FAUNA & FLORA INTERNATIONAL

UWA

CURRENT STATUS, OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF SACRED SITES IN THE RWENZORI MOUNTAINS

SURVEY REPORT AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

MAY 2012

CULTURE, VALUES AND CONSERVATION PROJECT
FAUNA & FLORA INTERNATIONAL IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
UGANDA WILDLIFE AUTHORITY

Executive Summary

The Culture, Values and Conservation Project (CVCP) implemented by Fauna & Flora International (FFI) in partnership with Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) seeks to integrate the cultural values of local people into the management plans of Rwenzori Mountains National Park (RMNP) and Lake Mburo National Park in Uganda. An important lesson learnt to date is that protected area managers can build local interest in and support for parks by presenting protected areas as cultural entities, by sharing the right to attribute meaning and value, and by demonstrating that protected areas conserve local as well as global values. Sacred cultural sites are among the most important cultural values identified in the Rwenzori Mountains; in Lake Mburo, it is the Ankole cow.

Making a thorough assessment of the values attributed to heritage is seen as a requisite step toward developing plans to integrate cultural values into the management of national parks and protected areas, as values strongly shape how and why people make decisions. To this end, in the Rwenzori Mountains, the CVCP has carried out past studies and a recent detailed assessment to establish the attitudes, interests and concerns of communities about the utilisation and management of sacred sites in RMNP. This report presents the findings of the assessment and offers new proposals toward the integration of cultural values into RMNP's management plans.

Initial studies in RMNP were conducted in 2006 to 2008 and generated vital information which identified existing sacred sites for consideration in the planning and management of the park. The information obtained enabled the creation of a first round of management proposals aimed at addressing the needs of sacred sites and led to recommendations for appropriate implementation strategies. The results of these studies are documented in a first edition of technical reporting, published in 2009. However, since 2008, several developments have occurred which stand to affect the integration of cultural values into the management of RMNP, particularly concerning the establishment of local cultural institutions. For example, in 2005, when the implementation of the CVCP began, the Obusinga Bwa Rwenzururu (OBR), the cultural institution for the mountain peoples of the Rwenzoris, was not recognised by the government. Thus at the time and through community consultations, CVCP identified the Rwenzori Mountains Cultural Conservation Association (RweMCCA) as a community-based institution to promote the integration of cultural values in the management of the park. In 2009, the Government of Uganda formally recognised OBR as the cultural institution responsible for all cultural issues within the Rwenzoris. OBR's formal status, mandate and institutional capacity necessitated revisiting the 2009 proposed plan for managing sacred and cultural sites in and around RMNP.

This current edition of technical reporting delves into the operations of the identified sacred sites and other emerging issues based on information outputs, learning and consultations which have occurred since 2008. For example, the development of sacred sites as tourist

destinations was a dominant theme in consultative meetings held in 2012. This report discusses these issues and their implications in developing a sacred sites management plan, including the potential effect of community cultural tourism on the sustainable management of the sites. Also, initially there was no clear distinction between a sacred site and a cultural site. In this edition, based on the information gathered from local experts on cultural issues, attempts are made to distinguish between the two.

This report shows that although sacred sites are located on land that is currently under the management of UWA, many sacred sites are traditionally owned by respective ridge leaders and ridge leaders still have an interest in managing the sites despite their occurrence inside the boundaries of the park. Some other sacred and cultural sites were traditionally owned by individuals, families or the community, but the ridge leaders held them in trust for the people. In the traditional cultural context, “ownership of a sacred or cultural site” means that power was vested in ridge leaders, chieftains and clan leaders to oversee the activities which took place in those sites. This power was passed on from father to son, through many generations. The majority of those consulted expressed a need and desire to revert ownership not only of sacred and cultural sites but also of the land on which they “sit” back to traditional ownership. OBR has been earmarked as one possible umbrella institution which would manage sacred sites and the land on which they are located inside of the national park in partnership with UWA. Sacred and cultural sites outside of the park would also be jointly managed by OBR and communities through a traditional structure.

Currently, most of the sacred and cultural sites within RMNP are inaccessible, including in some cases per the law. The sites are comprised of temporary structures and lack sanitation facilities. Most of the sites were deserted as people moved from traditional religious beliefs to modern religions and because of insecurity in the mountains during several rebellions. However, there is currently a renewed interest among the mountain people to resume management and use of the sacred sites. Redeveloping these sites would involve securing legal access to them, building and maintaining access trails, constructing basic public accommodations such as toilets, and in some cases, planning and developing targeted sites as tourist destinations and camping sites.

Consultative meetings have identified and confirmed a number of stakeholders that are associated with the use and management of sacred and cultural sites including: individuals, chieftains, ridge leaders, families, OBR and UWA. Other potential stakeholders identified include: the conservation organisation the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), UNESCO, Uganda’s National Forestry Authority (NFA), local government, and the Tooro Kingdom, a neighboring cultural institution in Kabarole District. There was a strong sense among respondents that all of the stakeholders identified need to collaborate to ensure proper use and management of the sacred and cultural sites. Some respondents suggested that the identified partners join to form a committee that could coordinate all sacred sites. However, the project expects that active partnership building activities will need to be facilitated,

including through stakeholder meetings, seminars and workshops, in order to enlist the participation and commitment of each identified partner.

This report presents and discusses two options on how different stakeholders might work with each other and with UWA to coordinate access, use and management of sacred sites. This report also identifies gaps in need of further research, including regarding issues of land tenure of sacred and cultural sites, the identification and verification of other sites, and the identification of underlying factors and management objectives which prompt the need to redevelop and access known sacred and cultural sites.

The information contained in this report is intended to form a basis for further research, consultation and testing of suggested options, and its contents are intended to lead to further integration of cultural values into the management framework of Rwenzori Mountains National Park and in turn offer learning to other protected areas in Uganda and elsewhere.

Publication Details

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Copies of this report are also available at the UWA office at Rwenzori Mountains National Park, FFI’s office in Kampala, OBR’s office in Kasese and the MMU library.

Acronyms

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBO	Community-based organisation
CCA	Community Conserved Area
CVCP	Culture, Values and Conservation Project
FFI	Fauna & Flora International
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NFA	National Forestry Authority
OBR	Obusinga Bwa Rwenzururu
RMNP	Rwenzori Mountains National Park
RweMCCA	Rwenzori Mountains Cultural Conservation Association
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UWA	Uganda Wildlife Authority
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

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Respectfully,

Moses Muhumuza
Mountains of the Moon University

Part 1: The Status of Sacred and Cultural Sites and the Associated Cultural Practices

1. 1 Introduction

1.1.1 Background to the Culture, Values and Conservation Project

The Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) is a government agency, originally established in 1996 and codified by the Uganda Wildlife Act of 2000, whose mandate is to conserve and manage wildlife resources and protected areas in Uganda. The Uganda Wildlife Act (Cap 200 of 2000) and the Uganda Wildlife Policy (1999) provide for the development of initiatives that allow for the participation of surrounding communities in the management of protected areas and benefit sharing as a means to encourage harmonious relationships between the protected area authorities and surrounding communities.

Over the past decades, investment in community oriented management initiatives in Uganda's national parks, like in other countries around the world, has generally failed to build positive relations with local communities (Ernst, 2011; Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, 2010). Protected areas and biodiversity continue to be threatened by illegal and unsustainable use. There is therefore urgent need to devise other approaches to manage protected areas that will create interest in conservation objectives and build support amongst local people.

In 2005, Fauna & Flora International (FFI) in partnership with UWA launched the Culture, Values and Conservation Project (CVCP) in Lake Mburo and Rwenzori Mountains National Parks in Uganda. This project aims at integrating the cultural values of communities into the management framework of the two parks. The project works to test the application of cultural analysis to conservation practices and to design practical interventions to achieve conservation objectives. It is hoped that the project will strengthen the linkage between the two parks and their neighbouring communities by representing the parks through values that are meaningful and relevant to local people. The long-term goal of the project is to provide a practical demonstration of how improved relations with local communities can be achieved by incorporating locally meaningful cultural values into protected area management.

1.1.2 Objectives

The CVCP operates under four project objectives:

1. Ensure that park plans contain explicit recognition of cultural values and practical measures which actively integrate local cultural values into park management.

2. Identify and promote new opportunities for tourism based on cultural values of local people.

3. Establish and operationalise community / park institutions for a process of integrating cultural values into protected area practices.

4. Manage two national parks with respect to the larger landscape through institutional processes based on cultural analysis.

The project used cultural analysis to identify key cultural values of the two parks which would form the basis of project interventions. In Lake Mburo, the Ankole Cow was identified as a leading cultural value, and in Rwenzori Mountains National Park (RMNP) the sacred nature of the mountains and associated sacred sites were identified as culturally significant values. In RMNP, 15 sacred sites have been mapped and geo-referenced. FFI and UWA have subsequently been working to establish detailed information about these sacred sites for appropriate and practical integration of cultural values into the management framework of RMNP.

It is against this background that FFI and UWA hired the services of a consultant to undertake focused research on sacred sites in the RMNP and to develop sacred sites management plans. The consultant was expected to:

1. Design a questionnaire and other data collection tools.

2. Review relevant existing documents for background information.

3. Undertake consultations through key informant interviews, focus group discussions, community meetings, direct observations and available literature to establish the attitude, interest and concerns of communities about the utilisation and management of the sacred sites in RMNP.

4. Establish the current status, traditional ownership, cultural and conservation values of the 15 mapped sacred sites in RMNP.

5. Identify four pilot sacred sites to be accessed by local people and managed jointly with UWA following an agreed upon criterion and management arrangement.

6. Generate a realistic management proposal for consideration in developing a formal management plan for sacred sites in RMNP based on the collected data, project objectives, RWeMCCA articles of association and planned activities.

7. Recommend appropriate implementation strategies that will lead to the integration of cultural values based on sacred sites into the management framework of RMNP.

8. Present a draft copy of the survey report and management plan proposal for sacred sites to UWA management for discussion and comments before producing the final report.

This resultant report is organised into two parts: Part 1 gives findings about the sacred sites, and Part 2 details management plan proposals for consideration in the development of a general management for RMNP. Tasks were led by the consultant, with support from the CVCP team which helped in making appointments with key stakeholders, mobilising informants and providing logistical support.

1.2 Review of related literature

National parks are a cornerstone of biodiversity conservation worldwide (Carruthers, 1989). National parks are classified under category II of the IUCN classification of protected areas (Naughton-Treves et al., 2005). They are managed by national governments through formally established authorities mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation (Naughton-Treves et al., 2005). According to the 2003 UN List of Protected Areas, sub-Saharan contained 7,457 protected areas covering 3,093,168 km^2 of land. This includes hundreds of national parks.

The majority of Africa's national parks face various threats such as illegal harvesting of park resources, grazing of animals in the park, conversion of part or all of park land into agricultural fields (Mung'ong'o, 2009), and violation of rules governing the national park (Conte, 2002). Many of these problems originate from local communities which neighbour the respective parks (Hulme and Murphree, 2001b). Some argue that, in most cases, local people in communities neighbouring national parks have no alternative sources of livelihoods other than the park's resources (Neumann, 1998). Therefore, ways through which local people could support the conservation of biodiversity in national parks and meet their needs without entirely depending on or depleting national park resources have continually been sought.

1.2.1 Involvement of local communities in the conservation of biodiversity in national parks

It is increasingly recognised that the success of national parks in conserving biodiversity depends largely on the support of rural communities which neighbour those parks (Igoe, 2004; Western and Wright, 1994). Consequently, participatory community-based conservation approaches have been suggested as a way of mitigating conflicts between local people and managers of national parks and to make biodiversity conservation and development compatible (Child, 1993; Fiallo & Jacobson, 1995). Participatory community-based conservation approaches are aimed at compensating, in monetary terms, local communities for the costs they incur due to loss of property and limited access to protected area resources. The assumption behind community-based conservation approaches is that if

local communities derive economic benefits from protected areas and have a stake in or an incentive to support protected areas management, their attitudes towards conservation will become more positive (Campbell, 1998; Lewis & Phiri, 1998).

Community-based conservation approaches are implemented in various ways. In some national parks, local communities are allowed to have access to the park resources after paying a fee (Marks, 2001). In others, local people are allowed restricted access to park resources after signing resource use agreements, or local communities are called upon to seasonally harvest some resources under the supervision of park staff (Barrow and Murphree, 2001). Also, there are cases where local people are not allowed to have access to the park resources at all but are given a proportion of park revenues for infrastructure development in their communities. In rare cases, local communities receive funds or incentives to facilitate start-up economic activities. Some national parks utilise several of these approaches concurrently.

