



Field Trips: Population-Health-Environment Projects in Kenya, DRC, and Madagascar

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Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

Edited Transcript – Dario Merlo

Good afternoon, everybody. Before starting with our Community Center Conservation Program, I want to tell you how the great pleasure it is for me to be here. Come from so far and be able to present you one of the country from which we generally listen some but things. So what I'm going to do today is to present you these but things but also show you what kind of results we can have despite all the problem we face there.

I will first start with a quick location of what we are doing and where we are doing our job. We work in the Eastern DRC, which is located in Central Africa, as most of you must know. And our program is based in the landscape tent that you can see in yellow on the, on the principal screen, principal image. So our landscape is about twice bigger than Rwanda so we are talking about big size landscape. And as you can see, the green in the landscape show the intact forest that are illustrated on the right corner. The red under -- on the image shows the different places where deforestation is happening. So when we are talking about climate change, we are talking about this. This is the problem we address. This landscape have really high potential in forest that I will present you later. You can see in the pictures below how bad can be things in reality if deforestation happen.

And I will move now to a group presentation of our landscape and what you find in it. The first thing is the rich biodiversity that you can see here. With lowland gorilla, about 90 percent of this species is contained in this landscape. You have also different species like Okapi, which is only found in this landscape in the world and in this forest. We can also talk about the size of this landscape, which is about 50,000 kilometers square. So at least this is a really important landscape defined by CARPE. We can talk about something that people are really interested in. When we talk about weather, this is one of the landscapes, which contain the biggest head weather of the Congo basin. So the availability of fresh water there.



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Let's move now to something that you may know. Congo is well known for its insecurity, as you can show here in the picture. We have this problem with a lot of uncontrolled person which have weapon. We have also as a consequences of this insecurity a lot of migration of people and poverty and extreme poverty there. As you may know, the illegal mining is also a threat in this landscape but you have also illegal lancing of endangered species like elephant, gorillas or [unintelligible]. And then what we are talking about also is the deforestation. People there do this deforestation not because they want to destroy the forest but because there is a lack of energy in this country so at least they cut trees for making some charcoal. So charcoal extraction is one of the biggest threat also.

Our program goal now is to attain a sustainable development in targeted zone for obtaining and contributing to conservation results where we are working. How do we do it now? That's what I'm going to present to you. The first part of -- the first component of our program is to support environmentally sustainable economic growth activities. The other one is to have -- to give access to people of primary healthcare. And then the main focus of us that we are trying to have there is to involve the community in what we are doing. So we think communities as our partners.

This is an example now on how we support the economy growth. This is the micro-central -- micro-hydro electric power in the village of Kasugho. This is a village which is well known in the area because it has the first and the only one university of conservation in Congo. So people who are there, and that's the reason why we emphasize on this place is because the people who are there will be the leader of the conservation in the future in DRC. So as you can see here, on the first picture you have the way we built it. We created a lake and a dam. The two people who are there can show you how big is the lake. And the interesting story of this is that this dam was built by the community itself.

Before Jane Goodall arrived there, the people already knew and decided that they need alternative source of energy if they want to protect the environment. So that's what they did. And JGI came for reinforcing the capacity to build it. So what we tried to do, because we didn't want that JGI is the manager of the -- will be the manager of the micro-hydro, we wanted to reinforce the local governance so we created a management committee of this micro-hydro and the management committee are people who come from the village and were elected by villagers.





Let's talk about the sustainability because this is one of the -- the biggest problem we have in DRC. Most of the emergency NGO who are there arrive with some projects, implement them and then just go. So at least you never know if the project will continue or not. And that's what we tried to avoid. So what we did, we made sure that this electricity generates -- will generate some incomes. So how we did it now, everybody who consume electricity pay a monthly cotization [spelled phonetically]. So the university was consuming electricity, pay cotization. Private people who have shops like you can see on the right side pay also some cotization.

But also, I want to emphasize the fact that this electricity generated give access to the university but also to the health centers who are in the area we are working in and also to the radio station that you can see on the second picture on the [unintelligible] side. It give access to electricity to the radio station. The radio station is something really important in the community we are living in for one reason. Here everybody have books, computers, television but you have to imagine that these people in remote places, they just listen to radio. When they are working, they listen to radio. Walking, everything they do, they listen to radio. So at least it help us to spread the conservation messages but also, as I will present you, the family planning and family planning aspects and every kind of local development, sustainable development we can have in the area.

Let's move now to the other part of the support of the economy group. We also provide income to farmers but also training so they have a sustainable way of developing livestock. We also train them by showing how we do it by creating some demonstration units. So at this here you have some pictures, which illustrate that. Our conservation efforts now for helping these people to protect their forest and their environment, we are trying to give some equipment to the park rangers and the eco-guards. The eco-guards are the people who are working in the community reserves that I will -- I'm going to talk about. The park rangers are the people who work in the national park which are include in the landscape.

So the result of this is the creation of more than two million acres of community reserves, which is a lot considering the size of the landscape, but also, these people were able to realize more than 229 patrols during this year. And during these patrols they have a lot of things that they find like ivory from elephants or snares. Here I just took this number because it's quite important, about 2,000 snares that they found there. And they also find people with gun who are just hunting so these people are able to bring out these people and arrest them. They were also able to realize a coverage of 40 percent of this forest. So it's maybe hard to





imagine how they can do it because they are doing that in the forest where there is no road so they have difficult access but at least they are able to realize it.

I was talking about the community reserves and that's exactly what is illustrated here. This map show the limit of the landscape. And in light green you have the two national parks that gave the name of the landscape. The landscape's name is Maiko-Kahuzi-Biega. This park -- these two parks are well known for the gorillas, which are there, and a lot of bad news are happening and discontent exactly these places. So in dark green now you have the community reserves that I was talking about.

So the question is to know how does these people create these reserves? Before JGI arrived in DRC some local leader that we call the Mwami -- Mwami means kings -- some local leaders decided to protect the environment. So what they did, they created some reserves because these people are the owner of some big lands in the landscape so they decided, okay, we have to protect it. Now, what they are waiting from us is to give them some support because at least if they protect the environment, if they don't want to cut trees or they want to have clean water instead of polluting, you have to give them the possibility to do it. Alternative source of energy is one of the key to do it but I will show you -- we will -- I will show you later how we implement that. But it's real important to understand this concept of community leaders because these people also give us access to us to the community. So at least it's really important to have them on board when we try to create any kind of activities.

