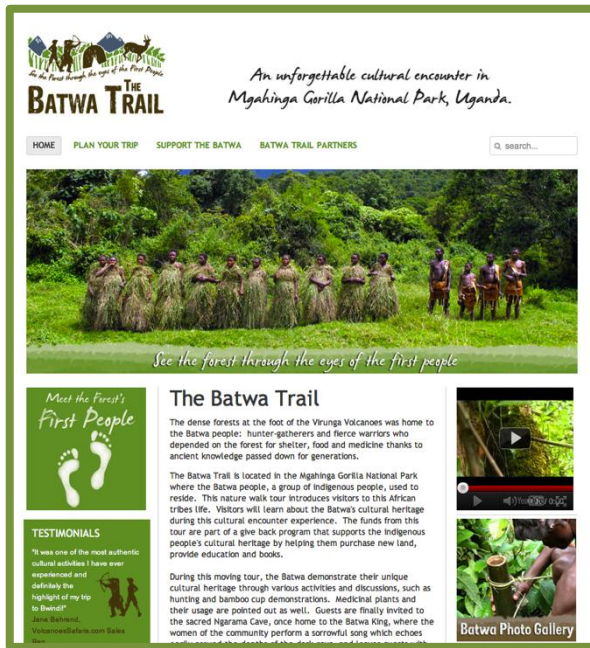
As the CTEs refine their product development via training and technical support activities, there were three communities in need of brands (logos and taglines) to represent their products to target markets. Through a comprehensive methodology that involved as many community members as possible and dedicated branding work sessions, the Echuya Forest, Ruboni Community Camp and Nyundo community now have brands. The communities are delighted that they were able to participate in the process and see a logo that symbolizes their product through tangible and creative designs.



The Batwa Cultural Trail

The Batwa Cultural Trail is one of the key community tourism products for the program. In addition to technical support, a logo, brochure, and signage were developed in close consultation (over multiple sessions and modifications) with the Batwa community. Although the brand is only a small part of USAID-STAR support to the CTE, it is a very symbolic and important psychological component of the process as it allows community members to create a symbol of their enterprise that will represent them to the outside world. The marketing collateral for the product included a logo (above) and brochure (Annex 9) that help to promote the tour product. In addition, USAID-STAR developed road signage for the product to guide travelers to the trailhead. These signs lead visitors from Kisoro and from the Rwanda border to the site. Signs at the start and finish of the trailhead were also designed.

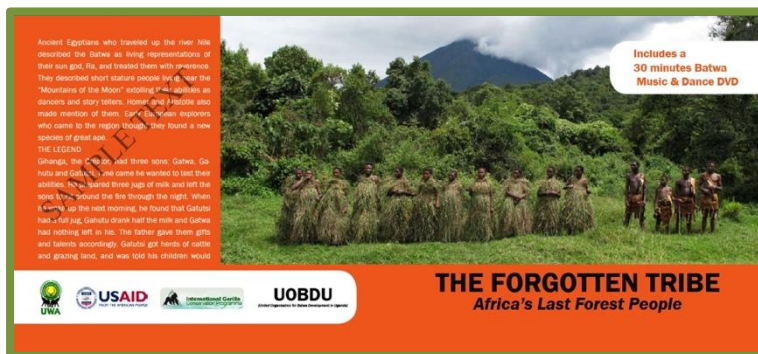




The program also supported IGCP in the development and launch of a documentary film and accompanying collateral information about the Batwa. The project included a documentary with background on the significance of the Batwa people and their struggles since being forced out of their traditional lands, music videos of traditional cultural songs and dance, a 30-second commercial, and a booklet telling the story of the Batwa. The booklet/DVD is being sold to raise funds for the Batwa people and the 30-second commercial is already being used to promote the tourism product, which will ultimately result in increased revenue for the Batwa. The short marketing video is

being distributed via youtube and other online outlets: www.youtube.com/watch?v=77-akzgmf9A

In support of the above marketing efforts, a mini Batwa Cultural Trail website was developed: www.TheBatwaTrail.com to provide an information resource where travelers and tour operators can learn about the Batwa, details of the tourism product include a “how to” book with information about how to get there, what to pack, and more.



The product was soft launched in 2010 but officially launched in July 2011 with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that empowers the Batwa community and spells out how the tourism product would be managed. The colorful event

was presided over by Ms. Grace Mbabazi Aulo, the Commissioner of Tourism who represented the Minister for Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage, local government leadership, and the Uganda Wildlife Authority. While she ceremoniously cut the ribbon at its official launch, Ms. Grace described the trail as “The tourism product of the century.”

Testing Tourism Products

Queen Elizabeth National Park Test Tour

As part of market validation activities for communities that have participated in and completed STAR/UCOTA trainings, and in order to provide these communities with positive reinforcement about participating in the tourism industry, USAID-STAR and its *Pearls of Uganda* program organized a “Queen Elizabeth National Park Test Tour” to Western Uganda. This tour helped to show the private sector that community engagement as part of wildlife viewing in Uganda is welcomed by tourists as a unique experience. It also helped the communities test their product offer and gather feedback from their clients.

The objectives of this tour were:

1. To provide communities with practice in their business operations, guiding, providing tourism and hospitality services, and writing receipts to help prepare them for the tourist high season
2. To encourage communities to keep up the good work by showing them they can generate income from enthusiastic tourists
3. To provide communities with feedback from actual visitors
4. To show tour companies that their visitors can stay longer in and around national parks by including community tourism experiences in their packages
5. To demonstrate market interest in these products (through visitor feedback and interest)

“The trip was fantastic. I feel so lucky to have taken advantage of this one-time opportunity! What you guys are doing is really making a difference and it was great to be a part of that.”

Brittany Barnes - Test Tour Participant

Itinerary items included the village and forest walks, sleeping at the Ruboni Community Camp, a dance performance and craft workshop with the Kikorongo Community Women Group, and a tour of the Katwe Salt Lake with KATIC. The participants (who paid for the tour but understood it was organized as a test of the products) were given forms to complete after each activity in which they were asked to evaluate the activity or accommodation. Based on the results of the questionnaires, USAID-STAR

worked with the CTEs to discuss the feedback from clients and enact improvements where applicable. Overall the participants on the tour thought that the products were ‘excellent’ and ready to sell to the wider tourism market.

For Youth Development – Agricultural Tour for Conservation

For Youth Development (FYDe) is located near Katara Lodge in Queen Elizabeth National Park. The group has been working on this product for the past year and has been an active participant in all of the USAID-STAR/UCOTA Community Tourism Enterprise Development Trainings. The community invited the program to test their product and so a small group of foreign tourists were mobilized to participate in the test trip. The product included ethno-botanical interpretation, especially identification and use of plants for medicinal purposes. FYDe has been successful in working with the park authorities to allow

them to place beehives on the border of the park and elephant trenches that help protect the community's crops which are also part of the tour.



The activity of the bee hives is hoped to have a three-fold effect on the group: expose visitors (tourists) to the conservation effort and gain revenue from their tour fee, protect the farmers' crops from elephants which are common raiders, and provide alternative income and savings for the members through selling honey. FYDe has been working closely with its members who buy into the organization by purchasing one beehive. This entitles them to one share in the groups' profits,

including the honey and tourism activity. Based on this test, the group enjoyed the landscape views from the walk, learned about the communities farming practices, and experienced down-to-earth interaction with the local people. They found the guide very capable.