1.2.2 Shortcomings of current community-based conservation approaches

Although community-based conservation approaches appear commendable for attempting to reconcile biodiversity conservation and the development interests of local people (Matowanyika, 1992), and despite some registered successes of these efforts (see for instance Lewis et al., 1990), community-based conservation approaches have been criticised by many (Adams & Thomas, 1996; Barrett & Arcese, 1995; Campbell, 2000; Emerton, 1998; Igoe, 2003; Kellert et al., 2000; Oates, 1995). First, in practice, the "participation" of local community members in community-based conservation approaches has been found to be often only symbolic (Alpert, 1995; Gibson & Marks, 1995; Parry & Campbell, 1992; Songorwa, 1999; Wells & Brandon, 1993; Pretty, 1995), or used by local elites to further their own interests (Gibson & Marks, 1995; Gillingham & Lee, 1999; Kellert et al., 2000). Secondly, according to studies by Gillingham & Lee (1999), Igoe (2003), Langholz (1999), and Parry & Campbell (1992), economic benefits do not automatically yield positive attitudes which would be helpful in the conservation of biodiversity. Development of positive attitudes toward conservation depends on various factors such as the nature of the economic benefits received (direct versus indirect, and communal versus individual), which people in the community receive benefits, and how the benefits are distributed among the community members (Songorwa, 1999).

A fundamental shortcoming to community-based conservation approaches is that the underlying economic hypothesis, that the provision of economic benefits to local people will fuel their willingness to live sustainably near protected areas, is yet to be tested. Barrett & Arcese (1995) argue that community-based conservation projects proceed from untested and false economic and even biological assumptions. The argument that community development can be used as a means to attach biodiversity conservation goals cannot hold based on empirical evidence (Kellert et al., 2000). Conservation actors have persistently grappled with how to address the shortcomings of community-based conservation strategies.

1.2.3 Implementing community-based conservation approaches through traditional ecological knowledge

In Africa, traditional ecological knowledge is part of African epistemology that dates as far back as 4,000 B.C. (Berkes, 1989). Berkes (1999) describes traditional ecological knowledge as knowledge ingrained in the relationship of living organisms with one another and their environment; it is sometimes referred to as traditional environmental knowledge. Christie (1991) claims that traditional ecological knowledge represents experience acquired over thousands of years of direct human contact with the environment.

Although the term traditional ecological knowledge came into widespread use in the 1980s (Agrawal, 1995), some researchers (Conklin, 1957; Lewis, 1975 and Wyman, 1964) claim that the practices of ancient hunter-gatherer cultures were based on such knowledge. Although anthropologists made the earliest systematic studies of indigenous knowledge, traditional ecological knowledge was first studied as ethno-ecology (which was derived from ethno-science and folk science) by ecologists (Hardesty, 1977). Ethno-science and folk science involve the study of systems of knowledge developed by a given culture to classify the objects, activities and events of its environment (Agrawal, 1995).

As a result of the shortcomings of the current community-based conservation approaches, some authors such as Usher (2000), Abrams et al. (2009) and Darkoh (2009) have advocated for the implementation of community-based conservation through traditional ecological knowledge. Berkes et al. (2000), Agrawal (1995), Byers et al. (2001) and Western (2000) argue that people in traditional communities conserved biodiversity through traditional ecological knowledge. Traditional ecological knowledge could be investigated to serve as a basis for proposing community-based conservation schemes. Nelson (1983) argued that although much of African history had been passed down by oral traditions, there were many scripts that gave clues to ancient African epistemology and evidence of biodiversity conservation through traditional ecological knowledge.

Some recent studies attempt to show examples of how biodiversity conservation has been effected through traditional ecological knowledge of local people. For instance, Maffi and Woodley (2010) documented 45 projects around the world (six of which were in Africa) that attempted to link biodiversity conservation with traditional ecological knowledge. Gilligan (2006) reported about a successful indigenous protected area programme in Australia. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (2010) commended the contribution made by traditional communities by conserving biodiversity in Community Conserved Areas (CCAs).

CCAs are voluntarily conserved by indigenous and local communities through traditional ecological knowledge and are often cited as evidence of biodiversity conservation applying traditional ecological knowledge (Shahabuddin and Madhu, 2010 and Porter-Bolland et al.,

2011). In 18 developing countries which house large amounts of forest cover; over 22% of the forests are conserved by local communities through traditional ecological knowledge (CBD Secretariat, 2010). Some studies show that levels of protection accorded to some CCAs by local communities using indigenous means of management are higher than in government gazetted and managed protected areas (Porter-Bolland et al., 2011).

Although the role of traditional ecological knowledge in the conservation of biodiversity is increasingly recognised, there are various studies that argue against it. This has caused what Posey (1985) refers to as “the ecologically noble savage debate”. Some authors (Alvard, 1993; Diamond, 1986) who argue against traditional ecological knowledge claim that traditionally in Africa and in other communities in the world, there were no strategies put in place to conserve biodiversity. These authors claim that biodiversity conservation involves restraint or motive for meticulous planning to enable the availability of resources for future generations, and that these attributes are not found amongst traditional people (Diamond, 1986).

1.2.4 Knowledge required to effect conservation of biodiversity

The aim of conserving biodiversity is to protect species, their habitats and ecosystems from extinction (Fiedler and Subodh, 1992). Conservation of biodiversity is of two types, ex situ conservation, which involves conserving biodiversity outside its natural habitat, and in situ conservation, which involves conserving biodiversity in its natural habitat and includes defending a species from predators.

From the scientific angle, broadly, there are two categories of knowledge required to plan for and implement biodiversity conservation in both of its types. One is knowledge about the status of species. This comprises knowledge of the species ecology in its broadest sense which includes but is not limited to species populations, species reproductive behaviour, species life forms, species feeding behaviour, species activity patterns (for animals species), species survival strategies, and the role of the species in the ecosystem (such as keystone species, indicator species and umbrella or flagship species). The second is knowledge about pressures that lead to biodiversity loss and how species respond to the pressures. For instance, knowledge about how plant species are harvested and how these species respond to the harvest is important for planning and implementing conservation of these species. The broad types of knowledge emerge from research on risk, threat and vulnerability of species, their habitats, and ecosystems (Given and Norton, 1993).

Analysis of these broad types of scientific knowledge shows that traditional knowledge can inform them, and that people in traditional communities have knowledge that could be integrated into current biodiversity conservation approaches. Analysis of literature on traditional approaches to biodiversity conservation (Muhumuza et al. in prep a) reveal a variety of approaches that were traditionally used to conserve biodiversity; these are summarised in Figure 1.

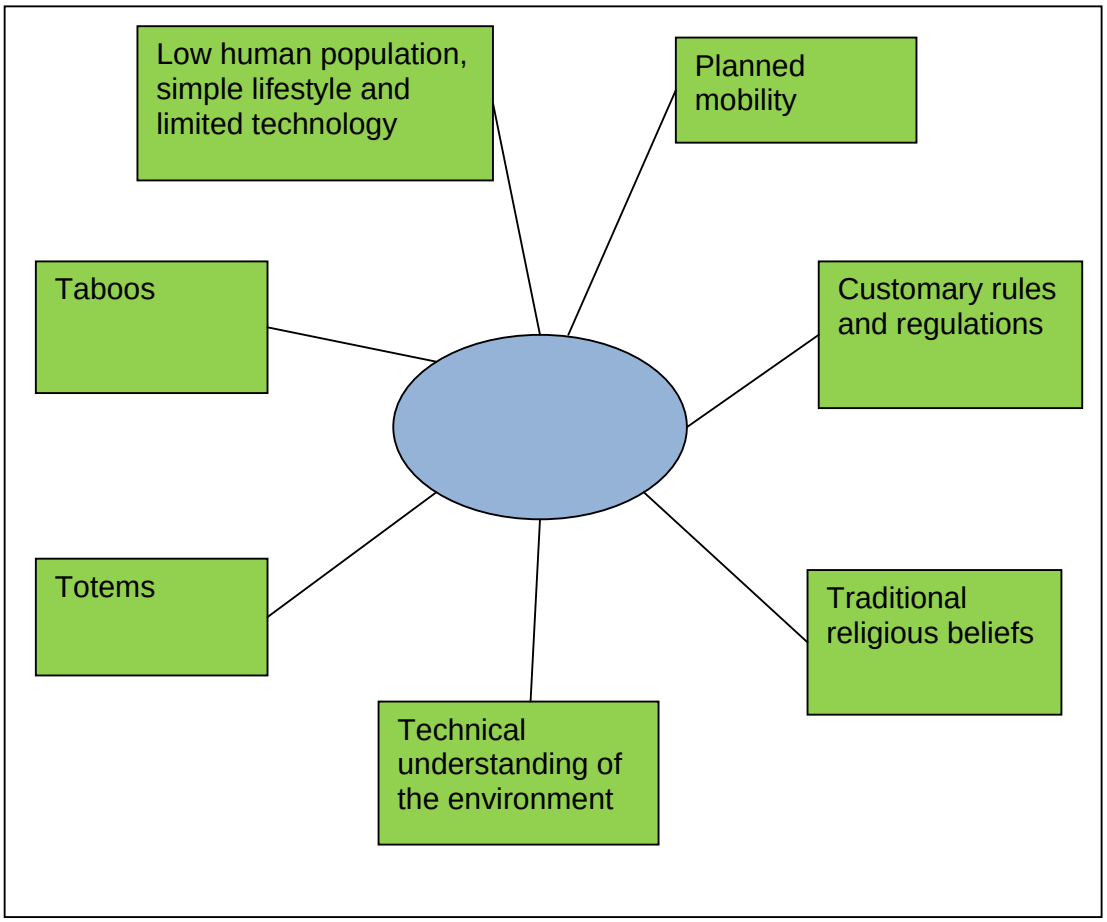

Figure 1: Traditional aspects associated with biodiversity use in Africa

In these approaches protection of biodiversity and habitats could have been coincidentally achieved through a system of customary rules, traditional beliefs and practices which were informed by experiential indigenous knowledge. A system of beliefs, knowledge and practices enabled the preservation of some places called sacred sites which are explored further in the next section.

1.2.5 Sacred sites

A sacred site is defined as an area of special spiritual significance to peoples and communities. Sacred sites are a new frontier for interdisciplinary research based on their own merits and for their relevance to biodiversity conservation (Beltran, 2000). The religious or cultural designation of an area as sacred, especially those which are relatively natural, may either intentionally or coincidentally promote the conservation of its associated biodiversity (Anderson et al., 2003). Such sacred areas can complement national parks and other protected areas established by governments. Collaboration among religious, governmental, scientific, and/or conservation agencies may be desirable for the protection of sacred sites and landscapes.

Many sacred areas in nature are associated with indigenous cultures (Hadley, 2002). Although societies of people that are genuinely indigenous compose only about 15% of the world's human population (estimates range from 200-600 million persons depending on definitions and sources), they occupy a much larger percentage of the land in the world, perhaps up to half (Hadley, 2002). Indigenous societies commonly use a wide variety of natural resources for their survival, economy, medicines, rituals and other purposes (Harmon, 2002). Historically, cultural and spiritual aspects of the ecology of indigenous societies were grounded in the biodiversity, ecosystems and landforms found in their habitat and surroundings. Thus, indigenous people are most important to consider in exploring the relationships between sacred areas, biodiversity and conservation.

A particularly striking case is provided by a study from Bruce A. Byers and colleagues with the Shona people who live in the Zambezi Valley of northern Zimbabwe. The Shona consider trees, rivers, pools, mountains and even whole mountain ranges to be sacred. Their concept of sacred connotes something that is life sustaining and linked to rain and the fertility of the land. A sacred place is where spirits are present. Associated with it are certain rules of access as well as behaviours that are not allowed, i.e. taboos. Moreover, Byers and colleagues discovered that deforestation is at least 50% lower in sacred forests than in their secular counterparts. Some 133 species of native plants occur in these sacred forests, whereas, they are variously threatened, endangered or extirpated elsewhere in Zimbabwe. These researchers conclude that strategies for biodiversity conservation that link culture and nature are more likely to be effective than those imposed from the top-down by government and/or international agencies and that ignore the traditional beliefs, values, institutions and practices of local societies.

The mountain of Sorte is another example of a sacred place that is relevant to biodiversity conservation. Sorte is located in the Chivacoa District in the state of Yaracuy in central Venezuela, in an area called El Monumento Natural de Maria Lionza. Sorte is sacred because of its association with the historic personage of Maria Lionza. The related spirital cult is a creative mixture of African, Catholic and indigenous religions. Sorte has a substantial religious history, extending back at least to the 18th century, although some aspects of the cult developed mainly in the last few decades. Sorte is the site of religious pilgrimages, especially during periods when religious and state holidays coincide. Pilgrims engage in rituals of purification and healing, vigils, and other religious experiences. Some go into a trance through spirit possession. The main shrine where the spirit of Maria Lionza is believed to reside is at the top of the mountain near a lake. There are numerous sacred caves and springs as well as shrines throughout the forest along the mountain side. Maria Lionza has been characterised variously as a goddess or spirit that, among other things, protects the forest on Sorte. In a survey of forests and deforestation in Venezuela during the early 1970s, Lawrence S. Hamilton noticed that by far the best preserved forest in central Venezuela was around Sorte. The extent of the forest was substantial, around 40,000

hectares. These examples demonstrate how spiritualism and sacredness of a place can contribute to conservation objectives.