Let's talk now about how we implement the health program. The first component of this health program is the malaria prevention. We distribute mosquito nets and also anti-malaria doses in the health zone we are working in. The other part of our health program is the family planning activities, and this is the biggest activity we have in the country as it was judged by the people there that it's a real need to give them access to different things. And that's exactly what we are trying to do. The first thing is that we try to train the healthcare providers, because at least they need to have this knowledge and so we can improve the way they are giving access to the people of primary healthcare. We also provide different methods such as IUD, female and male condoms, pills and some natural methods like cycle beds. What we do also -- because it was a lack of the government -- we tried to rehabilitate some clinics and health facilities. So actually, we have already rehabilitated six health facilities on 71 we are working in.





The other big part of our work is desensitization. And how we do it, we have three component on this aspect. The first one is by radio emission. So the radio, who has access to electricity are really important for us because it's the only place where we can spread the different messages concerning family planning but also environment. But also, we have a really interesting [unintelligible] group who are going from one village to another, from one area to another. And these people are able to sensitize and educate people on family planning but also on environment. And also, we have -- as I talked to you about the importance of sensitization of the communities, we have some volunteers in the communities that are called the CBDAs, the community based distribution agent, who are working in different villages and educate people in family planning.

So what we do also because it's something about from here is difficult to imagine that some health facilities don't have gloves or different disinfectants so what we try to do also is provide this kind of product. And for the following and the monitoring of the project we do a monthly monitoring and quarterly supervisory visit.

Let's talk about the numbers now. We work in three health zone in 71 facilities so we are talking about a lot of people, about half million people that we are trying to help in this area. And I will talk also about the target people, target women, which are the women who are at the reproduction age. There are about 123,000. Briefly I will give you this number that we did during the last four years. We conducted 41 training sessions, during which 894 providers -- healthcare providers -- were trained. So this represent a lot because at least in all the area you have 1,400 people working in the health facilities, so most of them have been already trained. We renovated, as I told you, six health facilities. We provided more than 236,000 doses of family planning methods. Actually, 489 CBDAs are working in the different communities, and we have a number of more than 15,000 people using the methods. So the scale of the landscape is a few but when you come from nothing, this is a lot already.

Let's talk about what we learned from our four years in DRC. The first one is that it's possible to obtain some results despite insecurity. At least you have to work carefully but the result can be effective. But I will say for having that, the local community governance is a key in the process. We will say that as a part of its the community leaders are the people who can help us to involve their communities and the people who are living there in what we want to do.





I will say, as I told you, that volunteers are key in the -- we have to educate and mobilize people on different aspects. And the use of the media, this is something that we don't think about but the access of knowledge in DRC is one of the biggest problem we had there, but we saw that when people can have access to it, this changed the behaviors. And I will say that the most important is to have the communities as partners. Last time when our president were in DRC, he came in the village and the first thing he did was to meet, as you can see here, with the local village chief. So this means a lot because when people from there see some American NGOs or European, foreign NGOs coming, generally these people don't work with the community so at least you never know what can be the result of your work. But if you involve them and if you show them the importance to have them with you in what you are doing, at least it reinforce your capacity to implement your project.

Now, the program challenges. As you can see, we have big infrastructure problems. This is our car when we were going into the field. At least instability and insecurity in DRC is something everybody knows, and in fact, it's a problem. But we deal with it and we obtain results just by the fact that they are instability and insecurity. The health facilities, as the roads, are in really bad condition so that's the reason why we are trying to renovate them. The lack of the government support, and this is also a reason why we try to involve these leaders, the Mwamis, which are considered like kings in the area because sometimes they are the only representative of the government in these places. And I will finish by saying the religious and cultural barriers are sometimes a problem but we also try to involve the different religious leaders in what we are doing. Thank you.

Sam Weru:

Okay. Thank you. And good afternoon, everyone. I am happy and privileged to be here in such a diverse country to share examples of our PHE work from one little Kenya -- one little village in Kenya known as Kiunga within Lamu district. And Kiunga is located to the north coast of Kenya next to the Somali border. And although I'll about talking about issues of insecurity, don't worry about the piracy.

Kiunga Marine National Reserve is one of the most biological diverse areas of Kenya. Perhaps it's the only remaining pristine marine area with pristine coral reefs. [Unintelligible] has about two-thirds of the standing biomass of mangroves in Kenya and the most important marine turtle-breeding site within Kenya. And for those of you who like big game fishing, it's one of the most important billfish-breeding site, I think, in the world.



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I talked about insecurity. Being close to the Somali border, we have suffered a bit from the infighting within Somalia. A number of Vodivesti [spelled phonetically] challenges with regard to marine turtle poaching because marine animals don't know any boundaries. And although we protect marine turtles on our side of the border, they are butchered across the border. However, within the area we have Lamu village or Lamu Island, which is has been declared a world heritage site a few years ago. It's one of those old coastal villages representing the Swahili culture. There's only one vehicle belonging to, I think, what you would call here the governor. And a lot of, a lot of transportation there is done by, by old traditional [unintelligible] known as dhows or a donkey. So there's a donkey clinic, actually, in order to treat, to treat donkeys. Just like you'd have your car garage.

But like my colleague Dario mentioned, logistical difficulties, there are no roads. Very close to what you saw in DRC, perhaps worse. Lack of business amenities like hospitals and schools, and therefore, it makes it very difficult and expensive to work in. WWF is the only NGO working there currently. Challenges in access to healthcare, like I mentioned, education, high level of literacy and a very high level of dependence on national resources, and therefore, you can imagine the threats to Vodivesti with ever increasing demand for food globally, and Kiunga being the -- one of the, I think the most productive area in terms of marine fisheries in Kenya. Most likely if you ever had lobster somewhere in a restaurant, I would bet you one out of ten you had one from Kiunga.