Domestic Tourism Promotion

Easter Road Trip

In partnership with the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), Coca-Cola (for the Road Trip in 2011) and the radio station Power FM, USAID-STAR helped to promote domestic tourism to the National Park system in an effort to increase park revenues (leading to more effective park management) and awareness of the conservation value of protected areas within Uganda. One of the main efforts in this campaign was the implementation of two 'Easter Road Trips,' one in 2010 and another in 2011. This was a perfect demonstration of how USAID-STAR responded to the stakeholders wishes in Jinja at the WSR to improve media involvement in the sector.



For each event a visit to the national parks in the Albertine Rift over the Easter weekend was preceded by a six-week radio campaign on Power FM. The radio campaign included airing of jingles and conservation awareness announcements to engage Ugandans in learning about the country's national parks. The radio ran a contest with questions about the parks and animals and listeners who provided the correct answers were eligible to win a place on the trip, fully sponsored by UWA. People also had the opportunity to pay for seats on the trip. The theme of the campaign was "Visit a National Park, Take a Trip Back Home." During the road trips Power FM did live updates from the National Parks as a way of engaging the listening public and raising awareness among Ugandans. In 2010, ten winners and twenty self-sponsored (paying) participants took the 'Easter Road Trip;' in 2011 there were twelve winners and a total of forty-two paying participants. The trips were extremely well received

and there was significant interest and participation from the broader listenership of the radio station.

According to UWA Executive Director, there has been an increase of 23% in the number of Ugandans visiting Queen Elizabeth National Park (the target of the campaign) since the first event. The road trip received extensive media coverage through print and electronic media, which helped increase awareness of domestic tourism opportunities among Ugandans. The trip highlighted for local residents the affordability of visiting the parks and the opportunity to appreciate their home's natural beauty. The participants of the road trip acted as wildlife ambassadors, sharing experiences on live talk shows on Power FM. Following the trips, stories were published in prominent newspapers, including New Vision, Daily Monitor, The Observer and the Red Pepper. Stories also aired on Nation TV (NTV), Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC), Ddembe FM and Power FM.

Sustainable Tourism Promotion song

USAID- STAR, in partnership with national singer/artist Aziz Azion, his producer Westend Entertainment, and the Mwamba Children Choir (www.mwambachildrenchoir.com), produced a music song and video aimed at increasing awareness for both local and international visitors about the National Parks of Uganda. The goal was to increase knowledge and support for conservation and boost visitation to the parks. The tourism song attracted local attention (through Aziz Azion's local following) and is expected to attract international exposure in the USA where the Mwamba Children's choir will be touring and performing in six states for six months starting in October 2011. The song will be part of the choir's performance (copies of the music video will be part of promotional packages distributed to the audience during their performances).

The production of the song was also supported by Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and private sector stakeholders including Mweya Safari Lodge, Kyambura Game Lodge, Great Lakes Safaris, and Kikorongo Women's Group. Their contribution amounted to over \$10,000. The song '*Oh Uganda*,' was officially released on the July 15, 2011. The song was distributed to all radio and television stations in Uganda. Due to its quality and content, it was accepted as a playlist on most of the local radios and television stations. Since its release, it has been shown on popular local television networks at least once every day following its launch (Bukedde Televison, Wavamunno Broadcasting Services Television (WBS TV), Nation Television (NTV), Record Television, NBS Television, and Star Television). The video was also submitted to Channel O, MTV Base, and Trace Tropical TV for the international audience. The music video can be viewed on Youtube.com. Within a month of its release, the music video was viewed by over 1,500 people.

4. INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

Results:

- *UCOTA community tourism training program that can be offered as a service to other clients, supporting the organizations' revenue stream.*
- *Technical support and capacity building provided for Ministry of Tourism, UWA, UTB, UCOTA, Nature Uganda, Wildlife Clubs of Uganda, and Uganda Hotel Owners Association.*
- *Friend-a-Gorilla campaign that generated over \$2,000,000 in support to UWA and increased positive coverage of Uganda and its wildlife*
- *Leverages \$4,016,111 in support to USAID-STAR outcomes*
- *Created the 'Snapshot Safari' board game in support of environmental education to reach over 100,000 children and generate a sustainable revenue stream for Wildlife Clubs of Uganda*

Strong institutions are a vital component of the overall success of the USAID-STAR program and longevity of its goals and outcomes. It is these partners that ultimately drive the sector forward. The focus of USAID-STAR institutional capacity building interventions was to enhance the way key organizations operate and assist them, at their request, with governance issues, networking, relationship building and technical capacities. USAID-STAR supported and strengthened partners including UCOTA, Nature Uganda, Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry (MTTI), Friends of the Parks – Destination Stewardship Committees, Uganda Tourism Board (UTB), Uganda Hotel Owners Association

(UHOA), and Wildlife Clubs of Uganda (WCU) in their efforts to promote tourism and conservation in the Albertine Rift. Improving stakeholder engagement in the process of building more viable institutions was called for as a common goal in Jinja at the start of the program. Therefore, USAID-STAR developed activities to respond to this call.

Uganda Community Tourism Association (UCOTA)

UCOTA is USAID-STAR's primary partner for providing support to CTEs in the Albertine Rift. As a membership-based organization to support community tourism in Uganda, UCOTA maintains a large network of CTEs with which it has established good relationships. UCOTA has been in existence since 1998 and has developed into a fairly stable yet small organization. In early 2010 USAID-STAR worked with UCOTA to develop and deliver community awareness activities and guide training programs at multiple sites in the Albertine Rift. This allowed USAID-STAR to observe the strength of UCOTA's network and the good relationship that UCOTA had with all of its member communities.

UCOTA's staff was trained as specialized trainers in a comprehensive 5-module 'Community Tourism Enterprise Development Training Program' and successfully implemented three courses in each module to build their skills.

UCOTA is now being requested by NGOs and agencies to conduct this training for other communities in the country, building their capacity to service their members and generate sustainable revenue streams for the organization.

UCOTA's training activities were the strongest of all organizations tested by USAID-STAR. Nevertheless, there was still much room for improvement in terms of preparation, logistics,

materials, module content, and pedagogical techniques. USAID-STAR staff attended and assisted in trainings, providing feedback and conducting informal evaluations. Examples of new training activities and content were presented during trainings so that UCOTA could practice new techniques. UCOTA asked for support in institutionalizing more systematic methods for supporting their member CTEs. Therefore USAID-STAR worked with UCOTA to develop and deliver the community tourism enterprise development program (mentioned previously in this report) which included developing and institutionalizing a suite of trainings, technical assistance, marketing and sales strategies.

At UCOTA's request, USAID-STAR also provided assistance in refining and updating its business plan, which included helping the organization prioritize its activities and prepare a financial plan with financial projections. The revised business plan served as a guide for USAID-STAR's continued capacity building efforts with UCOTA. One of the most impactful changes was brought about by UCOTA moving its offices to the same building of the USAID-STAR offices. This has allowed the UCOTA team to have more access to USAID-STAR Tourism, Training and Marketing Specialists and the Communications Specialists. The proximity has helped UCOTA make use of improved connectivity and communication technology to enhance organizational capacity. This move has resulted in closer collaboration between the two teams with more efficient and in-depth accomplishments across USAID-STAR's and UCOTA's shared objectives.