1.2.6 Traditional beliefs associated with biodiversity use in the Rwenzori Mountains

In the same vein, among the Rwenzori Mountain people there may be beliefs which have an impact on the conservation of natural resources. For example, the Bakonzo cosmology begins with the creator (Nyamuhanga) who made the snow (Nzururu) (Masereka, 1996). According to oral legend, Nzururu is the father of the spirits Kithasamba and Nyabibuya who are responsible for human life, its continuity and its welfare. Kithasamba, who is believed to live in the glaciated mountain peaks, is a giant force who controls the natural environment and the lives of all of the mountain people (Masereka, 2006). The traditional background of the Rwenzori Mountain people reveals a strong link to the mountain (Stacey, 1996). For example, the word “Rwenzori” comes from a local word “Inzururu” meaning snow, and each mountain ridge has a local name with a meaning (Makombo, 1999). The Bakonzo and Baamba people attribute global warming and the loss of snow to their turning away from traditional customs, which has angered Kithasamba (CVCP report, 2007). They believe that deforestation, driven by rapid population growth, is also to blame (Masereka, 2006). There is an indication, therefore, that the Bakonzo people have strong indigenous beliefs.

Local people in the Rwenzori Mountains have traditional practices influenced by cultural knowledge and beliefs. There is now an emerging database generated by both biological and social scientists that describes the complexity and sophistication of many indigenous practices associated with natural resource use in sacred mountain areas including in the Rwenzori Mountains. The fact that so much effort is now being invested in understanding the basis for indigenous natural resource use indicates that the negative attitudes commonly held about indigenous practices during the colonial era have begun to change (Mutebi, 2005). This change could enable reviving some practices that could potentially enhance the conservation of biodiversity in the Rwenzori Mountains.

Prior to 1941, the Rwenzori Mountains were without marked boundaries and were managed and controlled by local communities (Masereka, 1996). The Rwenzori Mountain people, for centuries, depended on the mountain resources, regarding the mountain as a free gift of nature (Stacey, 1996). The Rwenzori Mountains had always been important in the livelihoods and culture of the local communities, until the area’s elevation to park status which disenfranchised local people by making access illegal (McCall, 1996).

Ridge leaders and elderly members of the local community in the Rwenzori Mountains claimed that the important natural resources were well conserved through indigenous practices before the area was declared a national park (Stacey, 2003) and that there were traditionally set norms and customs to follow while carrying out certain rituals and while harvesting resources. Although it is evident that there were indigenous practices in the Rwenzori region coordinated by a traditional system composed of chieftains and ridge

leaders (Stacey, 1996), we must recognise that there was indiscriminate removal of forests to create space for agriculture. This led to a severe reduction of many species in the Rwenzori Mountains.

The Obusinga Bwa Rwenzururu (OBR), the cultural institution of the Rwenzori mountain people, and local people are enthusiastic about revitalising traditional practices in an effort to please the spirit Kithasamba (Taylor, 2006). This infers engaging in practices at sacred sites in the mountains, some of which are insides the borders of the park, where the local community would historically offer sacrifices for blessings, thanksgiving and forgiveness (CVCP, 2007). Sacred sites are now a subject for human rights and legal action as well as for basic and applied research.

Although a lot has been written about cultural values and practices in biodiversity conservation, there is a lack of practical demonstration of how such values and practices can be integrated in the management of already established protected areas. A meta-analysis of 191 case studies extracted from 102 publications on traditional ecological knowledge and traditional strategies of sustaining biodiversity in Africa (Muhumuza et al. in prep a) showed that, in 66.7% of the case studies, authors argued for the role of traditional ecological knowledge in sustainable utilisation of biodiversity without basing their arguments on empirical evidence. In these case studies, authors based their arguments on historical accounts and “logical reasoning” about how people in traditional communities could have sustainably used biodiversity resources. Thus prior to the CVCP, there was a lack of understanding of how cultural values, beliefs and practices could be integrated in the management of RMNP to achieve conservation goals. It was not clear which resources could signify cultural importance, how access to such resources could be institutionalised and how this could form part of the cultural practices and norms to portray local people’s identity in a cultural context. This research entailed clarifying these issues, and the report details the practical undertakings of integrating cultural values based on the sacred sites of the Rwenzori Mountain people into the conservation of biodiversity in the RMNP.

1.3 Materials and methods

1.3.1 Study area

Rwenzori Mountains National Park (RMNP) is located in mid-western Uganda on the east side of the Western Rift Valley between 0°06' - 0°46'N and 29°47'- 30°11'E (Figure 2). The Rwenzori Mountains traverse three districts, Kasese, Bundibugyo and Kabarole, and are home to nearly two million people (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2002). They include the third, fourth and fifth highest mountain peaks on the African continent (Howard, 1991). RMNP is home to a variety of plant and animal species, many of which are endemic, rare or globally threatened. It has been classified as a centre of plant diversity based on species richness, number of endemics and range of habitats (ibid). However, the Rwenzori Mountains are prone to biological, chemical and physical degradation, induced by both

natural and human factors (Muhumuza and Byarugaba, 2009) and it is thus a fragile ecosystem sensitive to ecological disruption.

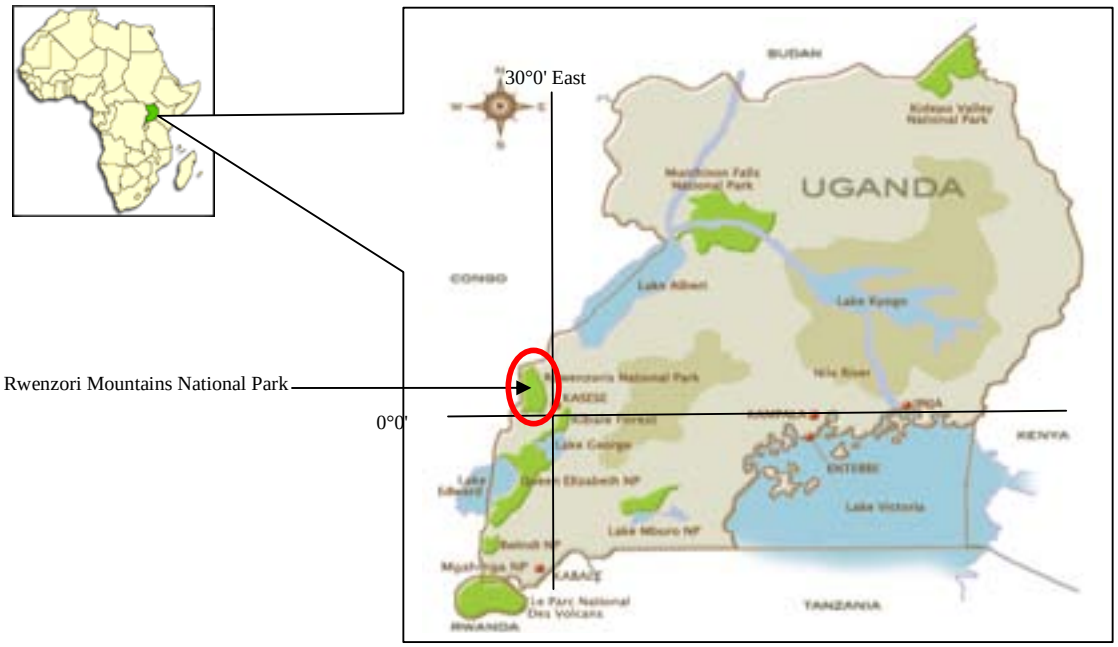

Figure 2: Location of the Rwenzori Mountains National Park

RMNP is a world heritage site (UNESCO, 2002). The mountain ridges on the lower slopes are the homeland of the Bakonzo and Baamba people who have a very close association with “their” mountain (Stacey, 1996). The Bakonzo and Baamba are together known as the Rwenzori Mountain people. There are a variety of superstitions, tales and folklore about the Rwenzori Mountains embedded within the cultural beliefs of the Rwenzori people (Stacey, 1996). The cultural beliefs lead to traditional practices which may have an impact on natural resource use in the Rwenzori Mountains.

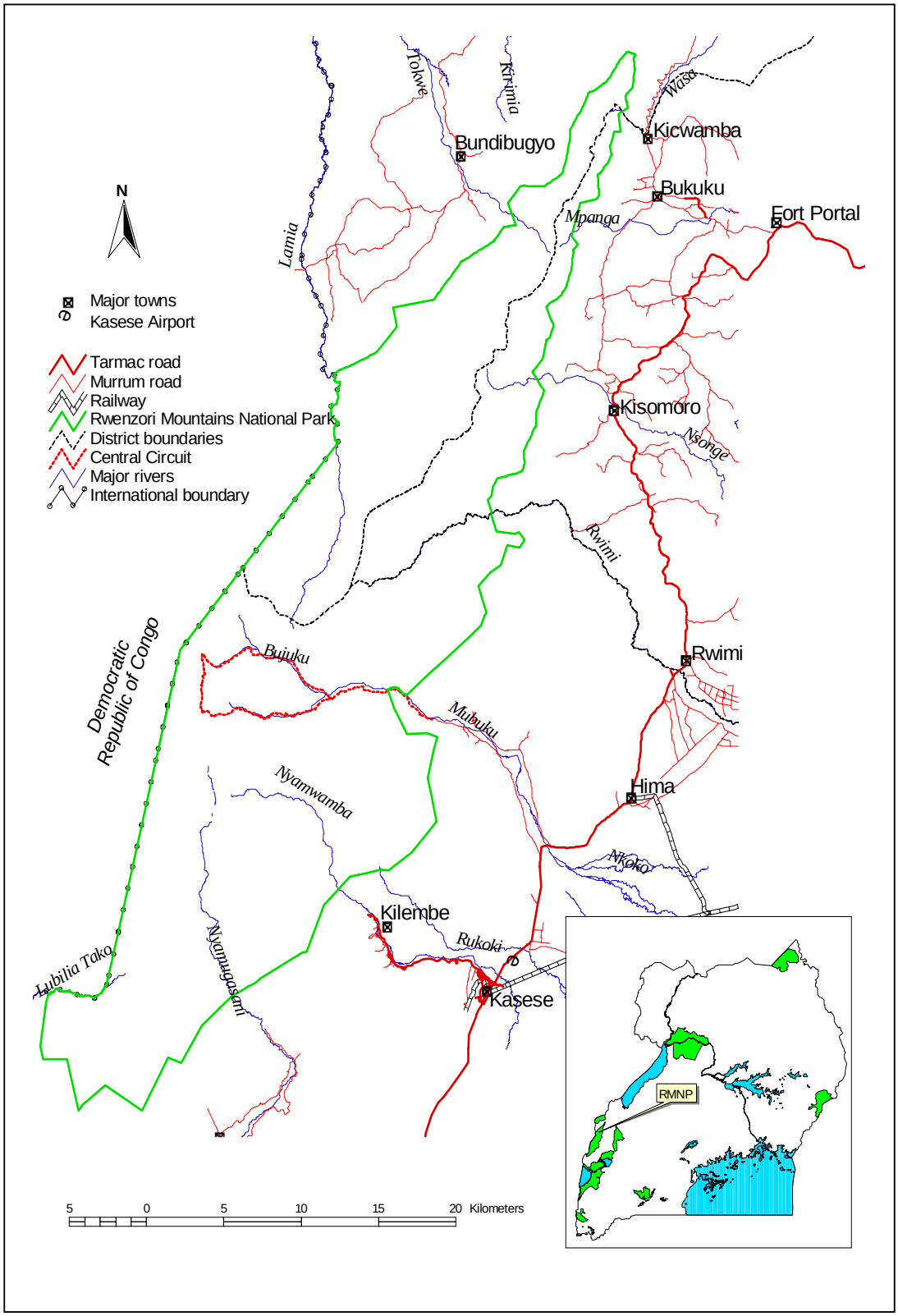

Figure 3: Map of the Rwenzori Mountains National Park

(Source: RMNP general management plan)

1.3.2 Methods of data collection

The study employed Rapid Ethnographic Assessment Procedures (Ervin, 1997). Rapid assessment methodologies have been adapted because they enable investigations into cultural conditions in a particular area with regard to resource management usually in less than a month or even a week (Ervin, 1997). The rapid assessment is used to identify the elements of a local system and how they interrelate through a qualitative data collection process to uncover local knowledge.

