

Fundraising and communication skills

Workshop report

Workshop held on 1 – 4 May 2007, at the WCS – Uganda headquarters,
Kampala, Uganda.

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The Workshop was organised by the Tropical Biology Association and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS - Uganda), in collaboration with the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA).



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Introduction:

The shortage of expertise in writing successful funding proposals and communicating key conservation messages often hinders the work of conservation organisations, particularly those in developing countries. The aim of the Fundraising and Communication Skills Workshop was to develop the capacity of senior Uganda Wildlife Authority staff and their partners to fundraise for conservation activities, and to communicate more effectively through print and electronic media as well as meetings and workshops. The workshop was jointly organised by the Tropical Biology Association and Wildlife Conservation Society (Uganda).

A total of 15 participants were trained during the workshop. Eleven were Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) Staff, and the rest were members of the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS - Uganda), Makerere University and the Institute of Tropical Forest Conservation (ITFC - Uganda). See appendix 1 for a list of participants.

Resource people for the workshop came from the Tropical Biology Association (TBA), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS - Uganda), Makerere University, Wildlife Clubs of Uganda, and the New Vision Newspaper.

Workshop opening

Dr. Andy Plumtre, director of the WCS' Albertine Rift Programme in Uganda welcomed the workshop participants and introduced the other workshop organisers present. These were Dr. Rosie Trevelyan, the director of the Tropical Biology Association and Mr. Kizito Masinde, a project officer from TBA. This was followed by a brief self-introduction from all those present.

The opening speech was then made by Mr. Aggrey Rwetsiba, Head of Research and Monitoring at the Uganda Wildlife Authority. Mr. Rwetsiba said that UWA's conservation work called for specialised skills among its workforce which they often lacked and they were thus eager to benefit from TBA's quality trainings. He gave an example of the need for UWA to communicate its achievements to the public, yet it lacked the necessary skills in its workers to do so. He mentioned that there were many opportunities for research that existed in the organisation. These opportunities were not exploited due to the lack of fundraising skills among the relevant staff. He therefore urged the participants to take the workshop seriously and to apply what they were going to learn when they went back to their workstations.

Dr. Rosie Trevelyan then gave an overview of the seminar, introducing the participants to what the workshop was tailored to cover, and how it was going to be conducted. She also asked the participants to mention what they expected out of the workshop. Participants expected to learn how to write better funding proposals, papers for publication and newspaper articles. They also expected to become skilled at making presentations and press releases.

Workshop themes:

The workshop covered the four themes of writing skills, fundraising skills, presentation skills, and communication skills. The workshop timetable is available in appendix 2. All delegates were presented with a copy of the Tropical Biology Association's "Fundraising guidelines" and "Scientific writing skills"

Day 1: Writing Skills

Writing skills are essential for effective proposal writing, publishing papers and communicating information elsewhere. To gain these skills, the workshop participants got an expert view of how to write concisely and accurately and the structure of reports and scientific papers. The motivation for publishing papers was explored as well as where to publish. This was followed by an exercise on abstract writing. A selection of the abstracts written during the exercise was presented, after which the participants engaged in an intensive discussion on how to better write an abstract.

To wrap up the theme of the day and introduce the next day's theme, the day closed with a talk on writing skills for reports and proposals.

Day 2: Fundraising Skills

Fundraising is important for conservation organisations to secure funds for priority activities and for effective management of an organisation. It is important to know what funding is available and how to tailor applications towards specific funders.

To set the pace, the day began with a general talk on establishing and maintaining conservation projects. In the talk, the workshop was taught how to assess conservation needs and what the needs and requirements of the donors were. Delegates were also instructed on how to market the conservation needs to the donors. The delegates to the workshop were then given a talk on funding proposals, and thereafter trained on writing budgets for proposals.

The exercise for the day was for delegates to assess some proposals and determine the key features that make proposals successful. This generated a lively discussion during the feedback session as the delegates criticised the proposals and gave suggestions on how the proposals could have been improved. The day was closed by a talk on identifying possible donors.

Day 3: Presentation Skills

Presentations provide conservation organisations with the opportunity to present evidence of successful conservation projects and to involve stakeholders in monitoring progress. It also gives the organisation a chance to obtain direct feedback from a target audience and to influence public and donor support

Participants learned how to give high quality, interesting presentations through lectures and a practical exercise. From this experience, delegates discussed, identified and presented a list of features that make a good presentation.

Day 4: Communication Skills

Delegates heard two professional talks on working with the media and the general public. A renowned journalist from the New Vision newspaper shared his experiences on writing conservation articles and how conservation organisations can make the media work for them. For practice, the participants prepared and presented press releases and discussed how to improve their skills in this area.

Workshop assessment

The workshop was rated either excellent or good by all the participants (33 % and 67% respectively). When asked how much they had learnt, all the participants reported having learnt a lot. All participants said they were quite likely or likely to apply the lessons learnt at their workstations. 75% of the participants thought a similar workshop would be very useful to other colleagues in their institutions.

The participants were also given the chance to freely comment on the workshop. A sample of the comments is given below:

“The number was small enough enabling full interaction”.

“The workshop content was good and the practical exercises were very applicable”

“This is a very good kind of in-service training course needed by staff at various levels including the executive director”

“It was important to scientists who lack skills in accessing funding, communicating results, and dealing with the media...”

“...there is a need for such workshops in the protected areas to target other staff e.g. managers, wardens, etc.”

“... would it be possible to give it more time or plan for a follow up workshop?”

“... I have been able to learn a lot within the short time... it has changed my ways of looking and being analytical about write ups, especially publications...”

