

Echuya CFR project receives more funding



Picture showing Echuya forest edge.

NatureUganda (Birdlife partner in Uganda) in partnership with Dansk Ornitologisk Forening (DOF) BirdLife Partner - Denmark secured funding from Danida to implement a project on demonstrating how Collaborative Forest Management can support livelihoods and sustainable management in and around Echuya central forest reserve (ECFR).

ECFR found in Kabale and Kisoro districts of south western Uganda is a crucial livelihood resource for the densely populated communities that live around and depend on it for fuel, water, soil conservation, building and handicraft materials. It is an important Central Forest Reserve managed by NFA and is ranked as the most important forest in Uganda for the rarity of its flora and fauna. However,

between 1980s and 2000, the forest became increasingly degraded through illegal encroachment and important forest resources as well as biodiversity declined, relationships between NFA and local communities were poor, and the forest dwelling Batwa 'pygmy' population was marginalised from the rest of the community.

Between 2004 and 2009, a highly successful project united the estranged stakeholders and showed them that the new national policy of Collaborative Forest Management (CFM) could be implemented to conserve the forest resources and biodiversity whilst reducing the poverty of the forest adjacent communities (FACs). This project

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BIG BIRDING DAY 2011 CELEBRATED.

Avian tourism is the fastest growing tourism product in the World and Uganda has the potential to become one of the leading destinations. Birds have the potential to become as popular as the "gorillas" in attracting visitors to Uganda. The Big Birding Day therefore aims at promoting avian tourism, raise awareness and promote the appreciation of nature to its citizens and visitors. This event also seeks to promote domestic tourism by involving Ugandans in such an exciting exercise.

Since 2009, **NatureUganda** in collaboration with various partners has been organizing an annual festival named the Uganda Big

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NatureUganda holds its 19th Annual General Meeting



From left: The ED NU Mr. Achilles Byaruhanga and Hon.Florence Ekwau with some committee members at the AGM

NatureUganda held its 19th Annual General Meeting (AGM) earlier this year on May 27, 2011 at the Uganda Museum, Kamwokya. This meeting signified a new era to all our future meetings following the resolutions that were made in the 18th AGM held in December 2010. The 18th AGM changed the financial year from April-March to follow the calendar year i.e. January-December. This resolution meant that all meetings shall be held after the first quarter in May to give time to the audit exercise in the first quarter.

During the 19th meeting, another resolution was made that NatureUganda(NU) develops its own constitution that will guide its operations in Uganda and NatureKenya does the same. The two organizations will then cooperate under EANHS through a Memorandum of understanding with specific roles and various areas of cooperation. Another resolution was for NU to always make a statement in the press on the state of the Environment when its condition deteriorates.

Among the members who attended was the woman's representative for Kaberamaido district, Hon. Ekwau Ibi Florence K'opio. In her remarks, she stressed the importance of civil society organizations and local communities getting involved in environmental conservation issues since the politicians had failed the country. She pointed out the Northern By-pass and the Sewage plant in Lubigi wetland whose Environmental Impact assessments would not have allowed them to be constructed in such a delicate ecosystem. She pledged total support and commitment to all NU's environmental programmes.

During this AGM, a new Executive Committee was elected and the details are in the table below;

POST	NAME
Chairman	Mr. Paul Mafabi
Vice Chairman	Prof. Christine Dranzoa
Hon Secretary	Dr. Robert Kityo
Hon Treasurer	Mr. Robert Nabanyumya
Hon Publicity	Mrs. Pauline N Kalunda
Members	1.Mr. Deo Nkuzingoma 2.Mrs.Charlotte K.Kanabahita 3.Dr.James Kalema 4.Prof. William Banage

<< 1 Echuya CFR project

was funded by the UK's Department for International Development Civil Society Challenge Fund (DFID-CSCF) and implemented by NatureUganda in collaboration with the RSPB (The BirdLife International Partner in UK).