The semi structured interview, the expert interview, and the focus group were used as characteristic elements of a triangulated methodology inherent to rapid ethnographic assessment procedures.

- **Individual interviews**: Individual interviews were conducted with identified individuals including district environmental officers under local government, ridge leaders, UWA staff and chairpersons of RweMCCA in various sub counties. Individuals were asked to give their opinions about the integration of cultural performances in sacred sites in the RMNP. The individuals were interviewed for a period on average of 20 to 40 minutes.
- **Expert interviews**: Expert interviews were conducted with ridge leaders, chieftains and wardens. These individuals have particular expertise to comment on the sacred sites and their uses.
- **Impromptu group interviews**: These were used in situations where people were gathered for other meetings or purposes. This enabled collection of data in a group context.
- **Focus groups**: These were conducted with RweMCCA members and officials from OBR. They consisted of six to ten members, and the discussion was conducted in the local language with the help of an interpreter. These enabled greater understanding of the cultural sites, and helped in determining the extent of cultural knowledge in the community and in identifying areas of conflict and disagreement within the community.
- **Stakeholder workshop:** This was conducted to receive further input into the report and to collect people's views regarding the management plan proposals.
- **Questionnaires:** These were used to collect information about location status and activities performed in and around sacred sites. However, questions were asked orally and answers were written down by the interviewer.

These methods provided independent bodies of data that were compared and contrasted, thereby improving the validity and reliability of data collected despite the relatively small sample size. Since the number of interviews conducted was relatively few, data was analysed by hand to ensure that data retained validity and detail and was not abstracted from its context. Finally, the various analyses were triangulated in order to search for

common elements and patterns of behaviours and to identify areas of conflict and differences, both in the nature of the data and in the groups themselves.

In order to ensure a degree of confidentiality that published quotations and responses are not attributable to particular respondents, the interviewers used a coding system. For example, KSK-003 represents respondent number three from Kasese District, BBG-011 represents respondent number eleven from Bundibugyo District, and KBR-146 represents respondent number one hundred forty-six from Kabarole District.

Image 1: Members of a traditional foot paths association participating in a consultative meeting at Harugale sub-county in Bundibugyo District

1.4 Results and discussion

1.4.1 Cultural practices associated with the utilisation of biodiversity and other natural resources in the Rwenzori Mountains

1.4.1.1 Traditional rules and resource management structures

Traditionally, the entire Rwenzori Mountains and the natural resources therein belonged to local people.

"The Rwenzori Mountains were owned and are still owned by us, it is only the new people who do not know this and the young people have been made to forget their traditional rights over the mountains. There are many uses that resources in there have in our life. I am happy that you have come to ask us who know how things were, many years ago" KSK–003

The political structure presented below in Figure 4 was traditionally followed in the cultural context of access and use of resources in the mountains.

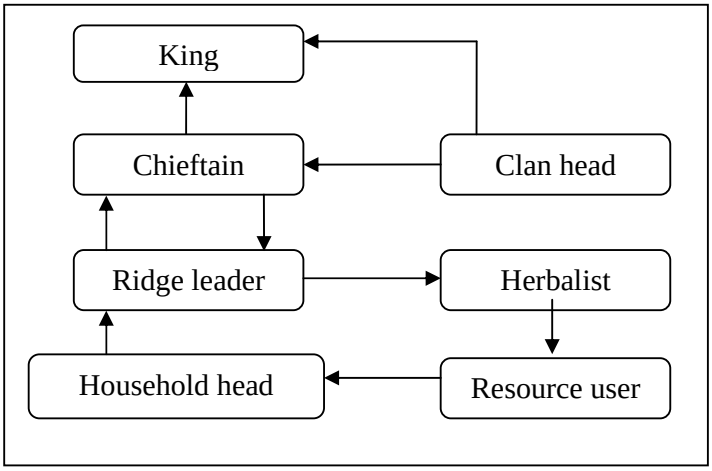

Figure 4: Traditional structure of access and use of resources in the Rwenzori

The political structure was based on families, villages, ridges and clans. Political authority over the use of resources started with *'Nyineka'* (the household head) who ruled the family. The families then made up "*obulhambo"* (a village), and each village was under the leadership of "*Mukungu"* or "*Mukulu wa Bulhambu"* (ridge leader). The ridge leader among other roles collected tribute for and reported to a leader called "*Ise Malhambu"* (chieftain). The chieftain was a central figure who had judicial, executive and legislative powers.

"*The chieftain was the judge and arbitrator in cases of conflicts originating on the village level. Each chieftain had some well-armed soldiers, responsible for handling undisciplined cases and most especially arresting and punishing those who resisted performing community work. All clans respected not only the chieftain but also the traditional leadership because chiefs from different clans administered different areas of jurisdiction".* BBG–011

The chieftains were responsible for overseeing more than one ridge and reported to the king on political matters. The chieftains however had complete power in terms of making decisions at the community level and concerning resource use and the performance of rituals. Chieftains were typically responsible for four to eight ridges. The chieftain title was held by a few people; however, there were many ridge leaders responsible for only one ridge who reported to the chieftain. Ridge leaders are recognised individuals who accompany the chieftains during the collection of resources and the performance of rituals.

The chieftain communicated to his people through the ridge leaders. Although ridge leaders were subordinate to the chieftain, they traditionally had supernatural powers close to magic and could even control nature. Ridge leaders were highly respected in the community. Ridge leaders had shrines at their residence where the community would convene for the ridge leader to pass on information to them.

Every clan had *omwame* (an equivalent of a clan leader) and his leadership was exercised independently from the chieftain. The role of the clan leader was to maintain law, order, unity and security and to govern the use of resources associated with a particular clan in the form of totems or taboos to which people of that clan must adhere.

Traditional medicine also had some influence on resource access and use. Traditional medicine men sometimes became village headmen by asserting their influence on matters of concern. The village headmen, elders and clan heads constituted the court system on matters of land and resource use.

Regarding the ownership and management of resources, the leadership structure indicates that the chieftains were at the peak of the management of the ridges and the resources therein. The chieftains however were answerable to the *Omusinga* (the king). The king's relationship to the resources was such that he was in a position to allow collection of some resources or performance of some rituals if he felt the situation called for it.

The leadership structure was much respected in the Bakonzo and Baamba cultures. Through the traditional leadership structure, community mobilisation was facilitated and disputes and misunderstandings over resource utilisation were settled. The positions of authority were hereditary.

"Even when the ridge leader is a young man, according to the Bakonzo and Baamba culture, he will command respect from an old man of 80 years because it is the great grandfathers that chose the ridge leader. The truth is that the ridge leader's word is undisputed and many people believe in ridge leaders' authority" KBR–146

Apart from getting permission from key persons in the leadership structure to access resources, there were other conditions that had to be fulfilled by people before, during and after resource harvesting. Even when permission was granted, people were forbidden to make noise or to cut down or kill anything unnecessary in the mountains. People were also obliged to report to the ridge leaders when they came back. Through this relationship, there was a check on the activities of the community. It seems this was mainly associated with accessing resources in the higher altitude forests. In discussions with respondents, "the mountains" referred to high altitude places.

There were also some places which were completely forbidden, for example, Kithasamba's headquarters situated at the peak of the mountain. In other areas, one could only collect herbs with the guidance of the ridge leaders and by meticulously following customary regulations.

"*Whoever went to collect herbs, had to go naked or else spirits would attack him or her.*" BBG–011

The process of collecting herbs from the mountains was hierarchical. The chieftain commanded the ridge leader who in turn instructed the clan leader who in turn sent the herbalist(s) to collect them. If a person overlooked this authority and went without permission, they would lose their way home and disappear or, if they found their way home, the herbs would not be effective. In order to rectify the situation, the leadership hierarchy had to be consulted, the ridge cleansed, sacrifices made and then the lost fellow would be searched for and brought home. When herbalists went up to get herbs, they were not supposed to rotate around the herbal tree. The rule was to go straight to the herbal tree, cut off a piece and turn home without looking back. Without following this procedure, the curative powers of the herbs would be rendered ineffective.

There were also other rules that governed the harvest of resources. For example, the harvesting of mushrooms was very controlled. Mushrooms were harvested seasonally, only during the wet season, and only by the hunters when they went to hunt. The different kinds of mushrooms, such as *obwiikwe, ekitosa* and *kiryabaheyi*, were used for different purposes and grew in different places. People would only go to the spot that had the type of mushroom that they wanted. Varieties of mushrooms were very important in the process of performing rituals and it was therefore important that those mushroom types remain available.

The selective harvest of mushrooms could be interpreted to mean that local people could have had knowledge about varieties of mushrooms that were psychotropic. However this is an issue that requires further investigation. Also the reasons why particular types of mushrooms were considered important and yet they were not mentioned among items that were needed for cultural performances need to be investigated.

1.4.1.2 Traditional knowledge and resource use in the Rwenzori Mountains

Collection of resources and performance of activities in the RMNP was also influenced by the knowledge and skills of resource users. Traditional knowledge was exhibited in a number of ways.

Specialisation in resource extraction and usage

Respondents revealed that traditionally, some people specialised only in hunting, others in gathering medicinal plant species and others in performing cultural activities such as rituals.

Collection of some resources was restricted to some members of the community who then distributed them to the rest. Different clans specialised in healing, rain making and alignment of bones. For example, not everybody made baskets; specialised knowledge of basketry was restricted to a few members of the community. Similarly, herbs were not for everyone to collect; only the traditional herbalists/healers had the mandate to collect herbs. Typically there were only two or three herbalists in an entire village. There were also specialised hunting families as well as people described as courageous and prominent who engaged in hunting. Such people could be as few as two in an entire village. They distributed meat in exchange for other things such as herbal medicine. Although there were specialists in resource use, the use had to be directed through the existing structure described in the previous section.

Specialised knowledge about plant and animal species

People also had specialised knowledge not only about the uses of plants but also the ecology of plants. For example, although the community greatly depended on bamboo, bamboo harvesting was limited. There were only two seasons for harvesting bamboo, and during these seasons only the grown dry shoots could be cut. If one had to get bamboo or bamboo leaves before the harvesting seasons, they had to consult the ridge leader first.

Additionally “traditional botanists” knew which species of plants did not grow in the foothills of the mountains and advised the community members accordingly, especially on risks involved in growing certain species of plants in low lands. For example, a plant called *embatule* was a medicinal plant used in treating wounds instantly, but was also very poisonous to humans and animals in case ingested. Medicine from such a plant had to be prepared and administered carefully by a specialised herbalist. Such a plant would never be grown near homesteads. People who wanted to cultivate in the forest only cleared trees that were known to make the soil infertile by drying it up, such as the *emisebere*, k*yungu*, e*kisusuti*, e*kyona*, o*mukole*, and o*mwolongo* plants. Plant species that were known to increase soil fertility were left standing.

Hunting occurred once or twice a month and was selective. Selective hunting gear which only targeted one animal at a time was used. For instance, *kitewo* was a type of hunting gear described as a rope with a noose at one end used to capture one animal at a time. Hunters applied traditional knowledge to successfully engage in hunting. For example, hunters only killed adult animals and avoided young or pregnant ones.

It was not apparent if there was a difference between hunting practices in the higher altitudes and in the lower altitudes. This is an issue that can be investigated further.

1.4.1.3 Traditional beliefs and resource use in the Rwenzori Mountains

Resource use in the RMNP was influenced by beliefs. Beliefs were of different types which included beliefs associated with totems, beliefs associated with taboos and beliefs associated with gods and spirits.

Beliefs associated with totems

Respondents revealed that the Rwenzori Mountain people are culturally grouped into 15 clans. Although each clan had a single totem that was respected, there were many sacred sites to which specific clans associated. This investigation revealed that six clans associated with particular animal totems as presented in the table below.

Table 1: Examples of clans and their associated animal totems

Clan name	**Totem**
Baswagha	Leopard
Abahira	Guinea fowl
Abathangi	Dog and Chimpanzee
Abahambu	Red eyed dove
Ababinga	Baboon
Abasukali (also called the royal clan)	Bushbuck

According to traditional belief, totems are not to be killed or harmed in any way by the clan members. It is illegal for a relative such as a wife, who may be from a different tribe or clan and therefore associated with a different totem, to hurt the totem of a husband or son.

"*Totems were viewed as part of the kindred, and it was believed that these totems shared blood with the ancestors. To hurt a totem was tantamount to hurting the community's ancestors.*" KBR–061

Severe punishments such as banishment, fines, hard labour, or death were applied to anyone who disrespected their totem. Therefore people feared to kill or eat animals considered as their totems or the totems of their relatives.