In addition, USAID-STAR worked extensively on developing UCOTA's capacity to run the *Pearls of Uganda* program. In support of building UCOTA's marketing capacity and strategy, USAID-STAR worked with UCOTA to create marketing materials, particularly in preparation for the Karibu Trade Fair in Arusha, Tanzania at the end of May 2011. Marketing collateral included:

- Pearls of Uganda Website
- A one-page biography for Helen Lubowa, Executive Director
- A one-page biography for Felex Kamalha, Field Officer.
- A five-minute consumer video
- A press release introducing the international press to the Pearls of Uganda
- A one-pager about community based tourism
- A one-pager about UCOTA
- UCOTA Folder design
- UCOTA Banner design
- UCOTA Business card design

As part of the effort to solidify and promote membership benefits for UCOTA, the team began developing membership collateral, including:

- A new member welcome letter
- A one pager about membership benefits
- A membership recruitment brochure

The team also created a comprehensive survey for UCOTA members, which was administered to individuals working with CTEs between April 20 and May 27, 2011. The goal of this survey was to understand the needs of CTEs so that UCOTA could better understand and serve the needs of its members. Findings included:

- Respondents listed the telephone as the most preferred method of communication, meaning that UCOTA should continue to contact communities primarily via telephone rather than e-mail, even though it is more expensive.
- Almost all (93%) of respondents wanted more communication from UCOTA, while 7% thought the current amount of communication was “just right.”
- In a follow-up question, 56.6% of respondents wanted monthly correspondence, and 26.7% wanted weekly correspondence.
- The most popular tourism products that CTEs offered were handicrafts, cultural performances, dance, drama, and music (83.3%), followed by guided walks, tours, and trails (76.2%). Only 35.7% of CTEs offer accommodation.
- When communities make money, it is spent on reinvestment, community development, site maintenance, and salaries and wages. Community members are the general beneficiaries.
- Nearly 58% of CTEs indicated that they distribute profits annually. 21% distribute profits monthly.
- Almost all CTEs (89.2%) use a savings account, and 91.9% of the CTEs have a bank account. Few CTEs take out bank loans; of the three CTEs that had the ability to access loans from a bank, one took out 500,000 UGX (about \$200) at a time, one took out between 3-5 million UGX (about \$1,200) at a time, and the last took out 5 million UGX (about \$2,000) at a time.
- In accordance with UCOTA’s role of providing support, 95.2% of CTEs interviewed require additional funding to remain in operation – this funding comes from donations, grants, and borrowed money.
- CBOs most wish to receive funding for marketing and promotional materials, followed closely by the construction of infrastructure needs. The third-ranked answer was “purchasing equipment, furniture, administrative items.”
- 42 (93.3% of) of respondents indicated that they had received training from UCOTA in the past, mostly for community tourism enterprise concepts – the initiative undertaken with USAID-STAR – and handicrafts.
- Almost all (97.8%) CTEs indicated that staff has had training in conservation.
- When asked what kind of help they would like to receive from UCOTA, the top two answers by far were marketing and funding/fundraising. Again, UCOTA can create training initiatives in these two areas to both create value for UCOTA membership as well as helping CTEs become more financially sustainable.

- When asked how much they would pay for the services listed in the previous question, respondents gave varying answers, from 1,000 UGX per person, to 2 million UGX. Other answers included 50,000 UGX per month or 500,000 UGX annually, “whatever the fee was,” “food and venue,” or “a percentage in kind.” For those organizations that were not willing to pay, their reasons were generally that they did not have the money.
- In particular, CTEs stated that they would be most willing to pay for marketing assistance, followed by being featured on the UCOTA website.
- When asked how the UCOTA membership has benefited the CTEs, the top ranking answer was capacity building followed by marketing, networking, and advocacy.
- When asked what they would like to see UCOTA do more of in the future, respondents replied: capacity building, marketing, and funding.

Through the results of the survey, the areas in which UCOTA could improve, build its institutional capacity, and cater to its members’ needs, became evident. For instance, understanding that members are willing to pay for certain services indicated an avenue for potential revenue for UCOTA. By asking why individual CTEs were not yet members of UCOTA, the survey results showed the most cited reason as being unfamiliar with the organization, its benefits, and the membership application process. Moving forward, UCOTA has committed itself to review the issues addressed in the survey and improve the functioning of the organization by considering CTEs responses to the questions. USAID-STAR believes that by building membership, UCOTA can work towards becoming a more financially sustainable organization.

As part of the final training module for USAID-STAR and UCOTA’s Community Tourism Enterprise Development Training Program, the Executive Director of UCOTA made a presentation about the organization and benefits it brings to members in order to begin a membership drive. Over 40 organizations signed up for membership that day and many institutional stakeholders also asked if there was a way they could become non-community members of UCOTA (supporting members).

UCOTA a Finalist in Africa Investor Awards

Through USAID-STAR support to UCOTA, the organization was named as a finalist at the Africa Investor Awards in 2011 in the Best Initiative in Facilitating SME Tourism Investment category. Africa Investor (www.africa-investor.com) is a specialist investment communications firm

advising governments, international organizations and businesses on communication strategies for capital market and foreign direct investments in Africa. Africa investor publishes Africa Investor Magazine, the leading international newsstand magazine for Africa’s investment decision makers. It also hosts the Africa Investor Index Series Summit & Awards which will be held in September 2011.



Nature Uganda



USAID-STAR worked with Nature Uganda (NU) in support of bird tourism and conservation in the Albertine Rift. USAID-STAR supported NU to deliver two bird guide trainings as well as support for Big Birding Day, which promoted information dissemination about the birds of Uganda within Uganda. In support of NU, USAID-STAR provided trainers with new tools to enhance their training program including lesson plans, background content, teaching strategies and evaluation tools.

Big Birding Day 2010

On October 14, 2010, USAID-STAR assisted Nature Uganda and the Uganda Wildlife Authority with the launch of 'Big Birding Day' at the Uganda Museum. The event was designed to build awareness about birds and birding in Uganda. The Big Birding Day features a bird watching race, an innovation to raise awareness about birds in Uganda and promote birding as an important tourism product. Over a 24-hour period, 50 teams of participants, covering 38 sites in all regions of Uganda, recorded a total of 655 different species of birds. The sites included all of the National Parks, Wildlife reserves, Important Bird Areas, Ramsar sites, and Forest reserves.



The teams comprised of at least 2 people (lead birder and a recorder) who had good knowledge of birding and many others who joined in with the count. Several groups numbered over 30 participants. Each group was equipped with at least one pair of binoculars, a guidebook, and a notebook. The teams recorded all the birds seen and heard throughout the 24-hour period. The team leader then submitted the results to the Nature Uganda tally centre and the final count was presented at a Big Birding Day event on Sunday October 16th.

Among the birders was the USAID SO7 Team (represented by Sudi Bamulesewa, Daniela Tedesco and Robert Senkungu), the French Ambassador to Uganda, Commissioner of Wildlife from Ministry of Tourism,

Executive Director Uganda Tourism Board, several directors from UWA, international tourists, Uganda Wildlife Clubs from four primary schools, local celebrities, and others.