With the additional support of DOF and Danida, NatureUganda will be able to consolidate the CFM process at ECFR: enabling both the NFA and FACs to fulfil their long-term obligations under the new CFM agreements. This will increase the benefits to the FACs through associated development activities and involve more people in the CFM process, which will ensure that the ecological integrity of the forest is improved in the long term. It will also enable NatureUganda to support the NFA at a national level to accelerate uptake of CFM across the country

By Rogers Niwamanya, NatureUganda

<< 1 BIG BIRDING DAY

Birding Day (BBD). The BBD is a special day when every person is encouraged to go out bird watching in any part of the country with the main aim of seeing the highest number of birds that can be recorded in a 24 hour period. This exercise is conducted by organized groups of birders led by expert guides from NatureUganda, Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), Uganda Bird Guides Club (UBGC) and local guides based at Important Bird Areas, National Parks and Forest reserves in the country.

The BBD 2011 was organized in collaboration with UWA, STAR-UG, UBGC, UTB, AUTO and UCOTA. This was a three day festival from the 29th September to 1st October under the theme "Connecting Birds to People and Nature".

It started with a launch on Thursday 29th September at the Uganda Museum. This was in form of a public talk with various speakers talking about birds and birding in Uganda. It was also used to announce the schedule of activities and flag off the birders to conduct birding the following day. This event was graced by the commissioner from the ministry of tourism Mrs. Grace Mbabazi Aulo who represented the



NU file photo: Members attending the BBD Launch at the Uganda Museum.

minister for tourism. The actual Birding was done on 30th September throughout the country led by expert ornithologists and bird guides. Many sites were chosen to represent the different vegetation types in Uganda and record all birds that can be seen in a 24hr period. The results from the Birding Day were announced during the climax

event at Ndere centre. This event begun with a morning bird walk and members later assembled for the ceremony where presentations were made, sponsors honoured and results from the Birding exercise announced. It was spiced up by performances from Ndere troupe, Railways PS, Kalinabiri S.S and St Joseph's Girls' school, Nsambya.

Results indicated a total of 569 bird species recorded in 53 sites by 36 teams. The highest score was 207 species recorded by the Queen Elizabeth NP team followed by the Entebbe Peninsula team with 189 species and Kidepo Valley NP team with 149 species. However, the total bird species for BBD 2011 were slightly lower than 2010 where 612 species were recorded in only 38 sites

*By Sarah Nambwere & Rogers Niwamanya
NatureUganda*

World Migratory Birds Day 2011 .

On Saturday 14th May 2011, the World commemorated **World Migratory Birds' Day** (WMBD) under the theme "Land use changes from a bird's eye view". This day was initiated in 2006 as an annual awareness-raising campaign to highlight the need for the protection of migratory birds and their habitats. On the second weekend of May every year, people around the world take action and organize public events such as bird

festivals and bird watching excursions to celebrate it under a specific theme.

NatureUganda highlighted the importance of bird migration with a nature walk and boat trip around Lutembe Bay in Wakiso District. Lutembe Bay is located on the shores of Lake Victoria, 16kms from Kampala along Entebbe Road.



Members on a boat ride during the WMBD, Lutembe

The visit was used to highlight the impacts of human activities on migratory birds, the lake and our general environment.

Lutembe bay is severely threatened by the high rate of encroachment by flower farms and real estate developers in the surrounding areas. This is reducing the habitat for birds and degrading the environment in

MABIRA FOREST

Economic Valuation Report and Documentary Launched

Following the proposal to give away 7100 ha of Mabira CFR to Mehta Group of Companies for sugar growing in 2005, **Nature** Uganda subsequently in 2007 conducted a study through independent consultants on the economic valuation of the proposed hectares. The results of the study were published in a report "Economic Valuation of the proposed degazettement of Mabira Central Forest Reserve".

