



Southern province - Nyamagabe District - Kitabi Sector – Kagano Cell

REPORT ON OUTREACHES IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS ON BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION EDUCATION PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

Since The creation of the world Human being are relying on biodiversity, the fresh air we breathe, the Good water we drink and use in our everyday activities, the crop production we harvest ,food we eat etc,,,, all are the results of a well conserved biodiversity.

Our country Rwanda also known as a country of Thousands hills has putted in place institutions such **RDB, REMA** to help in assisting in coordinating the conservation of biodiversity and environment, those institution are working closely with local **NGO's** in implementing and provide trainings on biodiversity conservation related project.

However, a lot of peoples and **NGO's** are investing their time and money in conservation projects that brings a lot income on their pockets and bank accounts, they don't care too much about future generation or taking their time to learn more about the challenges that we are facing due to the lack of biodiversity conservation done by past generation.

."A lot of peoples doesn't care when they thrown a stone to a bird which comes to take a 1 kg of grain wanting to kill it, forgetting that is one behind the whole production of a hundred of tones due to pollination "Said Ange IMANISHIMWE Msc in Biodiversity conservation.

Even if we need Conservation education in whole of Rwanda, there are some potential places which plays a great role not only in the development of Rwanda but Africa and whole world in General That needs to be taken into consideration and make sure that the population around are aware and understand well how to conserve the Biodiversity for sustainable development, which needs commitment to teach especially young Generations and one of those play in Rwanda is the Nyungwe National Park.

WHY NYUNGWE NATIONAL PARK IMPORTANT

Nyungwe National Park is a forest located in south-western Rwanda at (2°15' - 2°55' S, 29°00' - 29°30' E), (1,600 - 2,950 m ASL) of altitude, with an average minimum temperature of 10.9° C and an average maximum temperature of 19.6°C. The mean annual rainfall is 1,744 mm. This forest contains an abundance of plants and animal species. Dowsett, 1990 illustrated that **more than 260 species** of trees and shrubs have been found in Nyungwe with **24 species** believed to be endemic to Albertine Rift. This park also contains **260** bird species of which **25** are endemic to Albertine Rift, **13 species** of primates, including chimpanzees, Owl-faced guenons and Angolan black and white colobus monkeys.

Not only that this is the forest behind the 70% of water used in the whole of Rwanda this shows that by conserving the Nyungwe National park, we are unsure the well being of Rwandans and neighbourhood friends through Jobs creation, Good environment for relax, the most known hydropower of electricity used in the country are connected to the 70% of water form Nyungwe, Tourism, research area for universities students and researchers etc,,,,.

So far a Biodiversity Conservation Company (**BIOCOOP**) as an organization which aims at linking biodiversity conservation with human welfare has taken into consideration this issues and start community outreaches on Biodiversity conservation in both Primary and Secondary schools.

We are initiating Environmental clubs in Secondary schools and keep assisting, and supporting them in terms of trainings and finance, so far we are now conducting outreaches and have clubs in 9 Secondary schools around Nyungwe National park.

Within this program **BIOCOOP** preferred to involve young generation in Biodiversity conservation to unsure that also young people understand why biodiversity conservation is needed and that they will be able to connect what they are learning at schools with conservation and entrepreneurship for the sustainability of a well conserved biodiversity.

OUR HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

BIOCOOP is a Community Based Organization whose members are aimed in: Biodiversity conservation, Hygiene -sanitation, Environmental management and protection for sustainable development. Founded by **Ange IMANISHIMWE**, in **2012**; its main goal is to eradicate extreme poverty in local people around Nyungwe National Park (**NNP**) by involving them in different money making projects, connect youths to potential opportunities etc,,, . As a result this reduces illegal activities in the forest, and it is a reliable result for welfare of fauna and flora in **NNP**.

BIOCOOP emphasizes on community awareness and provides trainings to local community in farming techniques, Community outreaches to educate them on biodiversity conservation and hygiene -Sanitation.

We have four departments of operation:

I. Capacity building.

It aims at building the capacity of youths around NNP in ICT, biodiversity conservation, wildlife management, natural resources management, ecotourism, environmental management, water, hygiene, sanitation, climate change mitigation, agriculture, entrepreneurship, project management, civic leadership, and business development.