A lot of harvesting of mangroves is not sustainable. Although this has been addressed by the government by banning the export of mangroves to, to the Middle East, which was the biggest market. But a good thing is they still allow for domestic use of mangrove posts. By-catch and illegal -- use of illegal fishing methods is a big thing. Nets sizes that are below the threshold in terms of mesh size. The legal in Kenya is two-and-a-half-inch mesh. A lot of people use one-inch and less, up to the level of the mosquito net. I did mention earlier there's a high dependence on natural resources, both fish and mangroves because of lack of [unintelligible]. And therefore, it made it very difficult for us as WWF to spread our message of conservation.

It's one thing to tell people not to eat the marine turtle or not to cut mangroves or not to fish a certain species of fish or in certain area but they have no alternative. The immediate needs are health, water, education, and therefore, we looked at how we could spread out our message of conservation by integrating our work with social needs. They need health, so we





went in, and in collaboration with our health partners and the government, we started mobile clinics where we would go to all the villages and immunize children and expectant mothers. Basically because we would have also a doctor on board, we would treat any, any kind of ailment that we encounter. And while doing this we would also spread the conservation gospel. You get a dose of your vaccine, then you also get a dose of sands of conservation.

In some places we would develop infrastructure. The picture on the, on the left depicts one of -- a dispensary in one of the villages built by collaborative efforts of the village folk there. But it never operated because the government did not classify it as one of the -- as a suitable health facility. Therefore, they could not supply medicine or qualified personnel because it was substandard. So we went in and with the help of partners, Johnson & Johnson and USAID we built the structure you see on the right which has a pharmacy, a store for drugs, a consultation room.

It has a small room for expectant mothers. There's a big waiting area which can also work as a training center. And this is organized by the government, and therefore, this village was able to get medicine, although we still have challenges in terms of maintaining personnel there because the government would send the personnel to run the dispensary, but because of the challenges of living and surviving this area, the person sent there would not last for long. They would up to three months would look for transfer to work elsewhere. So we are still working on that. But at least that alleviates a lot of the health issues.

Water supply is a main challenge in this area. A lot of dependents on bore holes and wells. The one on the left is before intervention. This was an open bore hole, lots of dirt going in, and therefore, water contributes to a lot of disease in the village but we worked with partners to develop -- I mean, to cover the well and install a hand pump, treat the water and this eradicated the incidents of water-born disease in this one village, just that simple action. So it's very -- it's a very, you know, essential tool.

Because of all these logistics, the difficulties in logistics, any expectant woman depends on a traditional midwife for delivery as the first line of defense. And therefore, unless there are complications, rarely do they go to what you would call a hospital. Therefore, what we do is to train the midwives on better methods of delivery, on how to train the mothers on silver -- on how to provide nutrition for their newborn, how to take care of their children, or their babies, and the benefits of family planning and smaller families. And this has worked very well, although currently it is in conflict with the government policy because the government





policy is to do away with the midwives and replace them with qualified personnel. But in these kind of villages, it will take a while before this policy takes effect. So the midwives continue to play an important role in Kiunga, in this particular village.

I did mention the high dependence on natural resources and over harvesting of resources like fish. It is illegal in Kenya to use fishing gear that is below two-and-a-half-inch mesh, but 90 percent of the fishermen in this particular area use illegal fishing gear. So it's one thing to enforce the government law but that would, in essence, put 90 percent of the population out of livelihood. So we worked a program whereby we replace the illegal fishing gear with a legal one, would provide the fishing nets to the fishermen, and they would pay a certain percentage of the cost of that gear, given a time period. And by doing so, would reduce the conflict with the government, the fishermen would have -- would infringe less on the law. It would also increase the quality of their catch. The fish would be bigger and bigger, that is, the fish which is landed, and contribute to the ecological health of the environment.

The Kiunga area is at the, the meeting point of two ocean currents. One flowing from the north, the Somalia current and the one from the east African region, the confluence in this area, and by so doing there's a lot of debris that comes from all over the world. Flip-flops is one of -- is one big challenge. We organized the community groups, youth and women groups to collect this debris, especially the flip-flop, and work them into handicrafts: beautiful little things, wall hangings, bracelets, baskets, you know, just beautiful stuff that you can buy and make money out of it. The money goes in -- goes to provide for the needed domestic requirements, you know, lighting for the house, maybe some improved food, you pay school fees for your children, pay more, you know, pay more for healthcare. So it's very well needed cash in this region.

Another was -- of our health interventions is malaria control. As you know, children below five are affected more and more, and we provide bed nets to families with children below five years or expectant mothers, and this helps to control the incidence of malaria in the region. The youth are engaged in conservation activities that are fun to practice in. One of them is the marine turtle conservation. And by doing this together, working together with our partners, we talk about -- we spread a word or two on HIV/AIDS and how to practice safer sex. At the same time we would increase our conservation ideals.

Recently we did launch a satellite-tracking program where we will track marine turtles by satellite as they move all over the world. This began last July so we have yet to know all the



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individuals who are tracked right now are still within the east African waters so we yet know where they go beyond east Africa. But because of the involvement of the community, out of all the nests that are reported, 67 percent reported by the members of the community. And as a result of this collaboration, every year we are able to insure that 10,000 -- over 10,000 marine turtle hatchlings emerge and enter the sea successfully. This is our benchmark. Sometimes we get more than that.

In terms of family planning and immunization, we have seen the optic of family planning increase rapidly as well as coverage of immunization of children below five years has increased over time. We hope to -- we hope to reach their hundred percent coverage perhaps by this year or next year.

And to summarize our achievements in terms of livelihoods, I did mention of the flip-flop art. All the participating households are able to increase their, their monthly income by \$130. This may be nothing in terms of what you spend here in the U.S., maybe it's one day's expense while in town maybe traveling paying your taxi or your metro, but for a village in Kiunga which has no other household income, this is a lot of money and does a lot of -- it goes a long way in providing clothing and improving the domestic lifestyle. I have talked about how the community participates in our conservation work with an increased buy-in into our conservation work, support, local support from the politicians and the elders in the area.