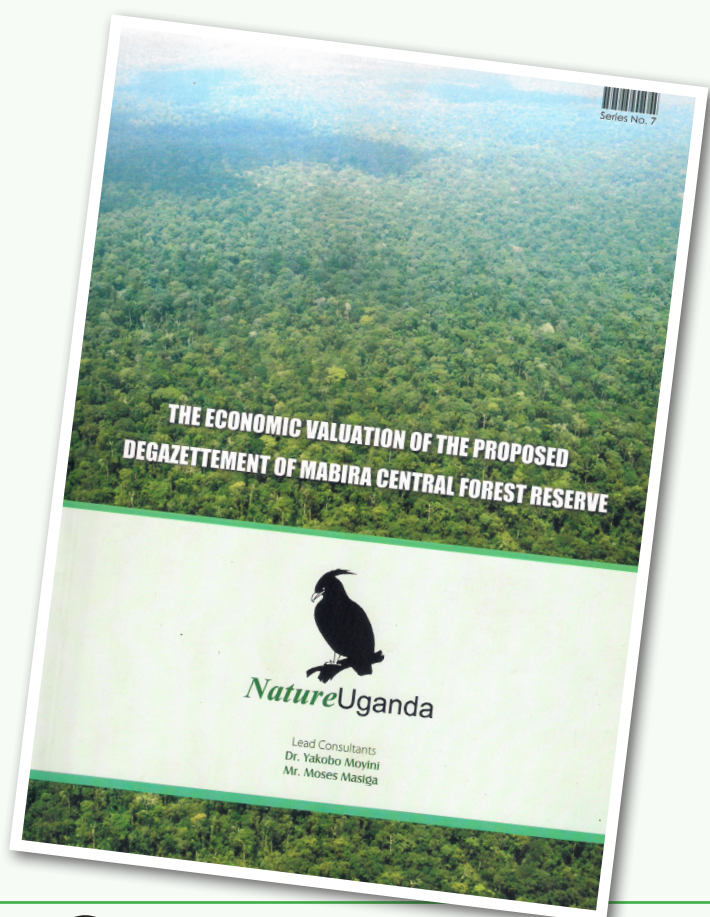
During the same period, an aerial trip funded by European Union was taken to determine the status of the forest especially areas that were considered degraded. This was compiled into a 15 minute documentary. The two reports (book and documentary) were launched on Thursday 6th October 2011 at Imperial Royal Hotel. The highly attended event attracted participants from the media, academia, various CSOs, environment activists, government departments, policy advocates, cultural institutions, religious council, and development partners among others.

The documentary is based on an aerial trip over the forest to locate degraded areas based on the investor's proposal that he will use only the degraded part of the forest. It did not locate any degraded area and it has been confirmed by the National Forestry Authority ground staff. Although there used to be encroached parts of the forest in 1980s, all of them were restored over the last two decades and the satellite images of 2010 indicate a fully recovered forest canopy.

The results indicated that while SCOUT had stated the potential benefits of its plan, these benefits have neither been quantified nor clarified. The corporation says the annual stream of net benefits of sugarcane growing represents a better land use option than the conservation of the Mabira reserve as it exists now. The report calculated net benefits of US\$3.6 million per year from sugarcane as opposed to US\$1.1 million per year from conservation.

However, such a calculation by the corporation was based on a short-term gain but when the present value of the standing timber alone was compared to the present value of net benefits from sugarcane growing, conservation of the forest yielded a greater long-term benefit. When the value of ecological services was added to that of timber, conserving the forest reserve registered a far higher net present value of US\$45.1 million, compared with US\$29.9 million from sugarcane growing. In other words, converting a part of Mabira CFR for sugarcane growing will not only cause ecological disturbance of the whole forest but would incur a net loss of US\$15.2 million to Ugandans.

Also while the economic life of the natural tropical forest stand can stretch over thousands of years, the economic life of sugarcane is optimal and maintained for about 5 years. The value of timber growing stock (only trees of 40cm diameter and above) was estimated at US\$35.2 million compared to the net benefits from sugarcane growing of US\$29.9 million, over a similar life-time of 60 years. The report estimates the value of standing timber in the 7100ha at US\$35.2m which in-



<< 4 Mabira Forest

validates the falsehood that the area proposed for sugarcane growing does not have valuable timber trees.

Interestingly, the study also indicates that for the equivalent of 7100 ha, SCOUL could purchase land from private sources at a cheaper cost of US\$10.6 million, an amount less than the compensation value of US\$45.1 Mabira Forest requires.

The publication of the two reports (economic evaluation report and the documentary) indicating that the conservation value is far more superior to the sugarcane growing and the video evidence that there are no degraded areas in Mabira provide enough information that the proposal to give away a natural forest for sugarcane growing was a careless proposal and should be set aside.

The results also compliment legal facts that the current legal dispensation does not permit the give-away of any part of a forest or wildlife protected area as per the constitution Art 237, Land Act section 42, Wildlife Act or the National Forestry and Tree planting Act.