Closing of the workshop

The closing remarks were given by Mr. Aggrey Rwetsiba, Head of Research and Monitoring at the Uganda Wildlife Authority. He lauded the workshop saying that the workshop was unique in the way it was structured putting it a cut above the rest. He commended the choice of facilitators, saying they were relevant and knowledgeable. He urged the participants to put into practise what they had learnt at the workshop. He advised the delegates to think about how to enhance their respective organisations work and profile. He finished with a call to UWA staff to utilise the proposal writing skills they had just acquired as funds were available to the organisation to support staff study and research.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge all the teachers on the workshop who made the workshop such a success. We also recognise and appreciate the role played by our collaborators WCS – Uganda in organising and hosting the workshop. Our appreciation also goes to UWA for initiating the workshop by seeing the need for their staff to acquire the skills offered by the workshop. We extend this appreciation to the other organisations which seconded their staff for the training i.e. WCS – Uganda, Makerere University and ITFC – Uganda.

Appendix 1: List of participants

	NAME	EMAIL	ORGANISATION
1	Atuhe Charles	atuhec@yahoo.com	Bwindi Impenetrable National Park (Uganda Wildlife Authority)
2	Ziwa Joel	jkziwa@gmail.com	Student (Makerere University)
3	Kyomukama Evelyn	kyomueve@yahoo.com	Lake Mburu Conservation Area (Uganda Wildlife Authority)
4	Jennifer Atuhairwe	jennifer.atuhairwe@uwa.or.ug	Uganda Wildlife Authority headquarters
5	Isaiah Owunji	iowunji@wcs.org	Uganda Wildlife Authority headquarters
6	Grace Nangendo	gnangendo@wcs.org	Uganda Wildlife Authority headquarters
7	Chripine Safari	safari@itfc.org	Institute of Tropical Forest Conservation - Uganda
8	Kisame Fred Eria	kisaf2001@yahoo.com	Mount Elgon Conservation Area (Uganda Wildlife Authority)
9	Kigenyi Richard	rkigenyi@yahoo.co.uk	Kibale Conservation Area (Uganda Wildlife Authority)
10	John Justice Tibesigwa	jjtibesigwa@yahoo.co.uk	Kibale Conservation Area (Uganda Wildlife Authority)
11	Aggrey Rwetsiba	aggrey.rwetsiba@uwa.or.ug	Uganda Wildlife Authority headquarters
12	Justine Namara	justine.namara@uwa.or.ug	Uganda Wildlife Authority headquarters
13	Olive Kyampaire	olive.kyampaire@uwa.or.ug	Uganda Wildlife Authority headquarters
14	Wanyama Fredrick	fred.wanyama@uwa.or.ug	Uganda Wildlife Authority headquarters
15	Kapere Richard	richard.kapere@uwa.or.ug or rkapere@yahoo.com	Uganda Wildlife Authority headquarters

Appendix 2. Workshop timetable

TBA – WCS Training Workshop: Timetable

Fundraising and communication skills: 1 - 4 May 2007

01-May	Writing skills
08:45	Welcome & introductions (AP)
09:00	Overview of the seminar & expectations from participants (RT)
09:10	Talk: Publishing your work: why, where and how (RT)
10:30	<i>Coffee</i>
10:45	Talk: Structure of reports and scientific papers (RT)
11:30	Practical: writing an abstract (RT)
12:30	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00	Feedback: abstract writing (RT)
15:00	Talk: Writing skills for reports and proposals (RT)
02-May	Fundraising Skills
08:30	General Talk: Establishing and maintaining conservation projects (AP)
09:15	Talk: Writing funding proposals: a general approach (JO)
10:20	<i>Te/ coffee break</i>
10:40	Talk: Writing budgets for proposals (RT)
11:30	Practical: what makes a good funding proposal (RT/JO)
12:30	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00	Feedback: results of the Practical (RT)
15:00	Discussion: lessons learnt
16:00	Talk: Identifying possible donors (RT)
03-May	Presentation Skills
09:00	Talk: Listening to talks (RT)
09:30	Delegates design presentation (RT/AP)
10:30	<i>Tea/coffee break</i>
11:00	Delegates presentations (RT) <i>2x10min talks</i>
13:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00	Group practical: what makes a good presentation? (RT)
14:45	Group feedback discussions: What makes a good presentation?
15:30	Talk: Useful tips for PowerPoint presentations (AP)
04-May	Communication skills
08:30	Guest Talk: Working with the media and the general public in conservation (JM)
09:15	Guest Talk: How the media works (GT)
10:00	Drafting a press release (AP) <i>Participants are given topic to write a press release for</i>
10:20	<i>Tea/coffee break</i>
10:45	Delegates presentations of press release <i>15 x 2min talks</i>
12:00	Group discussion: what makes a good press release? (AP)
13:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00	Feedback: working group
15:00	Discussion: Making the best of your training (RT)
16:00	Closing remarks, presentation of certificates and the closing ceremony

Teachers and resource people

Mr. Kizito Masinde (KM):	Project Officer, Tropical Biology Association
Dr. Rosie Trevelyan (RT):	Director, Tropical Biology Association
Dr. Andy Plumptre (AP):	Director, Albertine Rift Programme, WCS- Uganda
Prof. Joseph Obua (JO):	Makerere University
Mr. Joel MUSAASIZI (JM):	Wildlife Clubs of Uganda
Mr. Gerald Tenywa (GT):	New Vision Newspaper

Certificate of Participation

awarded to

<<name>>

For successfully completing a Specialists Training workshop in

'Fundraising and communication skills'

held in Kampala, Uganda

1 - 4 May 2007



Director, Tropical Biology Association

Director, Wildlife Conservation Society - Uganda