We have increased our partners. As a conservation organization perhaps, you know, your donor base is limited to people who can only support conservation but by bringing in the PHE work, we bring in partners who otherwise only support humanitarian aid. So now by integrating conservation and environment work we are able to increase our donor base, and therefore, our funding base. The main message that we like to give the local population, the local politicians, the leaders in the area is that conservation is for you, the people, and it is supposed to be done by you, the people. In other words, we are conserving the environment for the people, and therefore, healthy people and healthy environment.

The lessons that we have learned over time is that it is important to integrate PHE work right from the beginning of the project. When you are planning PHE may be -- have been in practice for the last, I think, four years -- four to five years. But would have been worthwhile to start planning your project with PHE right from the very beginning, and that you insure that all your partners, after selecting your partners you insure that they understand what their





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role is going to be and what they are going to be responsible for and how they're going to join you in carrying all the activities and sharing the resources.

By and large, conservation -- the conservation world is practiced by biologists, and therefore, we may not know how to deal with changing people's behaviors and attitudes. If you're talking about family planning or talking about conservation, it's all about changing attitudes. And therefore, you need skills beyond the biological, the ecological skills. You need social skills. And we've learned the lesson that we need to bring in both biological skills and social skills in doing PHE work because you're dealing with -- basically dealing with changing people's behavior.

Sometimes as conservationists we are very comfortable doing what we do best. We are poor at communicating what we do. And I think PHE work needs to be effectively communicated to all levels, the policy makers, potential donors, and other scientists and practitioners in the field. And I'd like to end my presentation there. I thank you very much and wish that one day you'll be able to visit our beautiful seascape.

[applause]

Geoff Dabelko:

Well, thank you, all three of you. You've given us an awful lot to think about and talk about. Why don't we open it up to the discussion, and then I should also say for those viewing online, if you'd like to send in an e-mail question, as one already has, you can do that at ECSP@Wilsoncenter.org.

So who would like to kick us off with a first question or comment? And as I mentioned, one of my colleagues will bring a microphone to you. Who'd like to jump in first? Yes. Down at the end of the table. Karen will bring you a mic.

Sharon Rocklin [spelled phonetically]:

We have a kind of a random question, actually. Why are the mangroves exported to the Middle East? What are they used for?

Geoff Dabelko:

And if you could tell us who you are, sorry.



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Sharon Rocklin:

Oh, my name is Sharon Rocklin with JSI.

Geoff Dabelko:

Thanks, Sharon. Sam, go ahead.

Sam Weru:

Okay. Mangroves are very hard, very hard wood, very tough. It's termite resistant. It needs no treatment to survive atomic attack or the elements of nature. It -- they are used in construction basically and the -- where you would perhaps use concrete to make pillars and columns in a building, the mangroves replace that, especially in marine areas where corrosion of steel is very high.

So mangroves can last up to about between 30 and 50 years as pillars and beams in a building. So they're very good, tough wood for construction industry. They also use to make boats, boats and Daos [spelled phonetically]. Daos are traditional like the one you see on the bottom right. Though this is not a very clear on the slide, but this is a traditional vessel that sail the coastal waters of East Africa. And have known to sail between the middle east and East Africa for, you know, centuries, transporting goods between the two regions.

Geoff Dabelko:

I have a couple; I'm going to jump in. Sam, you mentioned that Johnson & Johnson support is something that was part of the package, and so in some ways the question for all of you but this -- the notion -- the advantages and disadvantages of multiple funders. Potentially for different parts of the projects, and how as is that either -- made it easier or made it harder or kind of -- what's the balance of your various experiences in having multiple funders for a single package, so-to-speak. Janet can you say a word about -- I was interested to hear about the improved rice production from a food security perspective, and the conservation perspective. What are you achieving with that particular program? And then I'll stop because I do see some other hands and I can keep going. But why don't we start with that.

Sam Weru:

Okay, if I can answer the question of multiple funding or multiple donors. It can be a challenge sometimes, because some donors come with vested interest. If you're not careful a particular donor might change your focus. For example we are basically an environmental project, Kiunga, but some donor might want you to change that into a health project. And



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therefore you've got to be very careful in insuring that the donor understands the principal focus of your project and comes in to compliment that rather than complicate it.

Sometimes if you have multiple donors or multiple funders, reporting can become an issue. Everybody wants a technical report in their own format, or a financial report in their own format. And you could imagine if you have, like, ten donors, ten different donors and each one is report in their own format. And yet, for example, like WWF we have our own format, so that can be a challenge. But in an area that is so remote, with not -- you know less interest from so many donors. Some donors look at the bigger picture sometimes; they like to fund global warming, for example. They like to fund perhaps a rally, you know, a public rally or demonstration. Yet you want to do something real. You know, you want to save a turtle; you want to put a tag not -- sometimes when you have such challenges of adequate funding you might as well take the chance but then you have to stand your ground, you know, the donor does not change your focus.

Geoff Dabelko:
[Unintelligible].

Janet Edmond:

Just, from CI's perspective we do have a lot of projects. Just Cambodia, for example, we have the French development agencies putting a lot of money into the Cardamom's protected area to delineate the protected area. I work with communities to work on that. So -- and that's a big grant. That's a very big grant. So we have actually seen that as an opportunity to leverage those activities and, and those resources and a lot of the consultations that have come in.

I know that there is one program we have at CI that has leveraged our program, and they've done a very good job. It's called Conservation Stewards Program, and basically they make agreements with communities and they're given some sort of benefits package and then they do certain conservation activities. For example, the pangolin is a species in that area that's very endangered and it's often the Chinese who -- there's a market in China and so the people in Cambodia are, are exporting that.

So what they've done is say to the communities, okay, we'll give you teachers in the schools who will stay there, and in exchange you can make sure that nobody takes the pangolins. And there's four street guards and that kind of thing. So, and that program really built on a



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lot of what we had done with the land use planning and that kind of thing. So there are disadvantages to having lots of donors but there's lots of opportunities, too, I think, that we see there, so.

Male Speaker:

On rice, do you want to mention --

Janet Edmond:

On rice? I'm not a rice person. I don't know all the details.

Male Speaker:

Neither am I. That's why I asked you.

