



GENDER DYNAMICS IN WILDLIFE LAW ENFORCEMENT



SUMMARY REPORT MARCH 2023





GENDER DYNAMICS IN WILDLIFE LAW ENFORCEMENT: SUMMARY REPORT

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This summary report is an extract from the mini study on gender dynamics in wildlife law enforcement commissioned by the Wildlife Conservation Society and executed by Monica Kaporiri Namumbya.

DISCLAIMER

This report is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the USAID/ Uganda Combating Wildlife Activity implemented by the Wildlife Conservation Society. The contents of this report are the responsibility of the Wildlife Conservation Society and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States government.

INTRODUCTION AND APPROACH

This summary report presents the finding from a short and quick study on gender dynamics in wildlife law enforcement, commissioned by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) under the USAID/Uganda Combating Wildlife Crime (CWC) Activity. The study clarifies the value of gender considerations and integration for more effectiveness in combating wildlife crime by revealing challenges encountered by people on the frontline based on their sex, age, rank, tribe, and marital status.

The information was generated through a detailed questionnaire survey involving men and women in management positions and frontline rangers, key informants' interviews with managers, and focus group discussions with male and female Rangers in Murchison Falls National Park and Karuma Wildlife Reserve. Participants from Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) made up 71% of respondents. The process included a validation half-day workshop with the National anti-Wildlife Crime Coordination Task Force members, which endorsed the results as representing the experiences and views of the respondents and recommended that results remain as presented.

There were four objectives of this study, namely:

- To document how gender issues are incorporated or taken into consideration in the different institutions involved in wildlife law enforcement.
- To document the roles of different genders (men, women, youth, etc.) in abating wildlife crime at national and community levels.
- To explore the influence of gender on leadership in law enforcement.
- To profile the challenges faced by women and men in the field of wildlife law enforcement.

The study employed the gender and intersectionality lens to shed light on how individuals' different identities overlapped and intersected with the organizational culture and norms to produce the complex and dynamic experiential realities of individual men and women in wildlife law enforcement. It was designed as a rapid appraisal to generate as much information from different gender groups' perspectives as possible, triangulate findings, and present insights into the gender dynamics in wildlife law enforcement.

However, the scope did not provide for a literature review and further limited the number of respondents and adequate engagement with the other agencies in wildlife law enforcement. Overall, participants came from Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), National Forest Authority (NFA), Uganda Civil Aviation Authority (UCAA), Internal Security Organization (ISO), Uganda Police Force (UPF), Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) and Directorate of Citizenship and Immigration Control (DCIC).

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The gender and intersectionality lens revealed underlying reasons why people with the same academic qualifications, for example, had different experiences in wildlife law enforcement. The identities of education, sex, age, tribe and marital status emerged as most important, influencing decision-making in deployment, promotion, access to essential resources, interactions between colleagues, team dynamics, and interactions between leaders and subordinates. The sections below give a succinct summary of the results under each objective.

Considerations of gender issues in wildlife law enforcement

Gender policy: All program considerations begin with policy provisions. Based on the key informant interviews, none of the organizations had standalone gender policies. They had, gender policy provisions within the human resources, recruitment, and public service polices. These served to guide the implementation of maternity and paternity leaves, off days after working for 22 days in the field, exemptions from patrols and night duty for pregnant and breast-feeding mothers, medical coverage for families, fees for four children, and day care facilities and ramps in National Forest Authority. While these policy provisions were helpful and detailed, separate gender policies were necessary to elevate the need for gender integration to the organizational system level, to effectively demonstrate the commitment to gender responsiveness by the agencies in wildlife law enforcement, and to assist in resource mobilization.

Gender budgeting and essential resources: Gender budgeting, as a practice that focuses on gender-based analysis, an equity-oriented estimation, and evaluation of the distribution of resources periodically, was a new concept to respondents. All agencies had budget lines for specific gender-related needs, but with undertones of implementation challenges and inadequate resources. Only a few of the provisions in the gender policies were fully implemented.

Access, control, and ownership of essential resources: Adequate resources are central for successful gender integration. There was a general lack of resources in UWA. Out of a list of 51 items listed by respondents, none of the rangers present accessed all of them.