Beliefs associated with taboos

Traditionally, there were various taboos associated with natural resource use in the Rwenzori Mountains. The taboos that were revealed in this investigation are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: List of taboos concerning resource use

It was a taboo to…	
• take young bamboo from the mountain to the valley	• stop and rest in an undesignated place in the mountains
• cut the *ekitimazi* tree	• look from side to side when moving through the mountains
• cultivate near riverbanks	• bring home the body of a person who has died in the mountains
• for women to climb far in the mountains and especially to the sacred sites	• go to the mountains with a radio, or to whistle while there
• leave burning the fire used in ritual sacrifice	• have sexual intercourse while in the mountains
• cut a tree in which honeybees stay	• kill mother monkeys or their babies
• cross the mountain from one end to the other in one day	• kill “leader” animals
• use footpaths through the mountains during the rainy season	• kill *engeya*
• cut or break sticks while moving in the mountain from one village to another	• cut down a tree of a particular species which is found amid tress of with a different species
• eat meat struck by thunderbolt	• kill something which a person will not eat

Some respondents stopped following taboos because of the introduction of government policies, rules and regulations governing the use of natural resources in the mountains. Others attributed abandonment of taboos to the introduction of different religions. Some ridge leaders had themselves converted to Christianity or Islam and only a few were still interested in traditional culture. Some people had labelled such practices as witchcraft. Even though some of the participants in this investigation upheld and revered the Rwenzori Mountain as their cultural symbol, they felt that some of the taboos associated with resource use are in conflict with their religious beliefs.

Beliefs associated with gods and spirits

Traditionally, local people in the Rwenzori Mountains believed that gods live in different peaks and different mountain resources. People had a belief that all mountain ridges are homes of gods and that all ridges have sacrifice places called *eshendekere*, which means shrine or altar. People believed that the use of resources in various mountain ridges must conform to the expectations of the gods of those resources.

There were over 30 gods that were associated with various resources in the mountains, some of which are presented in Table 3 below. Only twelve of these gods were mentioned by respondents during interviews. The names of other gods were supposed to be mentioned only while performing rituals and not casually such as in an interview.

Table 3: Gods and goddesses that local people believe control resource use

God/Goddess	Responsibility of god or goddess
Nyamuhanga	The creator of everything
Nzururu	The god of snow and a father to the gods Kithasamba and Nyabibuya
Kithasamba	The overall god. Kithasamba, who is believed to live in the glaciated Rwenzori Mountain peaks, is a giant force who controls the natural environment and the lives of all the mountain people
Nyabibuya	The goddess of blessings
Mugenyi	The god of visitors and domesticated animals
Ndahura	The god of diseases, known to cause and cure diseases
Kalisya	The god responsible for hunters
Kahiyi	The god for all animals
Nyabinji	The god of abundant harvest
Irungu	The god and spirit of wilderness or hunters
Mulindwa	The god of the unfortunate, he makes people's plans work or fail
Nyabahasa	The goddess responsible for the bearing of twins
Walyuba	The god of life and its sustainability
Ndahukira	The god of luck and destiny
Mulemberi	The god of children and expectant mothers
Mbolhu	The goddess of strong love among women
Ndyoka	The god of water and wetlands
Kaleghire	The god of rescue
Kathulikanzira	The god of travellers, he leads their way
Kayikara	The god of herbalists
Muthundi	The god of abundant harvest

Gods were known to have wives, children, soldiers and pages. Local people traditionally believed that a community of gods was comprised of three categorical groups. One group was comprised of white gods of which there were nine in number; another group was comprised of black gods (the number was not specified), and the third was a miscellaneous group that included mothers to gods, and children, soldiers and pages of gods. Each of the gods had a unique name in relation to their power and control. The back cloth, a type of cloth made from Ficus trees, was said to be very important regalia for the gods.

People believed that gods brought resources including medicinal plants and animals from an unknown place to humankind and that some gods reside inside these resources. Mountain gods needed to be appeased if these resources were to be accessed forever. Some people therefore performed certain rituals in various places in the mountains to appease the gods. There are over 100 places which are considered sacred sites in the Rwenzori Mountains. Sacred sites appear in many forms including as stones, shrubs, trees, hills, caves and river potholes. These and other sacred sites were regularly visited for various reasons including health, peace, family planning, famine, drought, rain, accessibility to resources and general blessings.

Some plants which were said to be the homes of gods were also said to be medicinal, including *Euphorbia candelabrum*, *Euphorbia tirucalli*, *Macharmiaplatcalyx*, *Dracaena afromontana* and *Cymbopogon afronardus*.

There were several ways in which gods influenced the utilisation of resources. People with names of gods influenced gathering the resources as some resources were only supposed to be collected by people possessing certain names of gods. This practice was commonly found among the Batooro tribes but not the Baamba or Bakonzo tribes. For example, a person with the name *Ndahura* was supposed to collect only species of plants that have thorns and rough leaves. Such a person was the only one who could successfully hunt animals with rough and sharp fur. A person with the name *Mulindwa* was supposed to hunt only carnivores. *Mulindwa* was also supposed to collect plant species of medicinal value that protect people from attack by enemies or wild animals. Such people had powers to resist attack from any wild animal, ranging from small animals such as snakes to big animals such as lions and leopards. A person with the name *Mugenyi* was supposed to hunt herbivores. *Mugenyi was* also supposed to collect plant species of medicinal value that protect people from illnesses and plant species rich in amphetamines.

People who worshiped the god *Mulindwa* were not supposed to worship the god *Mugenyi* and likewise each of the worshippers of one god was not supposed to gather the resources associated with another god. The restrictions in worshiping gods did not only stop at gathering resources but also extended to social relations amongst the community. These examples are indicative though not exhaustive of the complex relationship between gods, names of people, and resource use.

People built houses, huts or shrines for gods and in those places they evoked them during cultural practices. Such houses were constructed on a particular area of the homestead using particular plant resources, and the door to such a house had to face a particular direction. It was believed that this appeased gods because gods and spirits used them as shelter.

Resources that were used in constructing shrines for gods were collected in particular ways and not by everyone. They were mainly collected by clan heads, people with the names of gods, ridge leaders and chieftains. Often, ridge leaders and others involved would prepare or initiate ritual activities at these shrines before they went up the mountain to perform other rituals.

Hunting was an activity that was conducted in close consultation with gods. Hunting was hereditary and passed on from one generation to the next. According to the respondents, the god of hunters became furious when people did not engage in hunting.

"*Not hunting is disrespect to Kalisya, the god of hunters and the other hunting spirits and this is a bad omen.*" KSK–034

When the god of hunters was annoyed, he could cause fatal accidents to a person who has not practiced hunting.

"If one is from a hunting family, but is blocked from hunting, a mere stone thrown by such a person could end up killing someone in the stone's path!" KSK–034

It was believed that such people frequently had nightmares and they had to make peace with Kalisya and the other hunting spirits by keeping hunting gear such as spears and bells and hunting dogs with them. After misbehaving or dishonouring the gods, a hunt would be fruitless. All specifications for sacrificing to the gods before a hunt had to be followed in consultation with the ridge leader if a hunt was to be successful. Unless the ridge leaders agreed that the time for hunting was right, there would be no hunting.

Some people traditionally worshipped near some trees which were thought to be homes of gods and these trees were not supposed to be cut. If cut, some trees would bleed, cry or even speak in expressions of pain.

"*According to culture, trees surrounding the shrines are never to be cut. If one cuts them, they might find evil spirits there that will attack and harm them.*" BBG–098

Obtaining resources in the mountains without following the proper procedure of appeasing the gods resulted in punishments. Common punishments from gods included deformity of the body by developing hunchback, swollen limbs, atrophy in limbs, and insensibility in some parts of the body, abnormality in the number of fingers or toes especially the development of a sixth finger and toe, the production of twins, and the occurrence of peculiar phenomena such as producing albinos. These punishments occurred either immediately or later to the offender and / or to his or her close relatives.

In order to know if a particular misfortune was the result of gods, the afflicted person or family would invite elders or clan leaders to confer and tell them about the problem. The elders or clan leaders would bring a fetish called *enkwanzi ya makerre*, which is described as a small spotlessly white bead, which they would tie with a fibre from a plant called *omuhaati*, which respondents said usually grows in neglected gardens. One of the elders or clan leaders would present the bread to the affected person while reciting incantations before taking it at night into the road junction to evoke a particular god who had caused the misfortune. Early the following morning the clan leader or elder who had put the fetish in the road junction would pick it up, bring it home and make incantations as he tied it around the wrist, neck or waist of the affected person. The affected person would start uttering words explaining what the problem was and a possible remedy to the problem. It was from there that people would know the cause of the problem and the means of solving the problem.

Generally people of the Rwenzori Mountains had strong beliefs about the control of gods on resource use, evidenced by the statement below:

"*If the spirits themselves make their call, not even the rangers will see us going up to the sites and yet we will go through their protected area, even when they are there. I can even cut down all the trees without the rangers seeing me if the spirits are with me!*" BBG–098

The results presented in section 1.4.1 indicate that resource use by local people in the Rwenzori region is closely associated to the local people's traditional beliefs, knowledge and practices. This is consistent with studies that report that resource use in rural Africa is influenced by traditional culture of the people (DeGeorges and Reilly, 2009).

However, in the Rwenzori Mountains, the identified traditional beliefs, knowledge and practices were not recognised at the time of establishing the park. This also partly explains why despite anthropological and historical studies in the RMNP suggesting a close association of the local people with the Rwenzori Mountains and resources therein, the culture of the people is not yet full taken into account in the use, conservation and management of park resources. This could also explain why the RMNP was declared a natural world heritage site but not a cultural world heritage site. However, the work of the CVCP, as documented in this report and elsewhere, offers a practical demonstration of the link between the management of biodiversity and cultural values. This work could potentially form a basis for recognising and integrating the culture of the mountain people into the conservation of RMNP.

1.4.2 Attitudes, interests and concerns of people about utilisation and management of sacred sites

***Individual interviews*:** Beyond ridge leaders and chieftains, other respondents interviewed did not know much about the location, nature and status of the cultural sites. It was evident

that the social organisation and the leadership structure of the Bakonzo and Baamba today is different from the way it was in the past. Therefore, most of the respondents, including at the local and district levels, had never visited any cultural/sacred site. However, leaders at the local level were aware that some people accessed the park, collected resources and performed some activities there clandestinely. As a result of the fact that ridge leaders and chieftains knew more than anyone else, deeper interviews about the status, nature and location of the sacred sites were mainly conducted with them.

The fact that some officers at the district, sub county and village level have never visited any sacred site points to a need for them to become acquitted with the sacred sites and what would take place there if and when they are developed for cultural performances. These people could be availed reports about the sacred sites and also visit some of the sacred sites. This will be helpful for planning purposes.

During individual interviews conducted for the first edition of this technical reporting, it was evident that older respondents, mostly 60 years and above, were more interested in performing cultural practices at sacred sites than the young. Only a few young respondents were interested especially in seeing the rituals being performed. The low level of interest in sacred sites and cultural performances among the young respondents compared to older respondents may be attributed to the fact that most of the young have never witnessed a ritual. Most people last performed rituals in the 1960s when today's young respondents were either children or not yet born.

Contrary to this view, during an interview for the second edition of this report with some representatives from OBR, it was revealed that even the young people are currently interested not only in seeing how the rituals are performed but also getting involved in the performance of the rituals. A case in point is one respondent, a 33 year old man and a son of a chieftain, who explicitly pointed out during an interview that he was interested in inheriting from his father the sacred sites and cultural tools. Indeed, during the interview, the father, a chieftain, gave permission to his son on several occasions to respond to some of the questions.

However, the understanding that some of the ridge leaders had last accessed sacred sites by or in the 1980s raises questions and issues of concern. For example, one chieftain stopped performing rituals in 1967 as a result of war. This therefore means that the gazettement of the park in 1991 may not be a prime reason for people's failure to access the sites. However, the people claimed that declaring part of the Rwenzori Mountains a national park contributed towards halting their cultural performances. A review of the timeline in the Rwenzori Mountains indicates that the mountains have been a home to various rebel groups since the 1960s. In 1960, the mountains were occupied by Simba, a group of Congolese rebels. From 1973 – 1986, rebel activity intensified when the National Resistance Army, led by the current president of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, occupied the zone. In 1988, another

rebel group called the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda entered to fight against the government of Museveni. This was followed by yet another rebel incursion and occupation in 1997. Given the fact that the people would perform rituals for peace, one wonders what went wrong for them to be overcome by war to the extent of abandoning their traditional practices.

It can be concluded that the main reason why the people stopped accessing the park area was because of the presence of rebels in the mountains and not as a result of gazetting the Rwenzori Mountains National Park in 1991. Other factors such as access to education, uptake of different religions, and emulation of other cultures could also have contributed to the abandonment of some sacred sites. In addition, there is also a question of if some of the sites are authentic sacred site, including for example the Kaghoma sacred site which is located on a trail that connects Kabarole to Bundibugyo and has for many years been used by local people. According to Wild and Mcleod (2008), one way of identifying a sacred site is custodianship. There must be evidence on a sacred site that people have cared for the sites for a long time. At many of the sites mapped, there is no sign of care and hence the authenticity of the sites may be questioned.