Therefore based on the above facts, all other reports produced and Ugandans disapproval of the proposal;

- SCOUL should stay away from Mabira Forest and the Government should decline to grant its request for 7,100ha
- SCOUL and Mehta must listen to the voices of the people of Uganda and how dearly they hold these forests, and withdraw from such 'corporate irresponsibility'
- Uganda is 'gifted by nature' and it must not be those that are entrusted with the protection of this gift that will instead lead to its destruction.

More details about the launch are on our website: www.natureuganda.org

**By Sarah Nambweere
Nature Uganda**

World Migratory Birds Day

general. Members recorded 85 species of birds including Palearctic migrants and intra-African migrants and a full list is available on our website www.natureuganda.org.

Bird migration is one of the world's most extraordinary actions with millions of birds travelling thousands of miles only to make that same journey a few months later. Birds migrate for various reasons but mainly to improve their chances of survival by escaping from harsh weather. This applies both to Palearctic and intra-African migrations like Terns, Gulls and Waders which breed in Northern Europe and escape the cruel winters to visit Africa, while the Blue Swallow which breeds in Southern Africa spends the summer months in Uganda around the northern shores of Lake Victoria. This is an example of intra-African migration.

Birds have a unique perspective when migrating thousands of kilometers across entire continents covering different climates and landscapes. This unrivalled view enables them to notice the dramatic changes which are currently threatening many of our planet's ecosystems.

Looking at the world's changing landscapes from a "**bird's eye view**" is a valuable perspective and can help reveal humankind's dramatic impact on the global environment. Through their dependence on many habitats along their migrations, birds feel the effects of environmental changes first before other animal species and this makes them key indicators for the health of the environment.

Major problems for the site are due to its close proximity to the capital- Kampala. The burgeoning population has led to development of the surrounding land for homes and leisure activities. This coupled with the extraction of sand and quarry stone are having a negative effect. The explosion of five horticultural flower farms around the bay are now reclaiming and degrading the swamp and agro-chemicals have been detected in the water of the lagoon.

This is of serious concern to the ecological value of the site and may damage it beyond repair. Throughout the years, numerous influences have evolved to alter the nature of this site. These have been plotted and all contribute to a negative value and it is estimated that 25% of the open water/marsh has been lost 🐾

**By Sarah Nambweere and Roger Skeen
Nature Uganda**

PROJECTS

Panasonic boosts LVCEEP Project

The launch of the partnership between WWF – East and Southern Africa Programme Office (ESARPO) and Panasonic took place on 3rd March 2011 at Kisumu Girls, Kenya. This memorable day brought together many WWF partners including **NatureUganda**, Wildlife Clubs of Kenya, WWF Tanzania and schools like Kisumu Girls SSS and Butende Primary School from Uganda.

The main objective for the launch was to raise Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) awareness and communications using the Panasonic communications equipment, through Lake Victoria Catchment Environment Education Programme (LVCEEP) Pilot schools and therefore putting ESD in practice.

Representatives from Uganda included Mr. Achilles Byaruhanga – Executive Director **NatureUganda**, Mrs. Ada Lesale - Project Executant LVCEEP (U) and Ms. Sylvia Nantumbwe -Deputy Head Teacher Butende Primary School. Others on the event were representatives from WWF Kenya, District Commissioner Kisumu, Provincial commissioner Kisumu, His Worship the Mayor of Kisumu, Permanent Secretary Ministry of Education Kenya.

Panasonic awarded all the pilot



The ED NU receives a voucher for the 42 inch TV from the Director Panasonic

schools with Panasonic 42 inch Televisions and it will continue to support the awarded schools with various communication equipments. The MD Panasonic Middle East and Africa also commented that the support will cover many other schools in the region to improve and increase awareness on ESD hence helping to achieve our mission of promoting the understanding, appreciation and conservation of Nature.

NatureUganda calls upon the public, private partners and the government to support its activities and the struggle of

bringing information close to the people in regards to the state of their environment. Easy access and availability of information will promote education for sustainable development (ESD), reduce on over exploitation of natural resources, reduce environmental degradation and natural disasters and enhance the delivery of ecological services as well as meeting other human needs 🐦

**By Ada Nshemereirwe
Nature Uganda**

FROM THE FIELD

Karamoja Apalis, why all of a sudden?