II. Community Health and Social Welfare.

This department is oriented in water, hygiene, sanitation, nutrition, and social work. We implement the projects based on public health and human nutrition as a result of eradicating malnutrition in local communities through education.

III. Agriculture and Livestock Promotion.

It aims at reducing the soil acidity in Nyamagabe and Nyaruguru districts by making organic fertilizers easily accessible to everyone. We integrate farming and human nutrition as the strategy of eradicating extreme poverty and malnutrition in the country.

IV. Biodiversity Conservation, Environmental Management, and Ecotourism Promotion

This integrates biodiversity conservation projects and sustainable development of the people around NNP.

- **Our Vision is contributing in the development of Rwanda to the level of middle income countries using our resources and skills.**
- **Our Mission is Building a Nation, Environ-Socio - Economically stable through our skills and our Resources.**

OUTREACHES IMPLEMENTATIONS AND ACHIEVEMENT

Why Outreaches in Secondary School

Local communities around NNP have little knowledge about biodiversity conservation; especially young generations do not understand the opportunity and resources available around Nyungwe national park in terms of job creation, spreading the Good image of the country, standing for self reliance etc,,, which is causing gradually the continuity of poverty and jobless around Nyungwe national park .

Connecting students whom we desire to be future leaders, with biodiversity conservation, we are ensuring the lasting of positive impact through a well conserved biodiversity.

Covered modules during outreaches:

- The role of biodiversity conservation in community development.
- Entrepreneurship in biodiversity conservation and ecotourism.
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- The source of water and management.

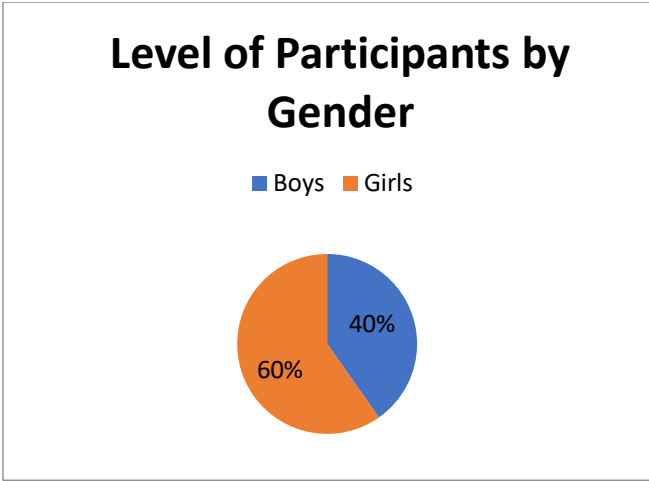
ACHIEVEMENTS

So far we have conducted outreaches in 6 secondary school ,**TTC MBUGA ,Gs KITABI,Gs KIGEME B,Gs BISHYIGA,Gs GIKONGORO and Gs KIRARO** where we reached around **11,265** of Participants and we have initiated **9** environmental clubs ,one in each of the schools stated above and **3** more in **Es MUDASOMWA,Gs UWINKOMO,Gs GISAGARA** where about **684** students are currently the members of the clubs, and **157** Have been already certified for attending trainings.



Photo 1: Outreach in Kiraro Secondary School BIOCOOP CEO Starts by sharing his history background with students.

KIRARO Secondary school one among the schools that are in the program of nine years basic education it combines both primary and secondary classes, the outreaches in **GS KIRARO** was very enjoyable and attractive to the participants where we reached a great number of participants as shows the graph below:



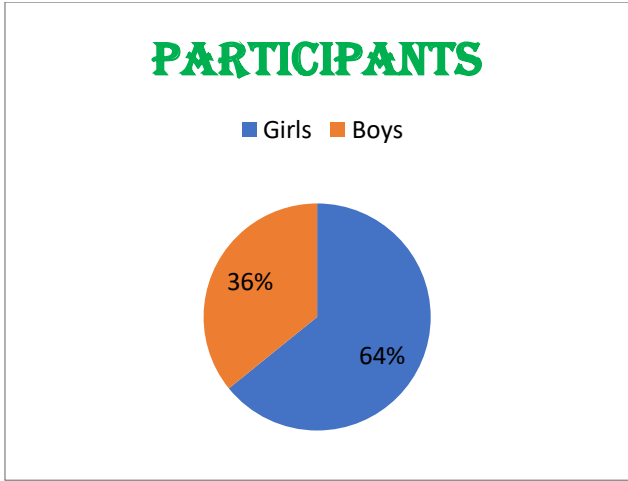
The total number of participants in KIRARO is 574 from secondary school and abuts 200 from primary students.