During interviews, ridge leaders and chieftains cited four main reasons for carrying out rituals at sacred sites, as shown in Table 4:

Table 4: Reasons for performing rituals at sacred sites, past and present

No	Priority of past activities	Priority of current activities (if allowed)
1	Health	Cleansing of ridges
2	Cleansing of ridges	Health
3	Drought	Peace
4	Peace	Rain

Cleansing of ridges (also known as sweeping the ridges) is a ceremony in which ridge leaders, chieftains and local people participate so that their land can be sanctified by the gods. This ceremony used to take place once every five years and was announced by the chieftain beforehand to allow people to prepare morally, socially and spiritually for it. People would divide up into groups, with each group being led by ridge leaders and assisted by traditional healers and clan heads. The groups would then descend the mountain and along the way collect things which they considered evil and agents of bad luck from homesteads and gardens. All of the collected items were then placed at a particular point at the lakeside or in the wilderness beyond human settlement and treated with medicine to prevent evil spirits from straying into the settlement.

Accordingly, the cleansing of ridges was considered a high priority because the respondents believe that the ridges have not been sanctified for so many years, so all of the evil has

accumulated in the mountains. Therefore, if negotiations for access succeed, before conducting rituals in sacred sites, these sites need to be first purified.

Health issues which prompted the performance of rituals in sacred sites ranged from disease epidemics to untimely deaths which were attributed to annoying the gods. Common and mild illnesses such as colds and headaches were and are treated using herbal medicine. Health was cited as a current priority, and several people referenced the Ebola epidemic that occurred in Bundibugyo in December 2007 as cause. People pointed out that such diseases may be associated with an unauthorised collection of resources from a particular place in the mountain.

Peace was also cited as a priority. Respondents explained that rituals would be performed so that peace can continuously prevail. They pointed out that the mountains are at times inhabited by rebels. The performance of rituals in the mountains would be possible, provided that rebels are not in the mountains and permission is secured from UWA.

Creation of rainfall was also an activity of priority. Respondents have observed that the duration of rainfall in the mountains has reduced and that dry spells last longer. One respondent pointed out that in the past, it would take about three hours to make rain by performing special rituals in a scared shrine. Respondents also noted that they are aware that water volumes in many rivers have reduced and that this has had a negative impact on their crops.

Other than the four priority activities which respondents mentioned, one can expect that there are other activities that are associated with rituals but that these were not mentioned because the activity is not a priority, is no longer done, or because people have found substitutes. For example, circumcision might no longer be a cultural ritual because it is currently done in hospitals or outside of the park.

Based on respondents' belief that harvesting particular resources by unauthorised people would bring bad luck to the whole community, we are tempted to conclude that inherent in the culture of the Bakonzo and Baamba are sanctions that would ensure resources are sustainably utilised. It appears that conservation was spontaneous and interwoven in cultural practices and not a deliberate activity singled from the rest.

It also emerged from the individual interviews that the ridge leaders and chieftains do not have any reservations about their cultural practices and they expressed a high level of interest and a positive attitude for reviving cultural practices in sacred sites. They pointed out that all of the current ecological, social and economic problems are a result of abandoning traditional practices and following modern religions. Some of the ridge leaders pointed out that there is nothing special with the current religions. To quote one of the ridge leaders in Bundibugyo:

> "*In fact, there is no right or wrong religion between modern and our traditional religion. When we were going to the mountains, we would pray to the god and not satan as alleged by the whites. This is true and known even by the missionaries because where they found a shrine, is where they constructed a church.*"

The staff of OBR shared a similar view during a group discussion. They argued that upon the introduction and adoption of western religions and the Obote government's abolition of kingdoms as cultural institutions in 1967, sacred sites and associated rituals were denounced which then paved the way for environmental degradation.

Expert interviews: The UWA officials interviewed had a positive attitude towards the CVCP. They view the project as a vehicle to promote a more harmonious relationship between local people and the park administration and as one of several participatory approaches to natural resource management in protected areas. UWA officials reported that the 2004-2014 RMNP management plan was reviewed and updated in 2010 to include the cultural aspects of resource use in the park. The resource use agreements that have recently been signed by UWA with local communities in Kazingo, Nsura and Kakuka give access to sacred sites as a resource that people need in the national park.

During the interviews, UWA staff expressed concerns about the ability of local people to live up to the negotiated terms and conditions incorporated in the subsequent memorandum of understanding (MOU) when signed. These concerns reflect the degree of mistrust that currently exists between the people and park staff, which can be addressed through a negotiation process discussed in Part 2 of this report.

All ridge leaders and chieftains interviewed pointed out that they are patiently waiting for the time when they can officially re-start their cultural performances. Towards the end of the interviews, ridge leaders were asked if they had any questions regarding the utilisation and management of sacred sites in RMNP. Many asked about when the arrangement of management of sacred sites by ridge leaders would be formally launched so that they could plan their activities in view of the annual coronation celebrations of the king which take place in October.

Additionally, some ridge leaders and chieftains reported constructing shrines near their homesteads for cultural performances. However, they pointed out that the sacred sites in the park cannot be substituted with shrines in their homes as both are important in cultural performances and complement each other. Image 2 below shows a private shrine in Bundibugyo District that the owner intends to develop into an education centre for cultural issues. During the interviews, ridge leaders stated that most people are willing to participate in cultural practices, especially cleansing of the ridges, and this assertion is based on the fact that several people still consult them for remedies.

Ridge leaders and chieftains who have shown an initiative and interest in the cultural performances by developing cultural sites on their private land should be supported through identified avenues by OBR. Also, since many individuals currently express great enthusiasm for cultural performances, the CVCP should work to expedite the management planning process for sacred sites by encouraging OBR in partnership with UWA to take advantage of the favourable attitudes. For sites which have unclear ownership, it is the duty of OBR in close collaboration with local organisations to work closely with clan leaders, ridge leaders and chieftains to ensure that people responsible for them are identified. Although as discussed in another section, ownership of sacred sites is really about holding the sacred sites in trust, in the interest of the community.

Image 2: A shrine under construction in Kakuka parish, Bundibugyo, 2009

During the interviews, ridge leaders and chieftains revealed that the sacred sites were not accessed regularly and, if allowed to access the park, the first rituals performed would be cleansing the ridges followed by other rituals depending on the needs of the community. It was pointed out that in the past, cleansing the ridges was performed once every five years as long as an adverse occurrence had not taken place. Once access to sites is secured and the ridges have been cleansed, chieftains expect that sacred sites inside the park will be visited at least once every three months. It is important to note that as cultural performances in sacred sites are diverse, including for example the appeasement of gods and spirits, enlisting blessings, cleansing the land, and seeking support in agricultural production, reproduction and community safety, they are performed by different categories of people. It is therefore beneficial to identify all of the people involved other than relying only on the ridge leaders and chieftains as the experts.

The chieftains pointed out a number of material requirements which will need to be addressed in order to start engaging in traditional practices, including:

- **Open the trails leading to the sacred sites**: Beyond legal access, the trails will need to be cleared to enable physical access.
- **Bamboo to construct the shrines/other structures in villages**: On average 600 bamboo pieces are needed to construct a medium-sized structure, such as that shown in Image 2 wherein no mud was used.
- **Goats, hens and food stuffs to offer during sacrifices**: Previously it was the responsibility of the individuals who performed the rituals to find these requirements. However, UWA policies do not permit taking food stuffs and live animals into a protected area. Part 2 of this report discusses how to address this issue.

Group Meetings: In the late 2000s, when community members were asked during a group meeting to choose one of the three stakeholders, UWA, OBR or RweMCCA, to spearhead the cultural values in the Rwenzori Mountains, the majority chose RweMCCA. Many people at the grassroots level expressed high hopes in RweMCCA as a body which will enable them to re-discover their cultural values. When asked about what they wanted UWA to do regarding utilisation and management of sacred sites in the park, many respondents indicated that UWA should give the mandate to OBR to oversee the activities of RweMCCA while it (UWA) remains a partner.

One respondent said:

> "*Surely for long, the park people have ignored our traditional rights to have access to the resources which mean a lot in our daily lives. Now that the Omusinga has told us to start performing rituals, the park should just let us because they (the park people) do not understand our culture and the way it is associated with the mountain.*"

Although group discussions during the 2009 survey had indicated that people had high hopes in RweMCCA, the recent survey revealed that people no longer had hope in the association and were concerned that it was not yet firmly established on the ground. However many respondents including members of RweMCCA believed in OBR as an institution that should coordinate the process of accessing sacred sites and performing rituals at the sites. People showed enthusiasm for incorporating a tourism aspect in cultural performances at sacred sites which indicates that financial benefit forms part of the motivation for resuming cultural performances and re-gaining access to the sites in the national park.

Issues of ownership were raised during group meetings. Some sites are claimed by several owners and there is a struggle for the power to manage them. This indicates a high level of interest among local people to manage and utilise sacred sites in the park. There were three factors which seemed to drive respondents' interest in accessing and managing sacred sites. First, some respondents and especially the ridge leaders perceived access to sacred sites as a way of recovering their culture and performing traditional practices for the sake of

cultural identity. Secondly, some respondents and especially the staff of OBR regarded access and use of sacred sites as a way of repossessing what used to belong to them and their forefathers. Thirdly, some respondents perceived sacred sites as areas that would easily generate income especially when developed for cultural tourism; this view was held by the majority of respondents. This perception explains the common emphasis on developing existing sacred sites for cultural performances. Some of the community tourism activities suggested by respondents are listed in Table 5.

In order to promote community cultural tourism it is important that OBR takes an active and leading role by identifying the cultural products that can be developed, marketed and sold through cultural tourism. For example, OBR through local organisations could help people in making groups so that they sell handcrafts collectively. An agreed upon percentage determined by members could go in the general resource pool. OBR could form groups or strengthen the groups that already exist (such as RweMCCA) so that they are able to exhibit cultural dances, songs, instruments and drama to tourists especially along trails leading to developed sacred sites like Katwekale sacred site and Bulemba cultural site. Local people living near the developed sacred sites and the general public in the Rwenzori Mountains will need to develop skills on how to package, market and manage community tourism programmes.

All of the activities suggested for possibly community tourism development are backed up by views from different members of the community. For example:

- Ridge leaders in Bundibugyo pointed out that Buwani sacred site in Ngite parish owned by Thembo Masamba was previously known to be visited primarily by blacksmiths.
- Ridge leaders attest that they have the capacity to control weather and climate; it only takes three hours to cause rainfall in selected ridges in the mountains.

To respond to the concern that construction of the shrines in and outside of the park requires materials including from the park, UWA could sign a MOU with OBR on behalf of local people so that these resources can be obtained and in a sustainable manner.

There must be clear agreement between OBR and UWA on the code of practice when local people enter the park for rituals. For example, some respondents feared that access to sacred sites and the performance of cultural ritual could lead to human sacrifice. Others feared that some cultural practices could evoke spirits that would torment the community. This is why a code of practice detailing general procedures for accessing and performing rituals would be useful.

Table 5: Activities that could be included in community tourism programmes

Activity	Anticipated interest of tourists in the activity as viewed by community respondents
Handcrafts	Locally made handcrafts could be available for sale along trails leading to the sacred sites.
Iron smelting	Some members of the community practice iron smelting using traditional methods (see Image 3), which may be of interest to tourists.
Rain making	In view of climate change and global warming and its international importance, this could be of interest to the tourists.
Traditional birth control and family planning methods	The local people could offer services in their homes to tourists both local and international regarding birth control and family planning. This knowledge could be of interest to tourists.
Medicinal plants	Local medicine people could share knowledge on medicinal plants and their preparation and usage. For example bark from the tree *omukikimbwa* shown in Image 4 is used to cure ulcers.
Forests outside protected areas	Some plantation or natural forests on private land may offer unique plant and animal viewing experiences.
Private shrines/ museums with cultural artefacts	Some members of the community have structures (such as that shown in Image 2) in which they collect cultural items and perform rituals or teach others about culture.
Cultural dances, music, instruments and drama	The Bakonzo and Baamba have traditional dances, songs, drama and instruments which could also be of interest to tourists; see Image 5.
Artefacts	Artefacts could also be of interest to tourists.
Other activities	Activities including the provision of accommodation and other local practices could be identified or developed; see Images 5 and 6 for examples.

The group meetings revealed that some members of the community were not aware of the CVCP and did not know much about cultural values and performing rituals. Respondents during discussions pointed out that there is a need for sensitisation about CVCP; this may prove particularly important in trying to ensure equal access to information and participation in eventual activities. Also, respondents requested training on how they could develop and market cultural tourism products. This was also requested by the participants from OBR. The respondents from OBR offered to conduct sensitisation meetings in various villages in the Rwenzori Mountains but will need logistical support in the form of transport and materials.