Janet Edmond:

There's actually two things. We're not doing rice production in the Philippines but in Cambodia, where I believe Sara Milne [spelled phonetically], who was here a couple of years ago did a presentation where she had indicated that they had done some research in the Cardamoms, and communities there, families there only had enough food for like eight out of 12 months. So they, they didn't have sustainable, you know, sources of food. So what we did there was to look at a lot of the areas that had laid fallow [spelled phonetically] and mostly that was because of the civil conflict.

And again, with this stewards' program we looked at areas that were being used, weren't being used and we did partner with a group called CDEC [spelled phonetically], which is the Cambodian Center for Education and something else. I'm sorry, I can't remember exactly. But they have done a lot on improved rice production, and so we worked with them to be able to get a tractor in there. I think at one point we actually used buffalo to go in there and try to, to still the -- whatever that word is, to try to get the land back in use. And there were plots that were put -- right, exactly. So there were plots put back into production.

And the idea is to make it sustainable so it's not using a lot of pesticides and fertilizers but to do it in a way that's environmentally sustainable and conservation --[break in audio] -- Madagascar but without the kind of partner, the high level partner. We're kind of doing it more on the ground so, you know. And both of those they have seen increases in the, you know, amount of rice production and hectares. I think we have had like 500 and something hectares under improved rice production so -- and it helps with habitat, too. So it's not so



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destructive.

Male Speaker:

John.

John Pelamire [spelled phonetically]:

Hi, I'm John Pelamire. I'm an independent consultant, and I have involved in evaluated these PHE programs, and I'm going to ask you a question I've probably asked you before but I might get an update. Do -- these are excellent pilots from the results and the question always is: What do you do with an excellent pilot? First, can you sustain it when the donor goes away or can you find somebody to help you scale it up? And how have you done in your programs? Have you found either? Either a way to sustain the program when the donor departs or a way to scale them up?

Sam Weru:

Okay. From my experience in Lamu is that we've been so far -- we have been successful in what we are doing in smaller area in Kiunga and we're now scaling up, and we have found two donors to help us scale up, and I'm happy about that. The only way to insure that you sustain your efforts when you don't have funding anymore is to work with local partners, both government and community so that, you know, the momentum is built even after -- you know, within the time frame when you have funding, and therefore, they will be able to continue thereafter. In Kenya we are working with the Minister of Health. One organization is Family Health International. I believe they have an office in the U.S., and also lots of community groups. Each religion has a community group that deals with health issues.

Janet Edmond:

Well, I don't really have a great answer to that question. We do have a lot of work to do on scaling up. It's one of our main challenges. I think a great opportunity that has recently come about is the new PHE technical leadership project, which has come out of the Office of Population and Reproductive Health. It's called the Balanced Project. We have a fact sheet, actually, that we can circulate, and CI is a partner. We're a sub to the University of Rhode Island Coastal Resource Center and we can hear from Linda, who is the project director, maybe in a minute.

Let me just go back to the scale up for a minute. We are -- CI itself is still working very much in the Philippines and Madagascar and hoping to continue in Cambodia. We do have



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some fundraising to do, to be honest. We do need to look for some alternative sources of funding. We have a lot of ideas. We're working on it. We are also working through a lot of the existing networks that have set up. We have some great networks in the Philippines, which is working at a national level with all the NGOs who have made a lot of accomplishments there. Madagascar, the same thing, we're hoping to work through that network. And so we have a lot of momentum and we do have a challenge of getting money in hand definitely, but maybe Linda can talk for a minute about the new project. Would that be okay?

Geoff Dabelko:

Can we give Dario a chance first to, to talk about his experience and then absolutely.

Dario Merlo:

I would say that as some said, the first important thing is to -- when you start a project you have to think about the sustainability of this project. So what we do in our case in the DRC, we try to involve the community governance. So at least we always keep in perspective that there are possibilities. In the best-case scenario we will stay there but there are possibilities that some day we will leave. So we try to help the communities to manage by their self. Also, what I was -- we have tried to do during this last two years is to involve the governments, the national government in what we are doing because we have to keep in mind that what we are doing is because there is a lack of government support, at least, so we have to involve them more. And it becomes a real challenge during the elections because it's the time where everybody want to show what he's able to do, and these people from the government, that's exactly when we are trying to involve them in our activities because they want to show also to the people that they are doing something. So at least we are trying to figure out this by responding with local governance and involving the communities.

But I will briefly say something about the different sources of donors. I think the best part of our program is that it's an integrated approach. So each donor can find a way to find what is interesting in our program by taking into consideration what is their focus. So some of them are more focused on health activities, family planning, or malaria. Different one are more focused on livelihood and different alternative source of energy. So at least we try to take advantage of this and take that as an opportunity.

Geoff Dabelko:

And Sam, can I just, for a moment, follow-up on your point saying that the Ministry of



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Health is involved? Is there -- was there some lesson there and how you brought the government, the national government in to provide some of their resources rather than the external donor driven? Was there -- was it data and results? Was it filling a need that's less expensive for them to do a need and provide services that they otherwise would have to do? Was there a key deliverable that your project had that meant that the ministry paid more attention and wanted to put money into it?

Sam Weru:

Well, I think one that the government found it easy to get involved is that we walked through the local representation of the government, that is, the local district hospital. And one thing that you have to do is to get the medical office of health in that district to work with you, to support what you're doing, to involve him in the planning and kind of try to iron out what are his challenges. The government may have personnel but may lack perhaps a vehicle to move out into the field. They may even have the drugs in the district hospital but lack of mechanism to distribute those drugs.

And that's the kind of need we filed, we filed within these remote areas. That is provide a mechanism, a logistical system to the government to provide a service that they should always be providing. And you know working with them we were able to find out that the dispenser that was in this one village could not get services because the government does not [unintelligible] it. And therefore in those discussions we came up with, what if we build a dispenser would you be able to support it? And the office said okay fine yeah we have three or four plans; choose the one that you can afford to build. And they can't go back on that. They know they promise to get involved because you provided a need which they were lacking or they were unable to provide and end up feeling compelled to take action and to get involved.

Geoff Dabelko:

That's good.

Same Weru:

And to build their own capacity, you know because they do realize that as an NGO you may pull out at any one time. And since they're involved with what we are doing, they have a target also to achieve. Once -- if we were to withdraw.