Karamoja Aparis

This is an East African endemic with the Ugandan population mostly seen in Mt Moroto areas. Having monitored sites in Irimi for over 10 years, it was interesting to have this much localized species in two of our sites for the very first time in February 2011.

Each of the sites had three individuals. Irimi is about 70 Km from Mt Moroto but has many of *Acacia drepanolobium* which is loved by this bird.

Could it be that the range for this bird

is wider than it was thought or could it be that there have been just some local movements? It is hard to believe that we could have been ignoring single individuals if they showed up and quickly disappeared.

The most ideal situation is a breeding record within the surroundings which may inform conservation efforts.

This was recently confirmed during a survey of the area on 23rd - 27th oct when a pair were observed entering the nest and holding territory. Remarkably, this is the first confirmed breeding record for the species in Africa 🐦

Michael Opiye- NatureUganda

UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS

UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS

MARCH

Familiar Chat: Single bird at Muyenga Quarry on 8th, according to the Birds of Kampala (Carswell 1986), this will be the first record for Kampala area.

Pintail: A single first year bird at Nakiwogo on 17th. This is the first record for the Kampala region.

Marsh Warbler: Single bird trapped at Ggaba on 20th. The fifth record for Uganda.

Egyptian Plover: Single bird in MFNP on 13th. This species has only recently been recorded in Uganda since two old specimens were collected in 1913.

Short-toed Eagle: Single bird in MFNP on 13th. This visitor from the north is not often seen.

APRIL

Barn Owl: A pair is holding territory in Namuwongo. According to Birds of Kampala Carswell (1986) "There are no known resident populations in Kampala today".

Southern Black Flycatcher: Pair seen at LMNP on 12th. This species has only recently been recorded in Uganda.

Whiskered Tern: At least 500 summer plumaged birds at Ggaba Water Works on 17th. Whiskered Tern was only accepted onto the Uganda list as recently as 1966, so this is an exceptional total.

Rock-loving Cisticola: Two birds seen well in Kidepo on 24th and 25th. This species has only recently been seen in the park.

Red-billed Buffalo-Weaver: A party of ten birds in Kidepo on 25th. The second record for Uganda.

MAY

Papyrus Canary: Single bird at Mpologoma Swamp on 5th. This species is not often recorded as its chosen habitat makes observations difficult.

Southern Citril: Up to ten birds of this recently split sub-species were recorded on the slopes of Mount Elgon 6-7th

Dark-backed Weaver: Three birds seen in a primary forest above Kapchorwa research station on Mount Elgon on 6th, according to the Uganda atlas it was last recorded here early last century.

Nahan's Francolin: Three birds in Mabira Forest at Griffin Falls on 22nd. These shy birds are seldom seen as they prefer to stay hidden in dense cover.

Violet-backed Starling: Pair feeding three fledged young at Kajjansi on 29th. There are no breeding records for the Kampala region.

JUNE

Yellow-bellied Hyltiota: A pair at Lusanja on 17th. An uncommon visitor to the Kampala region

Forbes's Plover: Single bird seen well on 29th at Nabugabo grasslands, third record for Uganda.

Franklin's Gull: An adult bird photographed in MFNP. This is the first record for Uganda of this visitor from North America.



Franklin's Gull:

African Quailfinch: Female sitting on four eggs at Nabugabo grasslands 21st-29th. This is the first confirmed breeding record for Uganda.

Madagascar Squacco Heron: Single bird seen well at Nabugabo grasslands on 28th.

JULY

Buff-bellied Warbler: Two birds feeding in Acacia scrub at Ggaba on the 3rd are the first record for Kampala area.

Lesser Flamingo: A flock of 1,800 on Lake Muryanyange in QENP on 15th is a good count by recent standards.

Painted Snipe: A pair displaying at Lake Muryanyange on 15th, there are few breeding records for Uganda.

Pennant-winged Nightjar: Twenty males and eighteen females counted at dusk on the 24th at MFNP airstrip with six unidentified nightjars is an excellent count.

Denham's Bustard: Ten birds on the Channel track at MFNP on 26th. This is their only reliable site in Uganda.