Lastly, some community members expressed concern that some ridge leaders had last accessed the sacred sites in the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s, thus how could they identify some of these sites and be certain of performing rituals in the right place. Indeed none of the ridge leaders and chieftains interviewed had performed the rituals at the sites since the early 1980s. They cited war and the presence of rebels in the mountains as the reason why they had stopped accessing some sacred sites. One elderly ridge leader confessed that what he had been describing was a report of what he had seen his father doing and that he himself had never performed a ritual. However, all of the ridge leaders interviewed avowed that they could identify the sacred sites and perform the rituals to completion without encountering and causing a problem to themselves or others.

Image 3: Iron smelting and tool making using traditional methods

Image 4: Part of a tree debarked for use in a medication to treat ulcers

Image 5: *Endara*, a musical instrument of the Bakonzo

Image 6: A man carries a drum used to prepare a traditional alcohol

Image 7: A fetish used to protect crops against thieves and pests

Focus group discussions: The results revealed that the older people are more interested and more involved in cultural issues than the young. However, one ridge leader pointed out during the discussion that the young are also interested except that the wisdom of the old people has not been taken into consideration. When this elder was asked how he wished the young to be involved he responded:

> "*Here, the young follow what we old men do. Just allow us to start the practices and we shall automatically engage them, we know how to do this.*"

One major concern pointed out by RweMCCA members during the 2009 survey was that some ridge leaders have already been given permission to access the sites from OBR. Ridge leaders mentioned that the king, the Omusinga, has allowed them to access cultural sites in the park and perform rituals there. Given that respondents stated that the management of sacred sites should be coordinated by OBR, this indicates that people believe that OBR are traditionally responsible for the sites in the park. Indeed, as mentioned earlier, some ridge leaders revealed that upon the coronation of the Omusinga, they started accessing sacred sites in the park. However, it is important that negotiations are first undertaken with UWA to formalise such access to the sacred sites. This should be a significant concern on both sides, and requires engagement between the park authorities and the Omusinga, ideally attended by highest levels of UWA. As elsewhere in Uganda, it

will be necessary for the traditional leadership institutions to interact with the contemporary ones.

During the recent survey, there was consensus among RweMCCA members that OBR should take the lead in the management of sacred sites. They hastened to add that OBR should delegate some of its responsibilities to existing local organisations. Concerns were expressed that rangers and tourist guides take visitors to sacred sites without the permission of ridge leaders or chieftains. This could lead to loss of lives if people accessed sites without the permission of the owners. Respondents instead suggested that the process of allowing visitor access to sacred sites should be coordinated by ridge leaders and chieftains under OBR in agreement with UWA.

Although the members of RweMCCA were of the view that OBR should take the overall lead in representing the communities in the management of sacred sites, they were concerned that their association is not functioning in line with its founding objectives. They argued that OBR has recently usurped their activities and their sources of funding. Further discussions with respondents from OBR revealed that RweMCCA's objectives were in conflict with many of OBR's objectives. This happened because by the time RweMCCA was formed, OBR had not been formally instituted. The respondents from OBR opined that they recognise the contribution of RweMCCA and plan to work with it as any other community-based organisation.

The fact that some RweMCCA members expressed reservations about the objectives of CVCP on some level begs the question of why they joined RweMCCA in the first place, based on the mission and purpose of the association. This highlights the importance of working to ensure that people understand what they are pursuing upfront and the need to be aware of possible conflicts of ideologies among the members of the local community and among religious groups. It was reported during the interviews that there are some priests who are members of RweMCCA and also participated in one of the rituals that was conducted in May 2009.

These concerns, when aired and elaborated, can ideally be addressed through OBR working together with stakeholders in RweMCCA and UWA as well as ridge leaders, chieftains and the other members of the local community.

1.4.3 Information about the fifteen mapped sacred and cultural sites in the Rwenzori Mountains

The fifteen sites were mapped in 2009 and all are associated with ridges. There are additional known sacred sites at higher altitudes and associated with higher gods, whose functions might be very different from those mapped. Information about other sites is currently being collected by OBR and the Minister of Environment and Sacred Sites.

The 15 sites were selected and ultimately mapped based on their proximity to the protected area, cultural attachment, accessibility, functionality and the topography of the area. It will therefore be important to indicate the location of the sites in relation to park management zones, as management plans for respective sites will take into consideration the park's zonation such as the strict nature zone. However, principle 2 of the Sacred Natural Sites Guidelines for Protected Area Managers (Wild and Mcleod, 2008) requires the use of zoning as a standard tool in land use planning and management of areas with natural sacred sites. The guidelines suggest that zoning within protected areas should be made on the basis of sacred sites. Evidently, literature suggests that sacred sites are often associated with high levels of biodiversity (ibid).

Wild and Mcleod (2008) suggest applying the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve concept in zoning protected areas with sacred sites:

> "*The UNESCO Biosphere Reserve concept can also be effectively applied to assist with the conservation of sacred natural sites. In this model, the "core" area could be the sacred natural site itself, and buffer and transition zones could be created around the core area.*" (p. 38)

Although all of the 15 mapped sites were originally referred to as "sacred sites", during a consultative meeting conducted with OBR members in April 2012, it was determined that at least one of the sites was cultural and not sacred. According to OBR officials, sacred sites are described as:

- important areas to which the people of Rwenzori Mountain (Abanyarwenzururu) attach cultural connotations and respect
- areas of worship, ritual performance and expression of culture
- places for ridge cleansing
- places for sacrifices to the gods, healing and worship
- places for livelihood security – through bountiful agricultural and industrial production and protection from diseases

Sacred sites are generally places for rituals, spiritual engagement, land cleansing and magical religious performances. Community members believe that sacred sites are a cultural heritage from their forefathers. Although all sacred sites are equal in importance, some have specific functions and cannot be used to perform more than one ritual. This is partly because different sites are associated with different spirits and gods who play different roles in the culture of the mountain people.

Respondents revealed that a sacred site is often associated with a god or a spirit unlike a cultural site which is simply a place of historical importance and may or may not be associated with gods or spirits. Cultural sites are mostly related to the OBR kingdom and

other historical/cultural aspects of the community like crafts and burial sites such as the Bulemba cultural site.

Respondents further revealed that there are some sites which are outside of the park. This makes one wonder why the community does not use some of these but rather insists on accessing those inside the park. It is important to note that many sites outside of the park are cultural rather than sacred.

Based on the described differences between a sacred site and a cultural site, one of the mapped sites is a cultural site and fourteen are sacred sites. All of the mapped sacred sites are inside the boundaries of the park (see Figure 5 further below). The sacred sites vary in type, shape and nature and the distance from one site to another varies. For example, Kayimbi sacred site in Kithobira Parish, Kitholhu Sub-county, Kasese District is the farthest at 10km from the park boundary. Table 6 presents information on each of the fifteen mapped sites and their location. Eleven of the sacred sites are in Kasese, two are in Kabarole and two are in Bundibugyo.

Table 6: Location, ownership and significance of sacred and cultural sites

District	Sub-county	Parish	Site Name	Feature & distance from park boundary	Ownership	Additional Notes
Kasese	Buyisumbu	Kasanghali	Mundara	Hill		
	Bugoye	Ibanda	Ntole	Bamboo shrub; 3.5km	Babinga clan	This site would be visited for drought control, to increase crop yields and cleansing of ridges.
			Mihunga	Smooth stone; a few meters		A place of worship and sacrifice for fertility of both land and health of people.
	Maliba	Bikone	Nyawereka	Tortoise shaped stone; 2.5km	Bathangi clan	This site is for the Bikone community. It is visited for disease control, cleansing of ridges, and control of other natural calamities.
	Kisinga	Nsenyi	Kahindangoma	Hill in between two rivers; 500m		A highly regarded royal palace. Annually on 30 June, celebrations are held to mark the independence of the Rwenzururu Kingdom. At this site, cleansing of ridges takes place, sacrifices for good luck are offered, diseases are controlled, fertility is prayed for and natural calamities are controlled.
		Nsenyi	Kasanga	Hill; 2.5km		A royal palace in Kighutu village. It is considered a unifying place for all mountain people.
	Rukoki	Kihara	Bughalitsa	Huge tree	Babinga clan	
	Kitholhu	Kithobira	Kambasa	Several trees		This site is accessed through Buyeyi Sacred Site (not mapped) in Kitobire. Rituals are first

						performed from Buyeyi then a person proceeds to Kampasa to pray to the god Kithasamba. This is proposed as a future site for the office of the chieftain.
			Kayimbi	Huge stone; 10km	Abaswagha clan	This site is for disease control, for animal and crop productivity, drought control and for spiritual meditation.
	Ihandiro	Bubotyo	Bulemba	Hill	All of the Bakonzo	This is a cultural site. It is a burial place for the king of Bakonzo (MukiraniIsaya). However, there is another cultural site about 500m from this site where people would go for special spiritual powers, initiation rituals, and memorial/historical anniversaries.
	Kilembe	Kyanjuki	Katwekali	Hill; 2km	Abathangi clan	This site is to control natural calamities, increase crop yields, and control pests, rodents and the outbreak of an epidemic.
Kabarole	Kibiito	Bukara	Katwekali	Plateau; 2.5km	Bathangi clan but Yakobo Kato (who died in early 2012) and Apolo Insingoma are owners. These are not ridge leaders but their late father was	This is found in Bukara Parish and is used by the community of Kinyambanyika village. Rituals were performed for security, disease control, productivity and control of calamities.

					the owner.	
	Bukuku	Kazingo	Kaghoma	Tree called *omuhati* (*Afrizianafraizio)*; 3km	Abaswagha clan and Abasukali	At the boundary of Bundibugyo and Kabarole Districts and previously used by both Bundibugyo and Kabarole people, the site would be visited in case of labour complications during birth, cleansing of the land, drought control, disease control and for luck during hunting.
Bundibugyo	Harugale	Bupomboli	Ikondere	Huge tree; 300m	Abaswagha clan	For Bupomboli/Kitsimba – Kaleyaleya ridge, this site would be visited for peace, high crop yields, disease control, control of calamities and cleansing of the land.
	Nduguthu	Kakuka	Bukandwa	Huge tree; 1.5km	Abaswagha clan	This site would be visited in order to control famine, to perform rituals for peace, to control of diseases and epidemics, and cleansing of the land.

Two sites, Bulemba in Kasese and Katwekale in Kabarole, have opened to community access through signed MOUs between UWA and OBR.

Image 8: A ridge leader standing near a tree called Kaghoma, a sacred site in Kazingo

Image 9: A chieftain and a tortoise shaped stone at the Nyawereka sacred site

1.4.3.1 Accessibility to sacred sites

Some sites are along or within a few meters of major trails, and some are far away from major trails with difficult or limited accessibility. Figure 5 shows the location of all 15 mapped sites. Many of the other known sites are located at higher altitudes in the mountains; these were inaccessible to the researchers taking GPS coordinates of the sites. This explains why the mapped sites shown in Figure 5 are located nearer to the park boarder.