Access was dependent on:

- The source of funding: Programs funded by NGOs had more resources.
- Rank of individuals: higher ranking officers accessed most of what they needed than the ones below.
- Position in the team: Team leaders controlled all team resources.
- Experience: the experienced were entrusted with essential targets.
- Sex: men who dominated the patrols, accessed more resources than women.
- Tribe: Favoritism based on tribe was suspected.

Access to resources reflected the organization's importance on the roles assigned to individual employees. Overall, males who carried out patrols had more resources than their female counterparts who performed other duties. Formal and informal laws and norms: There were enabling policies and laws that provided overall guidance and freedoms of operations and governed interactions among men and women in wildlife law enforcement. Mentioned were, the Wildlife Act 2019, Human Resource Manual in UWA, NFA's National Forestry and Tree Planting Regulation (NFTPA) 2003, and National Forest Tree Planting Regulation (NTFPR) 2016. Unfortunately, limiting informal practices weaken the formal laws rendering them ineffective. There was a need for a review of policies and their implementation processes considering gender, to identify and address the strengths, weaknesses, and gaps.

Gender dynamics in teams: Defined as relations and interactions between and among people in an organization, based on their multiple identities, gender dynamics were complex, and a few gaps emerged. First, the criteria used for team composition did not consider or see "people" and their identities but rather emphasized experience, discipline, abilities, etc. Gender considerations were implied but not specifically mentioned as important for teams. Both men and women, young and elderly, participated in patrols, but the continual involvement of individual women and the elderly men was deliberate and happened after conscious consideration. They considered the purpose of involvement (orientation or filling gaps), the levels of risk of the operation (safety), value addition (if there was a specific need for them), and malice (to punish someone). The design of patrol teams favored and provided for youthful, energetic, and agile male team members as compared to the women. Consequently, patrols brought out the weaknesses instead of the strengths of women and elderly men. On the other hand, women did well in teams at the gates (hospitality services to park visitors), community policing, intelligence gathering, and investigations, and these roles brought out the strength of the women.

Terms of reference for team leaders: Generally, the terms of reference were masculine for the patrol priority areas, arrests and collecting of snares. These required physical strengths and speed, knowledge and experience of the route and area to be patrolled, ability to command and order, competencies in legal provisions for handling suspects, briefing teams, debriefing with the supervisors, and persistence to have operations succeed. Women had to develop the mindset of men to succeed and remain in combat-related patrols. Two opposing propositions came up regarding women and patrol: "women will never be like men, exempt them from all patrols" and "women need to prove themselves in patrols to qualify for promotions"; exemptions disadvantage them". The challenge seemed not to be the actual participation in patrols but rather the differences in attributions of honor assigned to the tasks assigned to men and women. There was need for recognition and a reward system for the roles given to women. The validation workshop noted that the short study did not consider the UWA sectors of Tourism, Research, and Monitoring, where most women in UWA work. Enabling and limiting team behaviors of men and women: These were different for men and women. They were situational and time specific.

Respect was the most enabling team behavior for men in both focus groups; intimidation, intrigues, and mistrust were the most limiting behaviors. Cooperation, effective communication, and teamwork were the women's most important enabling behaviors. Intimidation, withholding information, harassment, and comparisons were the most limiting behaviors. It was clear men and women were motivated or demotivated by slightly different team behaviors.

Roles of different genders in abating wildlife crime at the national level as well as community level.

Representation of men and women: Overall, there were more men than women in wildlife law enforcement. Mubako, as a case in focus, the ratio of men to women was 31 men: 11 women. The same huge difference was reflected in NFA and UPF's estimates. Only UCAA had 50:50 from the Immigration Officer level downwards. Men dominated the combat-related patrols and arrests. Women were more active in escort and guard duties, managing gates, community engagements, intelligence, and investigations, and providing information to tourists. Women participated in several roles. However, they were always fewer than their male counterparts, which is attributable to the nature of work that seems to favor men more than women. Nonetheless, the validation workshop clarified that other sectors in UWA (Tourism and Research) had many more women.

Dynamics working with different age groups of men and women: Age-specific attributes that cut across agencies included knowledge, skills, and experience. Although all age groups had both beneficial and challenging attributes, these were not consciously used by management to maximize the benefits and minimize the challenges. While not all people in the age groups possessed all the negative or positive, some stood out as good and bad characteristics. Several young people had the energy, were teachable, had the morale and stamina to complete tasks, and some with good qualifications had the knowledge. Some of the older people had the knowledge, skills, and experience; they mentored and advised the young and led by example. Challenging attributes of some of the young people included lack of focus and concertation, indiscipline, peer pressure and being easily lured into illegal activities for money. Some older people were inflexible, harsh, and arrogant, lacked energy and speed, and slowed down operations. The study served to bring this up from the subconscious.