Photo 2: Outreach in GS Kitabi starts with environment related songs by environmental club

GS KITABI is the school located around the buffer zone of Nyungwe national park, this is the school that has tangible stories with the park as a great number of students of the school their parents used to be poachers in Nyungwe, others were doing farming activities inside the park, some of the students are collecting firewood everyday in the park, they always meeting face to face with different park animals such as baboons, birds, etc.,,,.

The outreach in this school was really needed and was well conducted as both students and school staffs are committed in biodiversity conservation. Table below is showing attended participants:



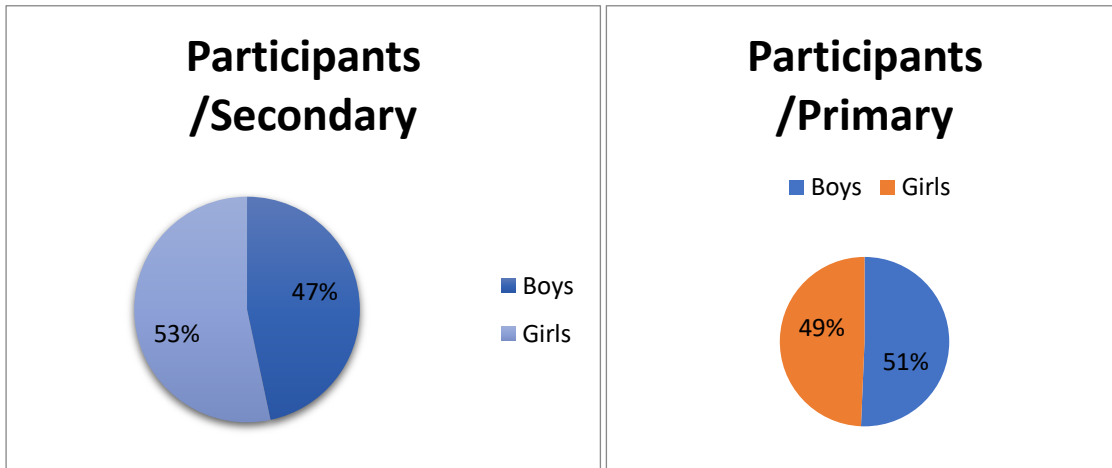
The total number of participants in GS KITABI was 1175 from secondary schools and about 2210 from Primary.

“When we talk about environment we are also talking about human being, that why when environmentalists approach us we are happy to receive them in our school, today we were happy to receive BIOCOOP, we are hoping that the message given to our students will positively bring changes to their minds as well as their parents and community members for better conservation of biodiversity” Said Jean Claude NSABIMANA head teach GS KITABI



Photo 3: Outreach in GS Kigeme B

GS Kigeme is the school located in Gasaka Sector, Nyamagabe District at one of two mountains that made Kigeme refugee camp , the reason **90%** of the students are refugees, outreach on conservation in this school sounds like a new chapter among the students as in the country where they come from there no more organisations who took initiative and went into schools for delivering a kind off outreach, They asked many questions and at the end they were very happy for the take home message of environmental protection and ready to start connecting what they are learning with conservation on how they can make money from conservation in the future.