Geoff Dabelko:



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I think that's a very valuable lesson. Linda, could you tell us about the balanced program?

Linda Bruce:

Yes, thank you very much, and I'm not going to take very much time because this is really their stage. But since it was brought up, Janet, I'm Linda Bruce, the project director for the Balance Project. We were just awarded the University of Rhode Island's Coastal Resource Center. We were just awarded the five-year cooperative agreement. Our partners are PFPI, Path Foundation Philippines, in the Philippines obviously, and Conservation International. And I've passed around a little flyer.

I would like to address my comment to address yours, John and it's nice to meet you. I've read so many of your documents. I've worked on the I Pop Corn Project [spelled phonetically] in the Philippines.

First of all we have three areas of focus in the Balance Project. One would be increasing PHE knowledge among donors of field to get more advocacies around the area and spreading the information and knowledge for everybody to use and tap into. The second would be building the capacity of people in the field, of the practitioners and policymakers in the field to actually be able to pull together and develop their own projects. The third area of focus is the most weakly funded as most of you guys know who work in development. It's going to be, we will need to seek funding from outside sources, missions, et cetera to foster the implementation of field-based PHE projects.

And, of course, we really would like to build on what's already out there so our job is to do a major advocacy work to support and gardener funding to continue very successful projects have been put in. But that's where we don't have guaranteed money. So like all of the international development projects that I've worked on and most of you have worked on, you know continuing sustainability is always the biggest challenge, and we've got five years to try to work on that and then you can ask me in five years if I've addressed your questions, thank you.

Male Speaker:
Kristen?

Kristen Patterson:

Kristen Patterson with the Nature Conservancy. I know in the case of JGI with Dario,



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they've already sort of -- the project in the DRC is a replication of work that they've already done, started in Kugoma [spelled phonetically] so that's an example of JGI sort of taking the PHE approach to scale and other landscapes. But as we all know WWF and CI are much larger organizations than JGI is and they work in many countries all over the world, and I'm curious to know, from your perspective, how much success you've had in sort of selling this approach to senior managers within your organizations and why or why not you think that doing integrated population health and environment work has been accepted or not accepted within your organizations?

Geoff Dabelko:

And after they answer I'll ask you to say, answer that for TNC as well.

Kristen Patterson:

I've only been at TNC for one year so I take no responsibility. I'm working on it.

[laughter]

Sam Weru:

Actually the work we are doing in Kenya is a part of the all the PHE work in Philippines, and Madagascar, and Congo, already that's one big plus. But within WWF we are trying to market so-to-speak the PHE work within other programs. And currently we are planning to introduce all the program managers for other programs within, at least within the East African region to the work that you are doing, what I've just shown you here, to kind of create a curiosity if not a need for them to integrate the PHE work in their programs, so we are working on it.

Janet Edmond:

I think for CI as Sam had already mentioned, conservations groups have been mostly run by biologists so it's been a tough sell, there's no way to whitewash that. But, you know our outcomes are species protected, hectare is protected, that kind of thing. So our outcomes are a very, very high level, and the activities that we're doing and the accomplishments we have are kind of supporting those outcomes, but they're not very close to it. It's a long progression. It takes a long time to be able to convince people that we have reduced population pressure, that kind of thing.





But I have to say I do feel that there's a tide turning within a lot of organizations. In fact I read something that TNC had up, it was an issue of their magazine, which was about people and their role in conservation; it was a couple months ago. And so I feel like -- I know at CI we're having lots of discussions about this, you know that live harmoniously with nature, human societies. We're really trying to unpack that and figure out how we can really tackle that. So there's a lot of discussion going on and I think a lot of things are changing.

I think a lot of; kind of the funding is driving this. I've been to several meetings of groups of population organizations that are saying, "Oh we should really get with the environmental community," and then the environmental community is saying, "Oh we should really do more development and health." And so I think there's a lot changing, but I do think it's hard because I do think as we had talked about earlier before this meeting, conservation groups don't want to touch population. They just want to leave it, I think. But I think the more that they can see the goodwill that's built by these projects at the community level, there's a lot there we can tap into.

Sam Weru:

Maybe I should add to that and say that -- you know it can be -- it can open up a whole big argument especially from the classical conservationists. The more you educate them, the more your footprint, the bigger your footprint. The more you improve people's health, and the more you [unintelligible] the population and therefore they demand, so it can be a very, it can become an academic argument. So it's not an easy thing to do. And even within the conservation organizations, you know we still have our own challenges of convincing some people that we should do PHE work. But the examples that we are presenting here, I think the case has been made that the only way to succeed in your conservation work is to integrate with social needs.

Geoff Dabelko:

Having had Jane Goodall here at the center a couple of times, she speaks very eloquently about these linkages so Dario at least has the benefit of the top person getting it so-to-speak right away and right from the beginning. Jason?

Jason Remmer [spelled phonetically]:

Thanks, Jason Remmer from PRB. Thank you for your presentations and seeing a number of these sort of exposés where we have presentations to the community in Washington about these types of projects, and I think it's a great outlet for professionals in the United States.





I'm concerned with how this message is getting out to your peers in your own countries and whether or not Sam and Dario in Kenya if other people in other organizations know about your work or this integrated approach and in DRC. Have there been -- are there opportunities for you to share the experiences or are there networks that are set up that allow you to share these experiences?

Dario Merlo:

Thank you for the question. I will mention something that's really amazing in DRC. Before we arrived there, as I told you these leaders, these community leaders already decided to create some reserves because they knew that they have to protect at least their environment because they are seeing the consequences in different areas. In the village they live in all the trees are gutted, the water is bad, so at least they are always obliged to go far away from where they live and there are risks for that. At least these people really want to conserve their nature and it has to come from them. At least the people who work for NGOs or any kind of organization, they can just help them to reinforce their desire to protect what they have, and that's exactly what we do.

So at least when I went back from Ethiopia, I was with [unintelligible]. When I went back and I say that I will go there and elaborate an action plan and that's exactly what we did there. We decided what our priorities from where we have to start and how we will start to elaborate an integrated approach. So I think that it's already accepted by the people there and if sometimes the donors or the people in our office don't see the clear link between environment, population, and health, the people who live there in the villages see it.