Influence of gender on leadership in law enforcement

Naturally, men and women possessed and exhibited different leadership styles, but there is a place and circumstances for all leadership styles in an organization. The challenge is knowing which style to employ when and where, because each style prompted a specific response from subordinates. The reactions were either good leading to enhanced team performance, or were negative, reducing the team performance. Cultural gender influences on leadership practices and expectations: Although not part

of the formal laws in wildlife law enforcement, gender-cultural norms were central in decision-making, informing the positions, assignments and deployment of men and women in wildlife law enforcement. There were stereotypical views about what men and women could and could not do, which originated from the cultural gender roles and responsibilities. Most cultures placed men in the public domain and women in the private domestic domain. The resultant effects in wildlife law enforcement were that men confidently took up leadership positions while making it hard for women to lead. Men were expected to protect and defend women. Women were expected to take up domestic-related jobs, like cooking during patrols, and were expected to be “submissive to all men”. All these came from social cultures, and gender socialization of the expected behaviors of men and women.

The influences of identities on leadership: All the identities that were discussed had both advantages and disadvantages for different people in wildlife law enforcement. Marital status, tribe, and disability had more respondents with negative experiences than positive ones. Being single or married determined how easily one accessed their off days. Being male or female, determined whether one led an operation. Coming from a certain tribe excluded one from opportunities, and having “no rank”, excluded Rangers at the level of private from freedom of speech and attending certain meetings.

Priority Identities for leadership: Education (ranks were linked to specific academic qualification), sex (stereotypes dictated the roles of men and women), age (bias that young people lack seriousness and experience) and tribe (suspicions that favor for good positions was based on tribal connections) emerged as the important considerations for one to become a leader in wildlife law enforcement. Most respondents thought men were the most suited to lead given the conditions and provisions in wildlife law enforcement. Only those women who could swim against the tide progressed.

Challenges faced by women and men in the field of wildlife law enforcement

The challenges affected both men and women, young and old, but in different ways. Poor welfare made long-term field patrols repulsive to women and the elderly (both male and female). Prolonged isolation at the outposts led to behavioral swings of young men, setting in motion a chain of negative reactions: overdrinking and uncontrolled sexual activities even for marrieds, increased HIV/AIDS infections, multiple children from multiple partners, unplanned polygamy, and family breakups, which only exacerbated social and psychological traumas. There were sexuality issues for women where managers regarded the resultant frequent pregnancy cases, pregnancy related illnesses, and subsequent demand for maternity leave as the problem. Getting pregnant was treated as “crime” by some supervisors. There was gender-biased promotions criteria that was prejudiced against women and young people; as a result, women had a low aspiration for leadership roles. There are also gender stereotypes about women’s capabilities that claim that all women acceded to sex for promotion. Men were compelled to quit because of low salaries and allowances.

The worst experiences shared, revealing the gruesome circumstances most rangers faced in their line of duty, include:

- The double standards used for entrance into the National Park visiting of spouses – particularly in cases where the person in authority has an interest in or is in a relationship with the staff being visited.
- Excluding park management from budgeting and fundraising meetings by top UWA management.
- The absence of a partnership strategy.
- Malicious deployment and transfers as punishment to dreaded locations.



All these challenges revealed both the negative informal practices and weaknesses in the formal provisions. Several gaps were listed in relation to gender integration: These were many including knowledge and skills in leadership and management to spearhead gender integration; the right leadership styles for diverse teams; family planning, mentoring services to enable young people to develop long-term life plans, delayed family life until after achieving some career goals; In-service training especially to qualify more women for promotions; menstrual hygiene and management; essential resources especially at outpost, to make them conducive for women and the elderly men; ambulance services, potable water, and revised remuneration for rangers. If these gaps are addressed, integrating gender will be made easier.



UWA Men & Women Law Enforcement Officers (in uniform) posing with WCS Staff during one of the field visits to Murchison Falls Conservation Area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The NWCCFT Secretariate must be at the forefront of ensuring that the lessons and recommendations from this study are taken up by agencies in wildlife law enforcement.