Big Birding Day was supported by conservation and private sector organizations including National Forest Authority, Jane Goodall Institute, Pride Microfinance, SMS Media, Rwenzori Bottling Company Limited, Daily Monitor, Nile Gold, Katomi Kingdom Resort and office of the Vice President of Uganda. The Ceremony received coverage from prominent media houses including Daily Monitor, Nation Television (NTV Uganda), Uganda Broadcasting Corporation Television (UBC TV), Red Pepper, KFM Radio and New Vision. The goal of the event was to raise awareness about and support for conservation of bird habitat in Uganda and the impact bird tourism can have for communities and protected areas.

Uganda Wildlife Authority

USAID-STAR supported the institutional strengthening of UWA through communication and public relations activities with UWA staff as well as technical support and capacity building. This included working with UWA staff to implement effective communications strategies, partnership development, networking, and press relations for the launch of the Friend-a-Gorilla campaign. The program also supported UWA activities in the design of visitor centers for parks, facilitation of an educational trip for UWA staff to Rwanda to inspect a canopy walkway developed in one of the parks, and inspection of park infrastructure and operations. UWA staff, specifically the community and tourism wardens also participated in training programs at the park level.

Friend-a-Gorilla

The Friend-a-Gorilla campaign was an UWA-led initiative to bring greater awareness and support to gorilla and wildlife conservation in Uganda. USAID-STAR started in August 2009 and in one of the first meetings with UWA representatives, they requested that USAID-STAR help with the launch of this program, planned for one month later (September 2009). Seeing the opportunity to support UWA and build relationships within the tourism sector in Uganda, USAID-STAR agreed to help. The greatest need of UWA was to bring greater awareness and coverage of the campaign. Within a month, USAID-STAR had leveraged its contacts to rally partners behind the campaign, including the recruitment of three Hollywood celebrities to help launch the event. USAID-STAR supported outreach to boost the local and international coverage of the campaign and garnered support and sponsorship from the Ugandan and international private sector for the campaign. USAID-STAR acted quickly on the opportunity to help UWA, gaining the program important recognition as a results and action oriented project among partners in the country.

USAID-STAR coordinated the involvement of international celebrities to help raise awareness of the campaign to support wildlife conservation. The celebrities visited Uganda one week after riots erupted, leaving more than 15 people dead in the streets of Kampala. The presence of the celebrities and the press coverage that followed them helped the country change its image in the international media. The Minister of Tourism, Trade, and Industry announced in a meeting with USAID-STAR staff that the press coverage



resulting from the celebrity visit was the "best international coverage ever for the country." Several tour operators reported a considerable spike in sales and inquiries from new markets due to the campaign. The campaign generated over \$2,000,000 in free international media coverage on channels such as CNN, BBC, Sky News, USA Today, New York Times, and others as well as over \$500,000 in in-kind donations from private sector and individual supporters. Thousands of people around the world have become friends with gorillas through Facebook.

At the request of the Minister of Tourism, Trade, and Industry and the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), the USAID-STAR program—along with US celebrities and partners such as Sony Entertainment Studios—organized a US launch of the Friend-a-Gorilla campaign. The launch, a red carpet event in Los Angeles, attracted 200 celebrities, directors, and other invitees and generated considerable interest and media coverage for Uganda, wildlife conservation, and the Friend-a-Gorilla campaign. Following the red carpet event, the USAID-STAR program sponsored a tour operator and travel agent luncheon on December 8th hosted by the Minister of Tourism, Trade, and Industry for Uganda, the Chairman of the Uganda Tourism Board, and the head of marketing for the Uganda Wildlife Authority. The Uganda delegation presented Uganda and its tourism attractions to members of the travel trade from the region.



Following the red carpet event, the USAID-STAR program sponsored a tour operator and travel agent luncheon on December 8th hosted by the Minister of Tourism, Trade, and Industry for Uganda, the Chairman of the Uganda Tourism Board, and the head of marketing for the Uganda Wildlife Authority. The Uganda delegation presented Uganda and its tourism attractions to members of the travel trade from the region.

In addition, USAID-STAR, as a partner of the Friend-a-Gorilla program, facilitated efforts between Mojo Marketing, Key Clubs, and the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), to collect educational information from local partners and develop educational materials about Uganda and its wildlife. Under this program, USAID-STAR worked with Mojo Marketing on a fundraising and conservation education program endorsed and promoted by Simon Curtis (of the television show *Spectacular* and *Hannah Montana*) and adopted by Key Clubs in the US.

Key Clubs—the largest student-run leadership and philanthropy program in schools throughout the United States created a website (www.kcgorillas.com/) specifically for the campaign with the goal to inform children in the US about Uganda and gorilla conservation and to raise funds for conservation.

Building on the success of Friend-a-Gorilla, USAID-STAR supported an international twinning activity, started by one of the Hollywood celebrities, Kristy Wu (of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*), and the Wildlife Clubs of Uganda. As a result, a strong partnership between Iryaruvumba Primary School in Kisoro District, and the Mirman School in Los Angeles, California developed. In May 2010, the members of the Wildlife Club of Uganda at

Iryaruvumba received the first batch of letters from Mirman School and responded with their own letters. In the letters, the children gave insight into their daily lives and pledged to do everything in their ability to promote the cooperation and the exchange of knowledge. The goal was for these young people to learn more from each other in the areas of gorilla conservation, tourism, and more.



Valentine's Day 2011 was celebrated at the Mirman School in the interest of gorilla conservation. On Valentine's Day, the teachers from two classes of children came up with an idea to set up Friend-A-Gorilla Adoption Centers in their classrooms. The children each raised their own money by doing various chores, which went to adopt a gorilla on the website under the names of two teachers in the school. The teachers also made up certificates of adoption (which are pictured

here). Each kid received a certificate upon adopting his/her gorilla on the website as well as a stuffed gorilla, and each child memorized an oath to protect and care for his/her gorilla in Uganda. The children learned about Uganda and the endangered mountain gorillas.

A report by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was published in 2010 to give insights on how communication and marketing could be used in sustainable tourism to motivate tourists' behavior changes to benefit the environment and the communities in which tourism activities are taking place. The report included a case study on the USAID-STAR program, where the Friend-a-Gorilla program is highlighted as a concrete example of the efficiency of social marketing principles in awareness and behavior change campaigns. The promotional campaign is cited as a great example of how social media can produce successful communication campaigns on a global scale that can benefit a destination's communities and biodiversity. See UNEP report at this link:

<http://dl.dropbox.com/u/17278121/MarketingandCommunicationReport.pdf>

Friends of the Parks

USAID-STAR, in partnership with UWA and local partners, initiated the establishment of destination level committees for sharing information, ideas and resources in Bwindi and Mgahinga, through the "Bwindi Stakeholders Forum," and in Queen Elizabeth National Park through the "Friends of Queen Elizabeth National Park" forum. These forums helped strengthen communication and collaboration between government, private sector, civil society and communities for tourism development and biodiversity conservation.

USAID-STAR directly supported stakeholder requests to foster these forums and strengthen collaboration between stakeholders in the destinations. Support was given to Bwindi, Mgahinga, and Queen Elizabeth National Parks to pilot these interventions given the presence of strong NGOs and private sector players, firm commitment from local

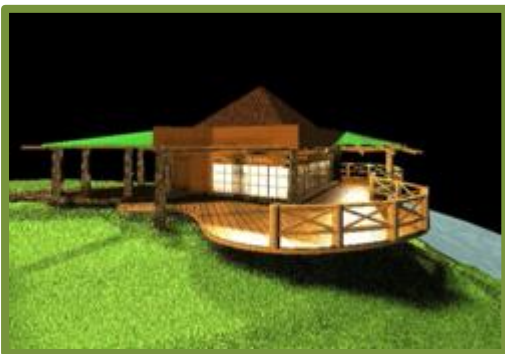
governments, prevalence of tourism, and a large need for the stakeholders to better coordinate their activities.