Sam Weru:

Let me mention in Kenya we are not -- WWF is not the only organization who are doing this kind of work. I'm aware of the [unintelligible] Project of the European Union working with the pastoralists in the north of Kenya and last month, September, I had occasion to visit four conservancies to try to look at what lessons the fisherman who I work with, what lessons can they learn from pastoralists who are doing the same thing. So we are not the only ones who are doing this. There are other projects that are doing this.

In terms of getting other colleagues to get a dose of this PHE work? Yes, like I mentioned earlier we are planning an exchange visit for our colleagues based out of the Nairobi office to visit [unintelligible] showing you here to experience the work that we are doing. And this is





with a view to arouse interest in them to start similar things, similar projects within their program sites, you know be it fresh water, savanna, or forests.

Geoff Dabelko:

And I think, Jason just to put it back in some ways on you I think the regional network programs at PRB has been so instrumental in doing for East Africa, for in the Philippines and such. Those are some of the, at least from my vantage point some of the most effective mechanisms where there's been that lessons learned sharing process that many -- I mean this was the Ethiopia Conference a number of us have referenced. That's been very useful and so if you haven't connected to that process, PRB and Jason is a good one to talk to about that.

We did get a question from a journalist online who wanted to ask, particularly from the Africa cases, whether you have seen any difference in public attitude in environmental awareness before and after the Greenbelt Movement and when Gara Matai [spelled phonetically] was recognized with the Nobel Peace Prize. In many ways her, the Greenbelt Movement has many of these different integrated programs and objectives in it. Is that something that has been detectable at all in terms of giving you more political space to operate in? Since this start with Kenya?

[laughter]

Sam Weru:

The environmental movement in Kenya has been growing from strength to strength. Of course we organized the efforts of Juan Gara Matai. A lot of community groups have come up to do work in our forestation. Right now a key issue in Kenya today is conserving water towers sort of this mountain forest that act as the catchment, water catchment areas. Right now there's a very hot political debate where some people are supposed to be moved out of the forest, which is a water catchment area. So there's an increased level of awareness within Kenya on the need to protect their environment and especially to protect water catchment areas that provide water to people in the cities. So there is an increase, yes.

Dario Merlo:

I would say that since 2004, that exactly when we started our program in DRC, as I mentioned more than two million hectares of community reserves were created and I think that's -- if we have to talk about conservation in the caterers of the desire of the people to protect their environment, this is one of them. But I think that we have to know that people





in Africa and especially who are living in the Congo Basin forests really want to protect what they have there because everywhere the people who have access to knowledge know that this place is so important, and the situation of the Congo Basin actually is so critical as you may have seen in the satellite -- my image, sorry my French sometime is just -- as you saw, maybe in the satellite image, the Congo Basin is the only remaining intact forest in Africa and one of the latest in words on earth so these people know that they have to protect their environment now. The question is how do we address their problem? How do we respond to their needs, and that's exactly what we have to think about and do now.

Geoff Dabelko:

Perfect. Thank you Dario. Ray?

Ray Shonholtz:

Can you tell us a little bit about -- Ray Shonholtz [spelled phonetically] here at the Woodrow Wilson Center, public policy scholar. Can you tell us a little bit about the types of conflicts you're encountering at the local level and the processes if any that you use or others use to respond to them? And secondly both the last two speakers, Sam and Dario you've mentioned one -- you mention the water catchment areas and the political sensitivity about moving people out. From a public policy process, what's being used to do that in a constructive way or is it just a government edict? And to Sam, well on the point you just made what are the methods used then to deal with that kind of problem that you just addressed?

Sam Weru:

Well I don't think I would like to comment on behalf of the Kenyan Government.

[laughter]

But what's happening is that the people who have settled in these particular water tower, are basically going to have to be settled elsewhere. That means identifying land for them to settle and to provide some kind of mechanism for them to reestablish their homes elsewhere. In terms of the conflicts that you mentioned, I can talk about Kyunga, not Kenya in general.

There are issues, you know if you, when you're thinking of an area with challenges, inadequate resources for survival, there's a big conflict between natural resources and human survival. You're trying to protect this, and I think, you know from Dario's presentation and my presentation, you kind of realize that these [unintelligible] hot spots are usually in the





very remote areas where there are very few, if any public amenities, and that can be a challenge for you.

If, for example you're seen or you're perceived by the local people to be in a position to address one of their needs, you become a source of inspiration for them and therefore you become the recipient for all their requests for assistance [unintelligible] to replace what government is supposed to provide. And if you can't provide that, it becomes a headache for you, you know, it becomes an issue. You know you don't supportive enough and can be counterproductive to your work. And that's why it is important to work with the community groups and community leaders and that they understand that you're only able to do so much and that you have a primary focus which is an environmental conservation, but integrating a few of these human needs.

One of the biggest conflicts we have in Lamu Kyunga area is with the fishermen because they ask you a key question. Why should we protect marine turtles here in Kenya only for them to be dead in Somalia? Are we protecting for the Somalis to eat? Now how do you answer that? You have to try and explain that whatever little action that you take here locally is a global effort and that to even protect one marine turtle requires the effort of everyone, not just the villager there or [unintelligible] who is making policy. That it's a global effort. For them to understand that may be a challenge, but nevertheless you have to face it.

Dario Merlo:

I would say that the movement of population is most of the time in our country in DRC, the consequences of the conflict you are talking about. I will make the point on this insecurity in the [unintelligible] of the countries and you see where we work. The first component I want you to take into consideration is that we work with community leaders which I call the kings in local language the [foreign language]. These people have a real infringe on any kind of armed group in the area. So when these people are against these groups, they cannot live in the places the community leaders are.

Another thing that I will mention is the size of the area we are talking about. Eastern DRC's a really big, big area and when we talk about the problem, the conflict, and the insecurity we talk about two little places which are called Massisi [spelled phonetically] and Ochuhu [spelled phonetically]. And on the size of the landscape it is less than 10 persons, so we don't work where people are fighting; we work where people want to protect their environment and want to have a sustainable development.