AUGUST

Karamoja Apalis: At least two birds present in the Iirri area some 70k west of Moroto, a notable range extension.

Taita Fiscal: Single bird seen well in acacia scrub, 30k east of Moroto town. There are no recent records of this scarce resident.

Magpie Starling: Single bird in Acacia

scrub near Moroto, this is a well known nomadic species with erratic movements, the last Uganda record being in 1983.

Woolly-necked Stork: Single bird flying over Kampala industrial estate on 10th is an uncommon visitor to Kampala.

Greyish Eagle Owl: Single bird in Muyenga Quarry being mobbed by Ross's Turaco's on 27th, this species is not often recorded in Kampala due to its nocturnal habits.

SEPTEMBER

Black-throated Barbet: Two pairs and three separate singles recorded in Acacia thickets. There are only two previous records.

Boran Cisticola: One heard singing and briefly seen on foothills behind Moroto. Another was seen well and heard singing, at Kakingol, in the foothills of Mt Moroto. (This species has recently been found in a few sites on Mt Moroto and surrounding hills)

Grey-wren Warbler: Common in most habitats, even degraded, calling birds seemed everywhere. Two birds were carrying nest material; there are no breeding records for Uganda until now.

Blue-capped Cordon-bleu: On the 4th a male bird seen very well at roadside puddle for two minutes and down to 15 feet before flying to scrub. Two minutes later re-found in same area with a female, when they flew of into scrub. This is the 1st record for Uganda.

Greater Sand Plover: Single seen on sand beach south of Entebbe on 22nd, this is the third Uganda record.

OCTOBER

Fischer's Lovebird: The pair remained at Ggaba waterworks, this species has only recently been confirmed for Uganda.

Shoebill: At least four birds in swamp at Ziwa Rhino Sanctuary on 7th.

Yellow-footed Flycatcher: Single bird in Budongo forest on 9th, this species is seldom recorded as it usually remains hidden in the under-storey.

Chiffchaff: Single bird seen in Karamoja on 24th. This is a rare European visitor which has not been recorded for over fifty years in Uganda.

Karamoja Apalis: At least ten were recorded during a survey from 24th-26th in Karamoja. A pair was observed entering a nest which is the first confirmed breeding record of this species.

Contributors: Roger Skeen, Derek Pomeroy, Lydia Tushabe, Marion Halliwell, Achilles Byaruhanga, Michael Opige and John Lofgreen 🐦

MEMBERSHIP

NatureUganda's Office Location



How to become a member

You can subscribe and be part of NatureUganda by sending a **cheque** or **cash** to cover your subscription at our offices on Plot 83, Tufnell Drive, Kamwokya.

Join us to promote the **Understanding, Appreciation** and **Conservation** of Nature.

Membership Rates per Annum

Category	Residents in Uganda	International
Sponsor*	shs > 500,000	
Corporate	shs 200,000	\$350
Institutions	shs 70,000	\$90
Family	shs 25,000	\$30
Full member	shs 20,000	\$20
Students*	shs 5,000	\$15

*Students' category caters for primary, secondary and undergraduates in Tertiary Institutions.

*Sponsor caters for any individual or organisation who don't belong to any of the above categories

ABC Membership



The African Bird Club has a local membership scheme at NatureUganda. Members based in Uganda and new members can register or renew based on the local registration fee of UGX 20,000.

Editor

Sarah Nambweere

Corporate Members

- Adventure Trails Uganda
- Acacia Safaris
- Access Africa Safaris
- Africa Adventure Safaris
- African View Safaris
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- Bunyonyi Safaris Ltd
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- Plants Working Group
- Herps Working Group
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- Friends of Dudus
- Microbial Resources Group

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- Eastern Uganda based at Islamic University in Uganda
- Western Uganda based at Mbarara University of Science and Technology
- Northern Uganda based at Gulu University

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- Bishop Barham University College
- Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Trust
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- Gorilla-Land Guest House
- Makerere University Conservation Biology Association (MUCOBA)
- Mbogo College School
- Mbogo High School
- Ndegeya Core PTC
- Kalinabiri Secondary School
- St. Joseph's Girls S.S Nsambya
- St. Joseph's S.S Naggalama
- Uganda Coalition for Crisis Prevention

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