As part of the “Friends-of-the-Park” initiative, USAID-STAR supported UWA to organize Bwindi and Mgahinga Gorilla Conservation stakeholder’s forum under the theme: enhancing community benefits from gorilla tourism. The Forum was attended by 59 people representing private sector (tour operators and lodges), NGOs, research institutions, community tourism groups, local governments (district and sub-county), central government agencies, and the media. Participants at the forum underscored the importance of increasing community benefits from gorilla tourism and the need to strengthen community-private sector partnerships and linkages.

In Queen Elizabeth National Park, USAID-STAR supported development of a framework for strengthening stakeholder communication and engagement through the ‘Friends-of-Queen Elizabeth National Park’ Forum. The first meeting (hosted by the manager of Mweya Lodge) generated excitement and interest within the private sector and other stakeholders who later called for a formal framework to contribute towards sustainable management of the park.

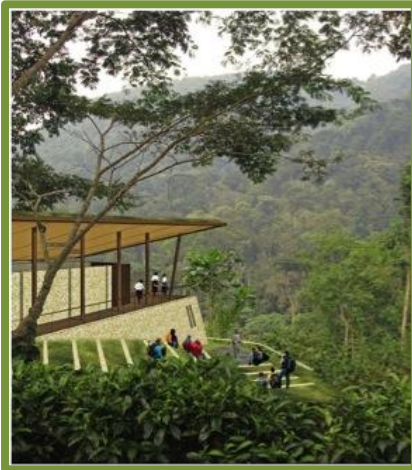
In Rwenzori Mountains National Park, USAID-STAR identified key stakeholders with interest in championing a similar program. Stakeholders included Rwenzori Trekking Safaris, Geologies, Ecotrust and approximately 20 community tourism groups. USAID-STAR facilitated this group to come together to discuss issues focused around the National Park and how, as a group, they could support activities in and around the park. This group formed the ‘Rwenzori Gateway Committee’ chaired by the Kasese District Government, which oversaw the management agreement for the new Rwenzori Visitor Information Center as well as other tourism development and management in the region.

Rwenzori Visitor Information Center



ECOTRUST and USAID-STAR, in collaboration with UWA, Ruboni community and Geolodges completed the construction of the Rwenzori Visitor Information Center (VIC). The facility, which was funded by USAID-STAR with matching funds from ECOTRUST and Geolodges, is located on ECOTURST land, held in perpetuity as a buffer between the Rwenzori Mountains National Park and the Ruboni community. Through the leadership of the US-Forest Service (USFS), USAID-STAR also completed designs and plans for three forest exploration trails covering 2.4 km, also on the ECOTRUST land. USAID-STAR also undertook an assessment of interpretive and signage requirements for the VIC and the forest exploration trail.

Bwindi Impenetrable National Park Visitor Center



In 2010, USAID-STAR, with leadership from the USFS and at the request of UWA, supported the development of architectural concepts and an interpretive plan for the Bwindi Visitor Center in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, a World Heritage site, and globally recognized home to roughly half the global population of mountain gorillas. The Park does not have a visitor and interpretive center that tells its story of and helps to create a link with residents and visitors. The conceptual designs and interpretive plan will be used by UWA to raise funds for the development of the center.

The Visitor Information Center will be the gateway into the park, and will be made up of a welcome center, gift shop/café, exhibition center, amphitheater, forest overlooks, educational gardens, and community event space. The buildings are light, open, site sensitive structures that are clustered to form comfortable indoor and outdoor spaces connected to the surrounding park. The location of the center is on UWA land next to the park where the gorilla trekking briefings take place (see Annex 10 for the full report).

Mgahinga Volcano Trail System and Golden Monkey Tracking

The need and potential for diversifying tourism products in MGNP was identified during the initial assessment phase of USAID-STAR. The park has a high population density living near its' borders and high expectations for community revenue from gorilla tourism. However the one habituated gorilla group in the park also moves to Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, making it an unreliable tourism attraction. To enhance and promote a more diverse tourism offering for the park, USAID-STAR focused on launching and promoting The Batwa Cultural Trail. To support UWA and identify product improvement and diversification needs, USAID-STAR also carried out an assessment of other tourism products that could increase tourism interest and visitation to the destination.



The assessment focused on two products that were thought, in the initial assessment, to have potential—volcano hiking and golden monkey tracking (See Annex 11). The report found that with some small investments in infrastructure to improve the ladders on the volcano trails the products were viable and operational. In addition to these small infrastructure needs, marketing and

promotion of the destination was the greatest need to help to generate greater visitation to the park. The report recommended implementation of a promotional program for the park and the tourism experiences it offers.

Connecting Culture, Conservation, & Tourism in the Rwenzori Mountains

In partnership with Uganda Wildlife Authority, the Rwenzori Mountaineering Services (a community owned tourism company), Rwenzori Trekking Services, Flora and Fauna International, the Kingdom of Rwenzururu and others, USAID-STAR facilitated and participated in the Rwenzori Mountains Challenge dubbed “Trip to the Moon.” The trip consisted of a hike led by the King of Rwenzururu with the theme: *Connecting Culture, Conservation and Tourism in Rwenzori Mountains*. The King’s hike to the Rwenzori Mountains was a very successful campaign in raising awareness about the value of the mountain range, the hiking activities, the challenges faced by Uganda Wildlife Authority in managing the impact of climate change on the mountain ecosystems, and the Park’s link to the cultures of the people of Rwenzururu Kingdom.



The hike was flagged-off at a ceremony by the Uganda Tourism State Minister, Mr. Separpoi Rukundo, held at the headquarters of Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) in Kampala on January 17, 2011. The hike coincided with traditional activities and a royal trekking delegation organized by the Rwenzururu Kingdom. At the reception of the hikers hosted by the King at his palace, the King launched an annual Royal hike every January 18 as part

of promoting culture, conservation and tourism on the Rwenzori Mountains. This was a historic event for the Uganda Wildlife Authority, the Rwenzururu Kingdom and the tourism sector. It attracted a diverse group of constituents, all celebrating the park.

In partnership with Fauna and Flora International, USAID-STAR facilitated the first ever MoU signing between UWA and the community to access cultural sites in a protected area. The signing ceremony, which was presided over by the King of Rwenzururu Kingdom, Omusinga Wesley Mumbere, was a landmark in strengthening the linkage between conservation, culture and people in the Rwenzori Mountains National Park. This Memorandum of Understanding defines roles and responsibilities of the Kingdom to allow access to the cultural sites within the park, especially the burial site of the first king of Rwenzururu Kingdom. The signing also set the stage for the Kingdom to develop cultural tourism for the purpose of increasing conservation among the Rwenzururu people and to improve their livelihoods through eco-tourism development.

During this event the Peace Corp Volunteer, Jennifer Krauser, who was working with USAID-STAR, interviewed some of the people attending the function on what the event meant to them and prepared a YouTube video which can be viewed at the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RxYt2YK97GQ>.

Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development



In addition to strengthening National Park institutions, USAID-STAR partnered with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to support the first Kigezi regional conference in Kabale in August 2010. This conference was in response to stakeholder goals to improve governance in tourism related issues. This region covers the districts of Kabale, Rukungiri, and Kanungu in southern Uganda. The region is an important conservation and tourism region,

encompassing the two gorilla parks, parts of Queen Elizabeth National Park, and other protected areas. It is home to 11% of the global bird diversity, hosts 19% of Africa's amphibian species, 14% of the reptile species, and more than 170 rare and endemic species of butterflies.

The conference brought together private sector, government, non-government organizations and development partners in the tourism industry, and aimed to strengthen cooperation among stakeholders to make Kigezi region a competitive destination with increased tourism benefits to the wider community. An action plan was drawn up and a steering committee for implementation established. USAID-STAR worked with the three districts that make up this region and the central government to improve coordination and joint action to support parks, tourism, and greater collaboration.

Uganda's Ministry of Finance and Planning for Economic Development (MOFPED) is charged with developing, maintaining, and monitoring Uganda's focus on competitiveness through the framework provided by the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) and in line with the National Development Plan (NDP). Within this plan, tourism is identified as a primary growth sector that requires special attention and support and the Ministry requested the support of USAID-STAR on the following two activities, which were defined as needing action at the Kigezi regional conference.

Tourism Priority Roads

Follow-up meetings were held with Ministry of Finance and other stakeholders of the Kigezi regional conference to address the issues raised at the conference, especially the road network infrastructure and improvement of priority tourism roads. USAID-STAR was appointed to the Budget Advisory Committee for the Competitiveness and Investment Sector of the Ministry of Finance. USAID-STAR accepted, knowing that its leadership on this committee would help to further the tourism stakeholder goal of improving infrastructure for sustainable tourism development. USAID-STAR spearheaded preparation of the tourism priority roads paper, which was discussed and later adopted by the National budget desk of the Ministry of Finance.

The paper, developed through consultation with key tourism stakeholders in government and other entities, prioritized six road networks in the country that were key to enhancing tourism

flows and visitation to and within Uganda. The paper conducted a brief cost/benefit analysis, highlighting the cost of road improvements and the potential increase in tourism, park revenues, and government revenues due to these improvements in infrastructure (see Annex 12 for full report).

Road Side Rest Stop Assessment

MOFPED also requested that USAID-STAR conduct an assessment and make recommendations for development of two to three pilot road side rest stops on major tourism routes throughout Uganda. These stops would provide relevant tourism information, such as overviews of the parks and conservation messages, suggestions on places to travel, travel times, toilet facilities, and, potentially, concessions (food, crafts, etc.).

The field assessment and stakeholder interviews led to the development of a concept paper identifying priority sites for the stop-overs and recommendations to the Ministry for their development. Initial meetings with tour operators and driver guides resulted in information that clean and comfortable toilet stops are one of the most important infrastructure components missing from Uganda's tourism offerings (See Annex 13).

Uganda Tourism Board

In partnership with the Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry and the Uganda Wildlife Authority, USAID-STAR supported UTB to launch a domestic tourism campaign as a climax to a series of domestic tourism promotion activities that included a media facilitation trip, an Easter road trip (see Sales and Marketing section), a tourism and conservation song by a well known local artist, and other activities. In addition, USAID-STAR worked with UTB on writing presentations and promotional information that UTB presented at various conferences and tourism trade fairs. USAID-STAR contributed to the development and printing of several promotional materials, such as the 'Destination Uganda 2011/12' publication, Birding Uganda publication, and the Birding Uganda website.

Strategic Planning for Uganda Hotel Owners Association (UHOA)

At the request of UHOA, USAID-STAR assisted in the development of a three-year strategic plan. USAID-STAR met with the organization's board and members, many of whom are major players in tourism in Uganda, to define and review UHOA's previous plan and develop a new strategy and direction for the organization. In addition to supporting one of the stronger tourism associations in Uganda and helping it define its direction in the coming years, USAID-STAR aimed to strengthen the relationship with hotel owners and encourage greater support and participation from its members in community and conservation initiatives (See Annex 14).

Wildlife Clubs of Uganda

In an effort to enlist future conservationists, USAID-STAR, in partnership with Wildlife Clubs of Uganda (WCU) and the United States Peace Corps, designed and developed the Uganda Snapshot Safari board game and an educational program centered around the game. This program introduces facts about animals, birds, local communities, and Queen Elizabeth National Park (QENP) and is intended for 10-12 year old children, although all ages have fun

playing it. The game is accompanied by eleven (11) children's books that provide more information about the park, its wildlife and neighboring communities in short children's stories. All of the materials were developed by local artists and produced in Uganda.

To finalize its development, the game was pre-tested at a one day workshop in Kasese to present Uganda Snapshot Safari^R to 95 participants: students, teachers, Peace Corps volunteers and WCU representatives from over 41 schools around the Queen Elizabeth National Park and the Rwenzori Conservation Area. This activity allowed the USAID-STAR team to learn ways to improve the board game while training "ambassadors" to help with rollout. Participants agreed to teach this educational game to their WCU members and sister schools starting in August 2011. Pretest results showed an increase in knowledge about features of Queen Elizabeth National Park among the workshop participants by 57.2%. This result was achieved after playing the game for only one hour.



To revitalize the extensive network of Uganda Wildlife Clubs and help them maintain their time in the school curriculum, which was threatened due to a lack of materials for the club activation, WCU have agreed to distribute the game to 400 schools that border QENP and to train teachers in use of the game and its accompanying educational materials. Strategic activities planned to accompany the board game also include art competitions, writing contests, reading lessons, and drama events. By

combining non-formal education techniques with biodiversity conservation, USAID-STAR builds on the premise that "people tend to care about what they know."

Queen Elizabeth National Park/Rwenzori Mountains UWA Conservation Area Manager, Mr. Nelson Guma, stated that "Although the game was designed for children, it is fun and very educational for adults, too. It will be a great tool for training our rangers to be better wildlife educators." USAID-STAR supported WCU in printing over 1,000 copies of the game and children's books that will be distributed to schools by the UWA training facility in Katwe.



The non-formal educational campaign is expected to reach more than 100,000 children and adults with important conservation messages, a first step in changing their environmental behaviors.

In addition, 350 'commercial' copies of the game were developed for sale in lodges, visitor centers, and outlets in Kampala. The revenue from these commercial games will go to WCU to continue their conservation education efforts in schools around QENP.

5. TOURISM SECTOR INTEGRATION & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Results:

- *Collective understanding and commitment to 12 common goals within the tourism and conservation sector, building better collaboration between stakeholders at a retreat of 110 stakeholders in 2009*
- *Over 100% increase in media coverage of tourism and conservation issues between 2009 and 2010*
- *Improved information flow within the tourism and conservation sector through a USAID-STAR, UCOTA and UTB newsletter*
- *Partnership with Business Today to dedicate two issues per year to tourism and conservation, reaching major stakeholders in government and the private sector.*

A big part of keeping stakeholders engaged in their commitments to achieve common goals and to collaborate in building the sustainable tourism and conservation sector is to build their trust in each other, keep them engaged with each other, and maintain their focus on the issues that bind them. This calls for better information sharing and increased media involvement, two of the goals that were established by the 110 stakeholders in Jinja. Over its life, USAID-STAR facilitated strategic cross-sector meetings that helped tourism stakeholders stay focused on their efforts to build the sector and support conservation objectives.