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So at least it's true that sometimes some army group can move from one place to another, but there is an aspect I want to bring up here and it's the fact that people, they don't want to go and destroy some project which are funded by USAID or any kind of international NGOs because they just know what can be the consequences to attack or destroy something that people took time and a lot of funding to implement.

And these leaders, these community leaders are helping us in the same direction. And I will also say that even if sometime there are conflicts, the work we are doing help the people live in these zone of conflicts because at least -- the question I was asking to these people who are in army group is why are you taking some weapon and go fight for something that you may not trust in it. And they were just telling me because now I can eat every day and I have a weapon so I am powerful. And the main problem there is because the level of life of people is, they live in extreme poverty so at least it's easy for these people to have a weapon and be stronger.

I will continue by saying that we heard a lot about rapes women in DRC, and that's something so bad which is happening in a really precise area where all these uncontrolled people are. And it's so bad that we have to talk about. So what we do and we saw a lot of women, raped women who came in the different villages where we work because now they have access to primary health care. It's something when these women are in bad health condition, they don't have accessing to conflict places so we are seeing movement of these people come in and trying to find peace where we are trying to, where we are working.

And I will finish by saying that what we are responding to is a question that interests all of us: when we are talking about climate change, when we try to protect the forests, when we try to have a sustainable way to live with the nature, when we talk about global security, because this is a real problem there, a lot of people living in poverty can be easily influenced to incorporate some group army and this is at the local level, but it can be more dangerous if we don't do anything against that. I would say also we are talking about preserving the species, not only the animal species, but all the trees, the vegetation species so at least we are talking about a big issue there. And I will say by taking that into consideration, even if the situation is not always good there, we have to work there, because we can't not do nothing there. We cannot say we will move from there because there is sometimes insecurity. But we are trying to work carefully, but at least effectively.





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Geoff Dabelko:

A question over here. Rachel, if you could bring the microphone here in front.

Mark Peterson:

Hi, Mark Peterson from the Board on Global Health at the Institute of Medicine. And I was wondering what role you thought there might be for private companies to partner with NGOs or government organizations in PHE work and do they have anything to bring to the table? And if so, what might encourage them to get more involved?

Geoff Dabelko:

And do I start since you're partnered with one of those companies?

[laughter]

Sam Weru:

Yeah, I think with private companies it's very essential that you partner with people like us --

[laughter]

-- Because we are integrated in terms of our conservation efforts. While it takes 30 years to see a turtle -- a young hatchling coming back to lay the eggs. We can build a dispenser and show it to you in your lifetime with a CEO of a private company. And I think that's what you want to see. It's difficult for most private companies to see a tree growing in 30 years. It's difficult for -- most private companies want to see impact now.

On conservation projects about the future, you know is a future desired condition. But when you integrate PHE work into your environmental work, you're able -- like what I showed you as that there was no dispenser and now you have one. There's a [unintelligible] we can show you the [unintelligible]. And that's really an opportunity for private companies to engage because they can see the results, you know, firsthand.

Janet Edmond:

CI does do a lot of outreach to private companies; we have a whole division that works on that. And I would have to say private medical companies is something that we haven't really investigated, but we are looking into, we're thinking about that. So also I should mention on



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behalf of World Wildlife their global development alliance, which they just did with Johnson and Johnson, which is a major achievement with Johnson and Johnson putting in a million dollars and USAID putting in a million dollars. So that's a huge achievement that they've made.

Dario Merlo:

Are we've not had more, I think some summarize. What I think we can help get quick results in what we are doing in different activities so, yeah.

Geoff Dabelko:

Yes, right back over there?

Lutvia Ahmed [spelled phonetically]:

I'm Lutvia Ahmed from [unintelligible] International and you know you've talked about deforestation, that's a big threat to conservation, and your health programs are also addressing child health issues like ARI. And I'm wondering if there's a need or opportunity for household level energy interventions, specifically fuel efficient, clean-burning cook stoves, which would address the deforestation aspect as well as the child health aspect?

Janet Edmond:

We do actually do a bit of that. I just kind of gave you a snapshot, but we are doing some things like that, and also I know other organizations like World Wildlife in Nepal are working on bio-gas stoves and that kind of thing. So there are efforts like that, but there's definitely a lot of opportunity there that we need to be working more on, definitely.

Sam Weru:

You know we are also exploring wind and solar power for two villages within our work area, basically to run these health facilities, provide some level of domestic power to some political areas like a small, cold storage for fish to avoid a lot of very high post-harvest loss of fish. So we are working on it together with private companies that have donated this equipment.

Dario Merlo:

Thank you for your question. I think you are definitely right. This is exactly what we need. When you ask people to protect their environment at least, as I said, they don't want to destroy their forest, this is just because there is a real need. So in fact they are requesting



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already for green stoves, these fuel-efficient stoves. We are also working on a project of briquettes, which are little bricks made with vegetables, vegetation and [French], is there anybody --

Female Speaker:
Boxes?

Dario Merlo:

Yes, old boxes and paper that people collect in different villages. So at least this is a response. So what we try to do with the -- what we did with the community was to say the reserves you cannot go and touch it, anyway. The place where they are living we call it the development zone. That's somewhere where they can have activities, or any kind of business there. And between the protected reserves and the development zone they are what they call the buffer zone. This is somewhere, where people can plant trees or if someone sometime they can go for hunting or cutting some trees, but they have, they need to have the agreement of the local management committee of the reserves. So at least this is a way to respond to their needs, yes.

Geoff Dabelko:

I neglected ahead of time to say that we have the good fortune of being able to have a reception after today's meeting so I'm glad so many of you have stayed so that we can continue this conversation informally. I think the three of you have given us an awful lot of insight into what you're doing, programs that are not at the beginning, obviously, but not at the end. And so that's terrific that we'll be able to hear about more of what you're doing so we thank you very much for doing that.

And also we urge everyone to kind of take advantage of these cases and telling people and pointing them to the Web sites and certainly ours will have reports from this meeting and a video and such, but also some of the different publications by a range of the people here trying to capture some of these cases and share these lessons learned across regions because, of course, that's a big part of why we group these so that we can share the lessons learned from these field-based programs and try to improve all of our joint endeavors. So please join me in thanking our panelists for really an outstanding [inaudible].



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