- 1. Conduct a detailed follow-up study on gender dynamics in wildlife law enforcement:** As accepted by the validation workshop, a detailed study of gender dynamics in wildlife law enforcement to provide depth and scope to the findings in this report will be useful. The study would involve more people from all agencies in wildlife law enforcement, face-to-face key informant interviews, hold more focus groups with rangers and frontline cadres from the five agencies in wildlife law enforcement, and a detailed literature review. This is necessary to get the statistics right especially on contradictory points, to cross-check issues, and to probe for more examples.
- 2. Develop and/or popularize gender policies within institutions:** The NWCCTF Secretariate needs to lobby and support member agencies in law enforcement to create awareness of the need for gender policies that address the gaps and opportunities for integration. A good gender policy should guide recruitment, deployment, promotion, gender-related allowances/benefits, roles, and responsibilities of gender-balanced teams, leaders, and team members; should address relationship issues of relationships, including sexual harassment, appropriate behaviors, motivation, and accountability systems. A fully consultative and participatory process should be employed to ensure that the resultant document caters for the real needs of men and women, in affordable, realistic, and sustainable ways for the current economic realities of wildlife law enforcement agencies. The resultant gender policy document should be publicized for all to know and adhere to.
- 3. Have a gender strategy in place as an overall plan of action:** The gender strategy should have specific actions to address weaknesses and gaps, and planned actions that link to all other programs. The NWCCTF Secretariate will need to provide oversight to ensure that the strategies of agencies in wildlife law enforcement provide all departments and leaders with a one-stop reference for gender integration.
- 4. Budget for gender:** There is need for every institution to have a budget with a detailed breakdown of budget lines based on the gender strategy and key identified gender identities and priority needs, targeted numbers as indications of progress, specific resources to be provided for different gender groups (taking into consideration the important identities of sex, age, education, marital status, and tribe), and budget narratives clarifying the rationale for each budget figure. This would be essential in fundraising, annual plans, and accountability purposes.

5. Conduct routine gender-responsive capacity building: To address gender integration needs, it is recommended that NWCCTF institutions undertake:

a) An orientation training on gender issues which should be designed to include aspects of:

(i) Leading teams and roles of team members.

The training should include aspects of menstrual hygiene management for women and sexuality; elements of gender, identities, and cultural norms, and their influence in law enforcement.

(ii) Training and practice on patrols.

Most women's first experience with patrols was deliberately made nasty for them, which partly explains the phobia that arose. The course for rangers should include attachments to actual patrol operations, with instructors or supervisors around so that the deliberate plan to frighten them is stopped. The training should also integrate human rights considerations and interpersonal skills to ensure all rangers regardless of their sexes, can competently work with communities and the hospitality sector of the wildlife sector.

(iii) Park/field-based experience for Headquarter staff:

The orientation of all technical and administrative (human resource, finance, etc.) staff of UWA should include a field visit to a National Park, a patrol experience, and a night at a remote outpost. This will help them plan and handle field realities better and improve the experience for field staff.

b. Gender training for supervisors, managers, and rangers: The overall aim would be to build capacity for gender integration. This would necessitate different depths and packages for the various levels. For example, the managers' package would be short, specifically to create awareness and equip them with enough knowledge to appreciate and work with the gender concepts in planning, budgeting, monitoring, and evaluation. The rangers' package would be to help them apply gender tools and processes to their day-to-day work.

c. Leadership training for supervisors and team leaders: Focusing on how to lead gender-balanced teams, to cover components of leadership styles, conflict management styles, emotional Intelligence, negotiation skills; effective communication, working with men and women, working with different personalities, identities, and aspects of sexuality.

d. In-service technical training on all other relevant technical skills and knowledge needed to help fast track the qualifications of those with few qualifications for promotions mentioned by respondents - digital forensics, financial investigations, awareness, and empowerment on appropriate standards. Again, these are to ensure that all staff have equal access to relevant and up-to-date technical knowledge and skills relevant to their job

performance. In addition, a transparent, gender-responsive procedure to qualify for in-service training or scholarships should be developed and shared.