Collaborative Actions in the Tourism Sector

To establish common goals within the sector and to help guide the programs implementation, USAID-STAR gathered 110 representatives of eleven different stakeholder groups to a strategic partnership building exercises to develop a road map of collaborative action for the future of tourism in Uganda. Stakeholder Groups included: National Government, Local Government, Private Sector, Training Institutions, Conservation Agencies, Non



Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Media, Opinion leaders, International friends, Hospitality Industry and Tour Operators. All groups overlooked any ongoing conflicts they had to determine what they agreed were the most important common goals and they then committed to collaborative actions through short and long-term work plans. By working across sectors, USAID-STAR helped stakeholders see

and understand the potential of sustainable tourism from a wider perspective, and engage everyone in a concerted system-driven effort to create impact at a larger scale.

The common ground that the stakeholders agreed to at the retreat was: Product Development, Improved Infrastructure, Environmental Conservation, Better Information Sharing, Shared vision, Improved Governance, Improve Standards and Training, Media Involvement, Marketing, Research, Stakeholder Engagement, Community Empowerment, Increased Funding. The Common Goals are listed in more detail in the USAID STAR Whole System in the Room (WSR) Retreat Final report (Annex 15).

Annex 16 provides examples of collaborative actions as a result of this initial gathering supported by USAID-STAR over the life of the project from September 2009 – July 2011.

Media Sensitization and Education

In an effort to further strengthen the working relationships between the wildlife and tourism sector and media practitioners, USAID-STAR consistently teamed up with the Uganda Wildlife Authority and private sector partners to facilitate media coverage of tourism and conservation events and issues, including awareness trips to Queen Elizabeth National Park, Mgahinga Gorilla National Park, Murchison Falls National Park, and other locations.



The objectives of these trips included (i) rally media support in providing space and airtime to tourism and conservation related issues; (ii) give media first-hand experiences of national parks so that they can appreciate and report better about conservation, parks, and tourism; (iii) explore with media the successes and challenges of wildlife conservation, and; (iv) to introduce media to the tourism activities. Participants in trips have included media houses such as The New

Vision, Daily Monitor, Red Pepper, Observer, East African, East African Business Week, NTV, UBC TV, WBS TV, Capital FM, KFM, Vision Voice, Radio One, Power FM, Sanyu FM, Radio Simba and Super FM.

A tourism media committee was established by leading media managers. The managers signed a declaration to use their skills and experience to promote the country's tourism image among Ugandans and the international community and build awareness about the parks and conservation issues.

Sustainable Tourism Media Awards

In partnership with the Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry (MTTI), Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), Uganda Tourism Board, Uganda Tourism Association (UTA), Media and Tourism Training Institutions, Association of Uganda Tour Operators (AUTO) and Uganda Hotel Owners Association (UHOA), USAID-STAR successfully organized the first ever Sustainable Tourism Media Awards for excellent reporting on sustainable tourism issues, and

hosted a gala dinner event at the Kampala Serena Hotel on the evening of September 26, 2010. The event was presided over by the Honorable Janet Mukwaya from the Prime Minister's Office and Honorable Serapio Rukundo, the Minister of State for Tourism. 174 people were in attendance representing media, private sector, and other community leaders.

The Sustainable Tourism Media Awards Program was among several collaborative actions that were agreed upon by sustainable tourism stakeholders at a collaborative work planning retreat organized by USAID-STAR in October 2009. The media representatives present at the retreat proposed that an annual media awards program be established to recognize journalists for excellence in coverage of tourism related issues.



A committee and panel of judges, with representatives from MTI, UWA, UHOA, UTA, AUTO, UTB, Fountain Publishers, Media/Tourism Training Institutions and USAID-STAR formulated the judging criteria and selected the best publications based on content (tourism and conservation messages), educational value, information quality, creativity, accuracy of research, newsworthiness, and other qualifications. They also oversaw the collection of prizes

from different private sector partners. Awards were offered in three categories: print, radio and television broadcast. Thirty journalists submitted seventy-seven articles for competition.

For each category, one grand-prize winner and two runners-up were awarded. Grand-prize winners were awarded 1,000,000 UGX plus other prizes that included international travel vouchers and many in-country travel and adventure opportunities, all donated by tourism private sector companies and conservation agencies. The two runners-up were awarded 500,000 UGX each plus in-country travel and restaurant vouchers. Several journalists went home with Honorable Mention awards, honoring frequency, in-depth research, popularity, and creative educational value. Media Houses were also recognized for their excellent coverage of tourism and conservation related issues.



The event was made possible with the generous support to the committee from United States Agency for International Development, TourGuide Publications, Procurement News and Metro Magazine, Emirates Airlines, Kampala Serena Hotel, Nile Breweries (Nile Gold), Century Bottling Company (Coca-Cola, DASANI), Wildlife Clubs of Uganda, Uganda Wildlife Authority, Chobe Safari

Lodge, Great Lakes Safaris Company. Masindi Hotel, Lake Kitandara Tours and Travel

LTD, Golf Course Hotel, Protea Hotel Kampala, Wild Places, Volcanoes Safaris, Iguana Club and Matooke Tours, Wild Frontiers, Rhino Fund Uganda, Red Chilli Hideaway LTD, Geolodges, AfriTours & Travel, Pearl of Africa Tours and Travel LTD, Nile Rivers Explorers, Adrift Adventures, MTN, Lotus Mexicana Restaurant and NYK, Ibamba Restaurant, Steers Restaurant, Uganda Wines and Spirits Distributors, UCHUMI Super Market, Nawab Authentic Indian Restaurant, Red Lantern Chinese Restaurant, ImageZ, Banana Boat, National Arts and Crafts of Uganda Association. The Sustainable Tourism Media Awards will be an annual event and was a great way for the public and private sector to show how important media is for the economic growth of the country. The committee was able to raise over \$30,000 in funding and sponsorship to make the gala awards ceremony a memorable event.

USAID-STAR conducted a second round of the Sustainable Tourism Media Awards in 2011 and held the award ceremony on September 16. The project generated more than \$35,000 in private sponsorship for the event, which culminated a year of media activities and awareness building.

Tourism Newsletters

USAID-STAR produced 5 newsletters (a total of 8,000 copies) at the national level in collaboration with UTB and UTA. These newsletters highlight sustainable tourism activities, reporting on all conservation and tourism stakeholder news. The aim of the national newsletter was to improve information sharing among all stakeholders in the conservation and sustainable tourism sector on a quarterly basis.

In addition, USAID-STAR assisted UCOTA in producing 5 issues of The Albertine Rift Community News, a quarterly newsletter that covered activities taking place in the Albertine Rift. By providing a forum for information exchange where all local organizations submitted articles about their activities, concerns, and objectives, USAID-STAR helped to support the strengthening of the sector and the growth of social capital around sustainable tourism issues. Over 8,000 copies were distributed to both tourism and non-tourism stakeholders, including Conservation Agencies, Conservation NGOs, Hospitality and Tour Operators, Private Sector, National Government, Media, Local Government and others. An electronic *Uganda Tourism News Flash* was also sent periodically to over 400 stakeholders in the tourism sector. The electronic publication was developed in response to several requests from tour operators and other stakeholders who were interested in receiving updates between quarterly distribution of the print newsletters. Feedback on the *Uganda Tourism News Flash* from stakeholders was very positive.