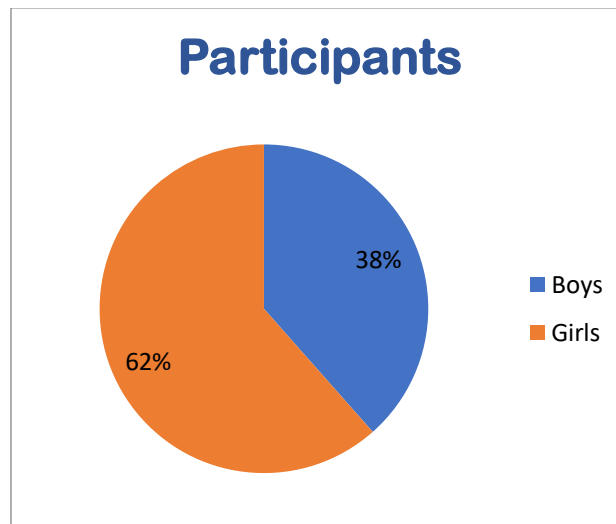
The total number of participants in **GS KIGEME B** was **4031** in both primary and secondary classes.

“The speech with Ange was interesting because he showed us that no matter the background of our family or how bad was our beginning, by using our skills we can make change in our community “Said the student from **GS KIGEME B**



Photo 4: outreach in Gs BISHYIGA

Gs BISHYIGA is the boarding school with students from all the corners of the country and it is located nearby Nyungwe national Park to the way goes to Karongi District through Nyamagabe, this gives the potential to the school of spreading the news of conservation in whole Rwanda as the students are coming from all over the Province of the country, at this school **BIOCOOP** also provided financial support of fifty thousand Rwandan francs to the environmental club of the school for motivating them and helping them to materials for logistics and recording what they are doing.



The total number of participants in **GS BISHYIGA** was about **1354 Students**



Photo 5: Students in Gs Gisagara were very interested during outreach.

GS GISAGARA is also the school in the program of nine years basic education, every year receives students that were born around the school, some of them didn't

got a chance of interacting with people who have background in Biodiversity to share skills and history, which is the reason **BIOCOOP** is focusing a lot on these schools to make sure that even in rural area of Rwanda young generation are understanding the role of biodiversity conservation in the development of the country.

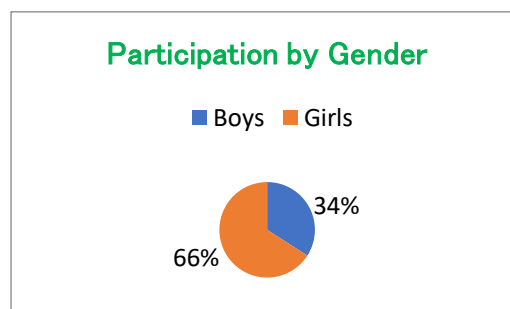


Photo 6: In all schools headteachers were thankful to biocoop for the outreach.

Level of participation by Gender

It seems to be a gap of gender in conservation, where mostly men are ones committed a lot in conservation rather than women, but as BIOCOOP we believe that involving women in conservation will enable them to be confident and being interested in conservation field. As we experienced from different researches we did, people who used to do illegal poaching in the Park their wives were the ones to receive them when coming back home, this shows that to teach young generations especially girls will change positively their mind and their parents as well. During outreaches that we conducted we were happy to see a great number of girls interested in conservation.

The total number of participants during outreaches was about **11,265** and **7426** are girls and **3839** are boys.



ENVIRONMENTAL CLUBS

We have initiated 9 clubs in secondary schools in each of the club we delivered a six months trainings on biodiversity conservation, Hygiene sanitation and environmental management and attended students have been certified.



Photo 7: Students have been certified for the completion of six month's trainings

So far we have been certified a number of 157 and currently about 684 are members of environmental clubs that we putted in place in several school I which we are partners, each club has one or two teachers who act us assistant of the club, they take one day a week to discuss more about environment and help their schools in terms of keeping clean the school, maintaining the school Garden etc,,,

The purpose of environmental clubs is not to give students skills and leave it at their school, it is also about opening their mind and start familiarize themselves within the life out of school, to let them know the realities out there so that after going back to their native community they will be ready to start implementing what they learnt and contribute in conservation of biodiversity and community development.

CONCLUSION

Biodiversity conservation education is a key to success, we believe that involving local community in conservation will act positively in poverty reduction, job creation, we are thankfully for the good collaboration of head teachers of secondary schools, without them we could not achieve any of the target. We are looking forward to see the positive change day to day due in our community.

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