

**Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resources Management,
University of Rwanda and National Geographic Society East Africa Fund**

Project Development, Proposal Writing and Fundraising Strategies Training Workshop

May 3-4, 2017



Done at Huye, May 29, 2017

Executive Summary



The Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resources Management at University of Rwanda in collaboration with the National Geographic Society-East African Fund hosted a two days training workshop about **project development, proposal writing and fundraising strategies** for 3rd and 4th year bachelor students at University of Rwanda. The participants were from Biology, Water and Environmental Engineering, and Wildlife and Aquatic Resources Management departments of College of Science and Technology (CST) and College of Agriculture, Animal Sciences and Veterinary Medicine (CAVM).

The training was an outreach activity of Fauna and Flora International (FFI), Conservation Leadership Program (CLP) and Critical Partnership Fund (CEPF) trainees; Yvette UMURUNGI, Methode MAJYAMBERE, Josué ARUNA and Providence AKAYEZU from Rwanda and Democratic Republic of Congo. .

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1.Introduction

Through enhancing skills in proposal writing, project development and fundraising strategies, Fauna and Flora International in partnership with Conservation Leadership Program and Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund hosted a workshop for conservation activists of Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda. The participants of the workshop would have to train others who did not attend. It is under this framework, Yvette Umurungi, Providence Akayezu, Méthode Majyambere and Josué Aruna have prepared a two days workshop hosted by the Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resources (CoEB), to build the capacity of 3rd and 4th year students at University of Rwanda in project design and fundraising.

The Training was organized in collaboration with the National Geographic Society (NGS) Eastern African Fund which provided financial support. In addition, Chloé Cipolletta, the Program Director at the NGS Eastern Africa Fund was among trainers where she explained about the National Geographic Society, types of grants it supports and the grant application process.

The Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resource Management is the biodiversity knowledge management center composed by nodes and partners network from high learning institutions, government and non-government organization biodiversity conservation and natural resources management in Rwanda.

A total of 35 students from the College of Science and Technology (CST) and the College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine (CAVM) were attended. The workshop has facilitators were from Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resources Management (CoEB), Kitabi College of Conservation and Environmental Management (KCCEM), Association des Agriculteurs Sans Frontière (AASF) Bukavu, Republic Democratique du Congo, lecturer at University of Rwanda and the NGS Eastern Africa Fund.

Four main topics covered were: 1) Project design and development; 2) Proposal writing 3) Finding and maintaining a donor; and 4) Fundraising strategies and plans.

2. Workshop activities

2.1. Welcome remarks

Training was opened by Prof. Dr. Beth Ann Kaplin, the Director of the Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resources Management. Through her welcome remark, she talked about the background of this training and she added that students leverage this great opportunity since the knowledge about project development, recipient-donor relationship is of high value.

2.2. Introduction to National Geographic Society (NGS)

Chloé CIPOLLETTA, the Program Director for NGS Eastern Africa Fund, gave a presentation about the National Geographic Society, type of grants provided by NGS and general advices about grant proposal writing. In addition, she pointed out that five main areas are considered: storytelling, education, research, conservation and technology.

2.3. Project proposal development, planning and design

Students were guided on how to nurse an idea since its conception to its implementation. Josué Aruna explained more about the problem tree. He said that without a problem, there is no project because every project must be intended to solve a particular problem. The real cause of the problems that a project is trying to address must be identified in order to avoid time and resources wasting.

Providence Akayezu continued by telling the audience about project planning and timeline. She said that it is very recommended to ask yourself a number of different questions including whether your project fulfil the donor's requirements, its feasibility, replicability and its outcomes. The project cycle also has been explained in details. Methode Majyambere explained that apart from planning, monitoring and evaluation is very important not because it is the most donor's requirement but for the success of the project.

Other covered points are: Formulation of logical framework, SWOT analysis, stakeholder analysis, writing a good abstract, identification of assumptions for you project and budgeting. Almost all subjects related to project development, proposal writing and fundraising were covered during the first day of the workshop (03rd 04 2017) to reserve sufficient time for exercises.

2.4. Practical exercises

On the second day of the workshop, students revised what they learnt on the previous day before doing exercises. Seven groups have been created where each group had to choose one topic and develop:

- a) The problem tree
- b) Objective, hypotheses and assumptions
- c) The logical framework
- d) Monitoring and evaluation strategies
- e) Abstract and
- f) The budget



Students explaining the audience about the problem tree of their project.

Photo credit: Alex Ndemezo

Afterwards, participants learned how they can search, approach and maintain a good relationship with the donor.

3. Conclusion

Students were very interested at every minute of the course. They said that they have really got the knowledge they needed. All of them took the decision to revise their projects and send them to the workshop's facilitators for the review.

4. Acknowledgement

These trainings would not be possible without financial support from the National Geographic Society-East African Fund. We are extremely grateful your passion in conserving our natural world. Specifically, we thank Chloé Cipolletta for her active role

in building the capacity of young generation. Great thanks to Yvette Umurungi and Providence Akayezu for initiating this idea. We appreciate also the work of Methode Majyambere and Josue Aruna, you did a great job. Last but not definitely least; we would like to acknowledge the role of Prof. Dr. Beth Ann Kaplin, the director of Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resources Management (CoEB) and the whole CoEB staff in making these trainings successful.

Appendix

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