6. Carry out continuous mentoring and coaching on gender: Gender integration is not an event but a process that includes capacity building and additional tailored support. Mentoring and coaching leaders of agencies, departments, units, and individuals would be of great value in speeding up the gender integration process. The older experienced staff already provided informal mentoring and coaching for others. This could be made official by training a selected number of men and women in professional mentoring and coaching, equipping them with skills, tools, and a process for official mentoring and coaching. Gender would be the entry point, but other areas would be included: Sexuality, work-life balance, career goals, and family planning, and technical areas relevant to both the male and female mentees.

7. Have a resource mobilization strategy for gender integration: Gender integration requires money and other resources; hence the strategy should include financial and non-financial resources, cash, and in-kind contributions. To provide crucial resources for gender integration, it is necessary to support partnership building and employ innovative approaches. It is important to note that the gender policy, gender strategy and gender budget are essential documents in resource mobilization and partnership building. As a result, these documents should include a provision for partnerships with local manufacturers to tailor-make some of the essential resources at reduced prices, such as tents, water bottles, boots, smartphones, and even vehicles. Furthermore, the gender strategy and policy would help agencies qualify as gender-responsive to access international financial support. Wildlife law enforcement must widen the scope of its partnerships to benefit from both local and international donations, cash and in-kind financial support. Priority resource needs should include decent accommodation, allowances and salary increments, transport and communication gadgets, first aid and medical kits. The resource mobilization and allocation of resources should involve leaders at the National Parks level, to ensure that the process captures and reflects the resource needs of all levels/ ranks in the organization, right from the field to the headquarters.

8. Encourage team building and regular meetings: There is a need to include gender identities in team composition criteria to ensure proper integration of enabling behaviors in briefings to develop healthy interactions between people of diverse identities, and to promote norms and practices that inspire men and women in law enforcement. Team composition should include checking on the availability of rangers especially the females (if in their periods or able to find someone to watch over their children). The aim is to help teams work well together by developing operational behaviors and language that respects team members with different identities and needs. Regular meetings between teams, units, and departments were identified were highlighted as essential to enable people to connect for connecting employees and making them feel part of the bigger picture. Meetings should help facilitate discussions on pertinent topics affecting the field teams, explore identities and the influencing norms, and enable the teams to have question-and-answer sessions. Routine meetings should include private rangers (they are referred to as “without

ranks". "Private" is a rank that differentiates them from trainees. It is the lowest rank in law enforcement). Their inclusion provides assurance of the agency's commitment to creating a conducive environment conducive for all. The concept of "checking in" before and after a mission would help review important concerns.

9. Mentor young law enforcement staff in family planning and delayed parenting: The value of having young women on the team seemed to reduce once they became mothers. This recommendation is to assist young people, both men and women, to develop career goals with clear milestones, and to deliberately put parenting on hold for a set period of time, for them to realize their career goals. Pregnancy is a biological and human right of every woman and prohibiting it would be unethical. However, if it interferes with other opportunities and responsibilities, it can be deliberately put on hold for a defined length of time. Young men and women could be counseled to delay parenting for two to three years after employment to pursue career development milestones. This would enable young people to serve, gain experiential knowledge and skills, contribute substantially to the organization and get promoted before starting families. If professional mentoring is instituted, the mentor and mentee will develop goals and milestones to be achieved before the mentee embarks on building a family. The gender budgeting would include incentives for young people to do this, and a fully equipped support system to make it work.

10. Provide recreation and social support: The study did not explore the existence of recreation and social support provisions in law enforcement, but they emerged as necessary. Male rangers came from the remote outpost to distant public facilities in search of recreation. This is where they got drunk, slept around with women, and misbehaved. There was a desperate need for people to unwind and receive some level of social support. If these facilities were provided, officers would have a place to reconnect, meet people, unwind, and have fun within the confinement of the stations. The social support system would necessitate the institution of professional mentors and counselors to stand by and help in times of need.



About the USAID/Uganda Combating Wildlife Crime Activity

United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Uganda Combating Wildlife Crime (CWC) is a five-year activity (May 13, 2020 - May 12, 2025) implemented by Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) together with a consortium of partners including, African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), Natural Resource Conservation Network (NRCN) and The Royal United Services Institute (RUSI). The goal of the activity is to reduce wildlife crime in Uganda by strengthening the capacity of CWC stakeholders to detect, deter and prosecute wildlife crime through close collaborations with security and law enforcement agencies, USAID implementing partners, private sector companies, and communities living adjacent to protected areas.





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