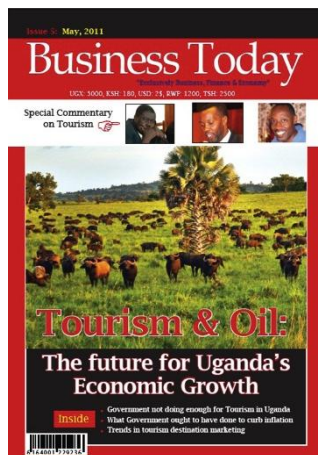


Media Clipping Service

The USAID-STAR print press clipping service program began in August 2009. USAID-STAR tracked articles written in the major newspapers in Uganda as a way of monitoring the

impact the project was having on the growth of tourism coverage. The existing records show that 3,103 stories were published in New Vision, Daily Monitor, East African, East African Business Week, Red Pepper, The Observer and Independent Magazine since the start of the program. One hundred and forty five (145) specifically talked about, or were a direct result of USAID-STAR interventions. One of the goals of USAID-STAR was to increase coverage, and therefore awareness about conservation and tourism issues in the country. In the first year, USAID-STAR tracked an increase in tourism and conservation coverage in the media, analyzing the coverage on a quarterly basis. Coverage of tourism and conservation increased by 100% from the first quarter to the last quarter of the period. As the graph below shows, coverage of tourism and conservation issues increased from 216 articles in the first quarter of the fiscal year (October-December 2009) to 433 articles in the last quarter (July-September 2010). Greater coverage of these issues helps to build awareness and support for tourism and conservation within Uganda.

Business Today Magazine



USAID-STAR formed a partnership with *Business Today Magazine*, a monthly magazine that exclusively covers business information, finance and economy. The magazine agreed to support the tourism industry by dedicating the May and September issues of every year to Ugandan Tourism and Conservation. It would also increase stories on the sectors in their other issues.

Oil and Tourism Stakeholder Forums

In the first year, USAID-STAR responded to the call of tourism stakeholders for Uganda to be a global model in how oil and tourism can coexist. At the request of the tourism and oil sectors, USAID-STAR participated in a working committee to improve information flow between oil and tourism stakeholders. USAID-STAR acted as the committee's facilitator and coordinator in a bid to improve information flow among oil and tourism stakeholders and support collaboration. The program organized several tourism stakeholder meetings that paved the way for three follow-up working group meetings, which culminated in a larger tourism stakeholder meeting.

In partnership with two oil companies - Heritage and Tullow, USAID-STAR facilitated a discussion forum chaired by the program COP. USAID-STAR was the secretariat of the seminar attended by over 45 representatives from private tour operators, oil industry, NGOs, Civil Society and government departments. The main objective of the meeting was to share information and to alleviate concerns between the oil companies, government agencies, and tourism stakeholders on the oil companies' on-going exploration activities in the Murchison

Conservation Area. The main concerns were 1) environmental footprints/impacts; 2) decrease in tourism revenue as a result of oil exploration; 3) social impact, and; 4) governance transparency.

“Partnership Approaches to Marketing Uganda Internationally”

In a continuing effort to improve coordination and collaboration in the tourism sector and enhance information flow, USAID-STAR hosted a tourism-marketing event on the March 17, 2011 themed “*Partnership Approaches to Marketing Uganda internationally.*” The event was held at the Metropole Hotel in Kampala and hosted over 100 participants from the private sector (including tour operators, travel agents and accommodation owners), media, government, NGOs, and other donors. William Byaruhanga, Chairman of the Uganda Tourism Board and Robert Senkungu of USAID Uganda made opening statements at the event.

The event aimed to highlight the importance of using collaborative marketing, media, and partnerships and was a direct response to the interests and concerns of the tourism sector in Uganda. From hotels to tour operators, safari guides and community tourism enterprises, the need to effectively reach and communicate with clients is vital and the tourism industry has been requesting support in this area for some time. Uganda is lagging behind its competitors in telling the story about its tourism attractions and building strategic partnerships to attract more tourism to Uganda and this event was intended to help move the sector towards a more strategic approach to tourism and marketing.

The goal of the event was to provide practical information about the use of marketing partnerships and media in promoting and selling travel to Uganda. The event hosted three panelists who presented on different tools and approaches for tourism marketing and how they could help Uganda. The panel included representatives from National Geographic Society, Solimar International, and AED.

6. GRANT PROGRAM

The small grants program cuts across all components of the USAID-STAR program, supporting the development of tourism experiences linked to conservation benefits. It complements the training and technical assistance provided by the USAID-STAR technical team, to fund products, events, and other program activities in line with the USAID-STAR objectives.

Through a USFS grant (with USAID funds) to ECOTRUST, USAID-STAR worked with ECOTRUST to implement and award seven grants to community tourism and conservation projects in the Albertine Rift. These include:

1. Construction of the Kikorongo Cultural Center for the Kikorongo Women's Group to provide them with a location to conduct their craft workshop, sell crafts, and perform cultural dances. The community is on the northern boarder of Queen Elizabeth National Park.
2. Improvement of the Katwe Information Center, including washrooms and a resting banda for KATIC in Katwe to enhance their services for bird watching and salt tours in Katwe and to encourage people to spend longer in the community.
3. Development of a butterfly farm and interpretive tours in Nyundo, with the Uganda Functional Literacy Resource Center bordering Bwindi Impenetrable National Park. The project will increase visitation to the community tourism enterprise and assist them in protection of 16km² of buffer-zone land next to the park.
4. Equipment for the Bulindi Eco-Café near Bodongo Forest with the Bulindi Biodiversity Conservation Project and Jane Goodall Institute. The project provides a source of venue for the local community and a stop over for tourists in the region.
5. Upgrading Ruboni Community Camp with the Ruboni Community Conservation and Development Program bordering Rwenzori Mountains National Park to enhance the tourism facilities and improve their sanitation system to protect the water supply in the community and park.
6. Construction of a 3D map at the Igongo Cultural Center to educate and direct travelers regarding the biodiversity and tourism attractions in the Albertine Rift Valley.
7. Improvement to the trail and bridge infrastructure on the Cultural trail to the burial site of the first king of the Rwenzururu in Rwenzori Mountains National Park with the Obusingo Bwa Rwenzururu. The project will enhance the trail infrastructure in the park and improve relations between the park and the local community, who will be able to access the cultural site.

ANNEXES

1. US Forest Service Trail Designs and Planning for Buniga Forest trail, Lake Munyanyange birdwatching trail and the Rwenzori Gateway Nyakalengijo forest exploration trails.
2. US Forest Service Interpretive Materials Report
3. The Training Needs Assessment Report of December 2009
4. The Training Strategy of January 2010
5. USAID-STAR's Training and Workforce Development Plan
6. Community tourism enterprise concepts, business plans, operations manuals, interpretive tour plans and marketing content
7. Community Tourism Enterprise Toolkit and Lesson Plans
8. Rapid Assessment of Birding Tourism Sector Needs in the Albertine Rift
9. Batwa Cultural Trail Marketing Packet
10. Bwindi Impenetrable National Park Visitor Center Architectural Concepts and Interpretive Plan
11. Mgahinga Volcano Trail System and Golden Monkey Tracking Assessment
12. Uganda Priority Tourism Roads
13. Uganda Tourism Roadside Stops
14. UHOA Strategic Plan
15. Whole System in the Room (WSR) Retreat Final Report
16. Collaborative Actions Chart of USAID-STAR Activities