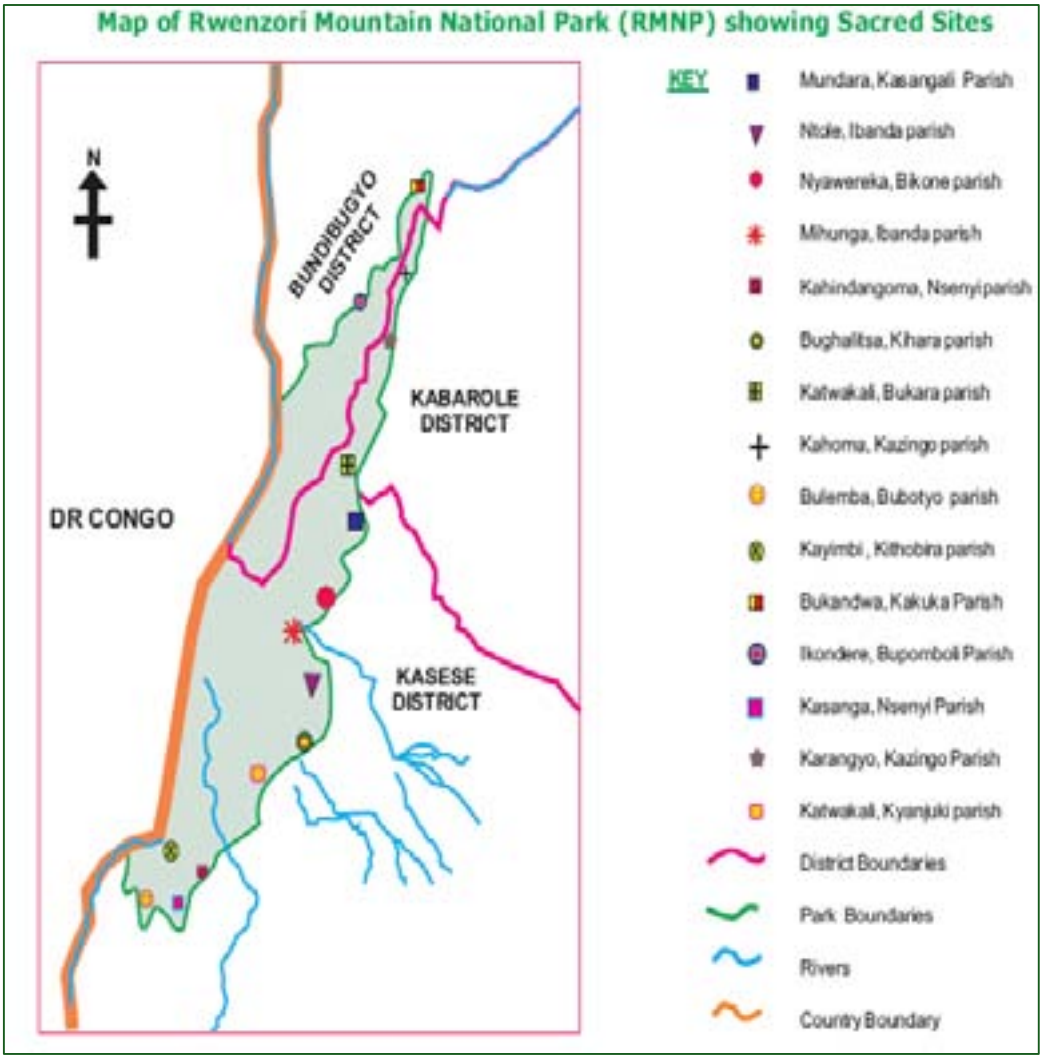

Figure 5: Map of RMNP showing 15 mapped sacred and cultural sites

However, there are some traditional foot paths said to have been used in the past that are currently not in use (Osmaston and Pasteur, 1972). It is suggested in the RMNP management plan that UWA will work towards re-establishing these for future use by visitors. These include Mahoma, Kyarumba, Kilembe, Kisomoro (Katebwa), Kakuka and Musandama trails (Figure 6). These could further enhance accessibility to some of the sacred sites.

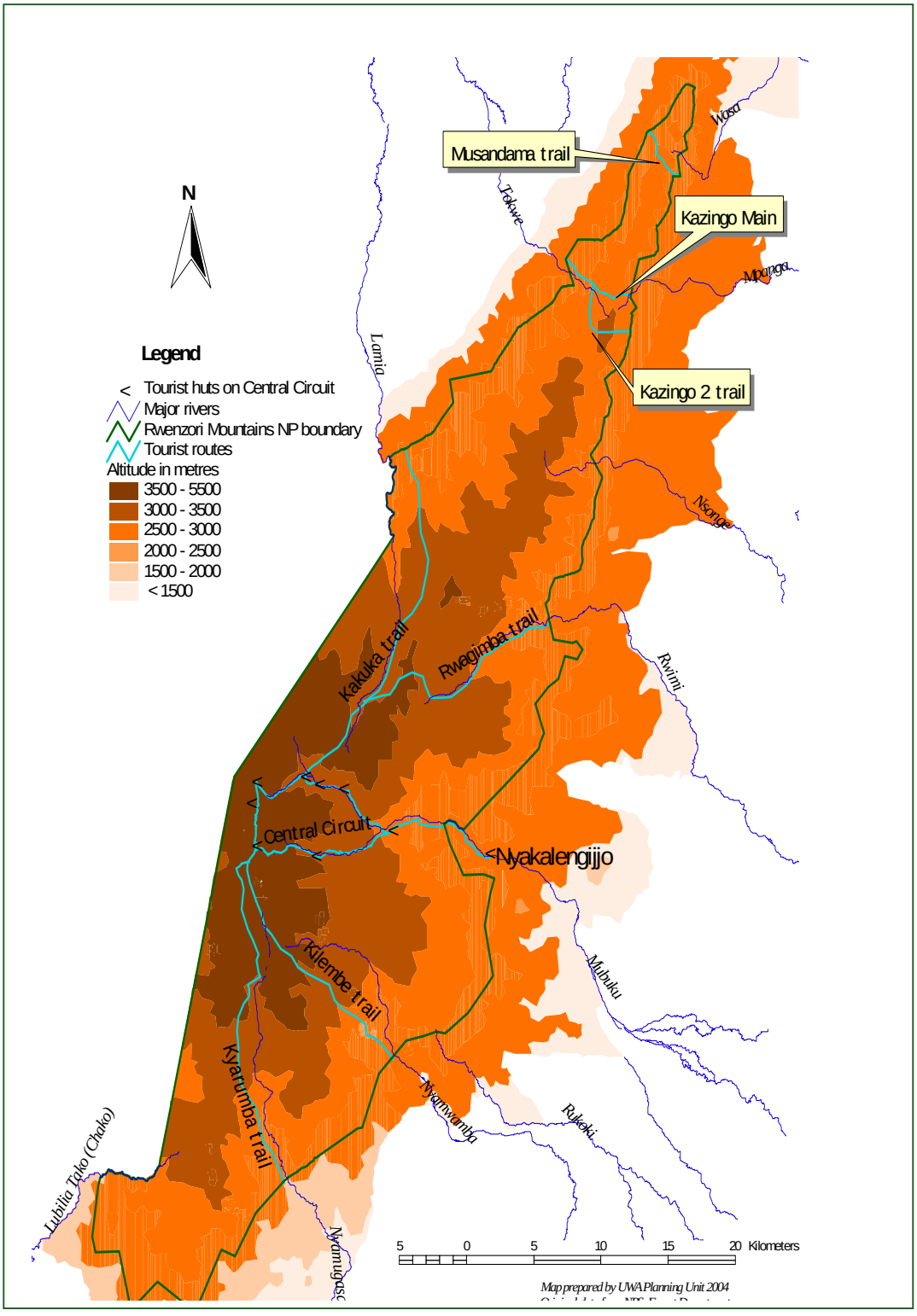

Figure 6: Map showing major trails and suggested trails in RMNP

(Source RMNP management plan 2004 – 2014)

All respondents were in agreement that the community needed to access sacred and cultural sites in the park. Community members at Nsenyi noted that if UWA would allow them to access and manage their sacred sites, then there would be no hostility between the PA management and the community. The ridge leaders backed this up by saying that access to their sacred sites is crucial because in times of calamities like famine and diseases, rituals to calm down the evil spirits were performed and the situation would return to normal.

Community members at Bikone in Maliba Sub-county and Katebwa in Kabonero Sub-county noted that with access to the sites, they will also need to gain access to other important resources like herbs, materials for basket weaving, and honey.

During discussions with local leaders in Bikone and Isule Parishes, one of the leaders highlighted the fact that the park has greatly interfered with hunting as a cultural attribute of the community by restricting access. As noted previously, hunting is hereditary and is passed on from one generation to the next in a family. Not hunting is disrespectful to Kalisya, the god of hunters, and the other hunting spirits and this is a bad omen. The failure to hunt is seen as a cause of many fatal accidents these days and a cause of nightmares. Those afflicted with nightmares must make peace with Kalisya and the other hunting spirits by keeping some hunting gear with them. The group members requested that such people be granted access to the park at least seasonally for hunting.

They suggested that since the park land belonged to the community in the first place, they should be compensated with some other fertile piece of land on which they can plant herbal trees after accessing the seedlings or seeds from the park.

Many of the local community members interviewed believed that the mountain and the sacred sites serve a very important part of their lives and this is a motivation for access.

1.4.3.2 Ownership of sacred and cultural sites

Many respondents claimed that sacred sites are owned by the respective ridge leaders and they still have interests in managing them despite the sacred sites being inside the boundaries of the park. Other respondents said that sacred sites are traditionally owned by the community but that the ridge leaders held them in trust for the people.

In the traditional cultural context, “ownership” means that power was vested upon ridge leaders, chieftains and clan leaders to oversee the activities that took place in sacred sites. This took place at some unknown time in the history of the Bakonzo and Baamba. This power was passed on from father to son, through many generations. OBR representatives expressed a need to revert ownership not only of sacred sites but also of the land on which they sit to OBR so that the sacred sites can be managed in partnership with UWA. They suggested that those sites outside of the park should be jointly owned by OBR and communities through a traditional structure.

This can be expounded by reviewing the traditional hereditary structure of the Bakonzo. In the past, there was a loose political structure (similar to what was described in Figure 4) set up based on families, villages, ridges and clans, each of which was administered independently. In relation to the sacred sites, the leadership structure placed chieftains at the peak of the management structure of the ridges and the sacred sites therein. The chieftains were answerable to the Omusinga or the kingship. It was not clear to which exact office of the king the chieftains reported. However, the king's relationship to the sacred sites was such that he was in a position to order the performance of rituals if he felt the situation called for it.

Given the current OBR structure, the chieftains would closely work with the Minister of Culture and Chiefdoms and the Minister of Environment and Sacred Sites. During interviews with participants from OBR, it was suggested that the offices of the Minister of Culture and Chiefdoms and the Minister of Environment and Sacred Sites would coordinate the process of addressing some of the problems associated with the management of sacred sites and negotiations with UWA and OBR, as the overall use and management of sacred sites including those individually owned falls under the jurisdiction of OBR. It was suggested that OBR would oversee the use and management of sacred sites by putting in place a code of conduct in and around the sites. This is similar to the arrangement of managing protected areas under UWA, wherein the government of Uganda has vested power to UWA to manage protected areas in trust for the general public.

A report on community participation in interactive park planning and the establishment of Uganda's national parks by Ogwang and DeGeorges (1992) delves into the progression of the management of protected areas in Uganda and more specifically of RMNP. According to Ogwang and DeGeorges, initially, when protected areas were gazetted, the government was cognisant of the fact that the local people should retain their traditional right over some areas and resources. For example, in 1948, the government put a boundary of trees to demarcate a government-run forest reserve from community land. Even though there was this boundary, the people were allowed to access the government area and get bamboo, firewood, mushrooms and herbal medicine and also to hunt. There were no restrictions on accessing sacred sites. Access of the area was managed and controlled by the *Muluka* and *Batongole* chiefs who would stop people from cutting trees and cultivating there. But if an animal came out of the government area, it was acceptable for the community to hunt and kill the animal. They would then report to the ridge leader who would also be given a special share of the kill. The community performed maintenance on the boundary. The grass was trimmed and the trees weeded under the authority and supervision of the ridge leaders. This exercise took place together with ridge cleansing. The government distributed the tools used in maintaining the boundary to the people. The government also paid some money to the committee responsible for the boundary.

After some time, these arrangements put in place by the government stopped. The power to maintain the boundary was then left in the hands of the ridge leaders. The ridge leaders had the powers to arrest anyone caught cutting a boundary tree. The culprits would be handed over to the *Muluka* and *Gombolola* chiefs for punishment, which went as far as jail. The community's complaint at the time was against extending the boundary in order to safeguard their land for cultivation of crops. This therefore means that systems for management of sacred sites were in place.

However, currently other sites have been abandoned and the people responsible could not easily be traced (for example Kaghoma sacred site in Kazingo).This could have been as a result of stopping the performance of the ritual. For instance, it was noted that the ridge leaders and chieftains stopped accessing their sacred sites between the late 1970s and early 1980s. As mentioned earlier, the only reason pointed out for stopping to visit the sacred sites was war and the presence of rebels in various parts of the mountain.

Another concern that came from the ridge leaders and chieftains was that there are some sites which do not have rightful owners and thus it would be risky to allow people to perform rituals there as they may not be rightfully designated to the site. A case in point was a ridge leader of Kyondo who claimed ownership of two sacred sites, performed rituals there and then lost two relatives. Details concerning ownership will again be discussed later in this report.

Contested ownership of some sacred sites could also be as a result of restricted access to some sites upon the establishment of the national park and its claim that everything in the park belonged to the government. This could have led to some individuals, who traditionally had power to manage the sites, losing interest and an eventual break in the hereditary chain.

The conflict over ownership between UWA and local people resulted from the largely restrictive and exclusionary conservation approaches that were used when the park was first gazetted. However, there has been a change in this approach globally and in Uganda, including as encouraged by international declarations which aim to recognise traditional rights over sacred sites (see Box 1 in section 1.4.3.4). Operating in line with the provisions of these declarations may help in resolving the conflicts that exist.

Provisions could be adapted in the context of the traditional structure. In the traditional structure, the chieftain was responsible for overseeing more than one ridge and reported to the king on political matters. He however had complete powers in terms of making decisions at the community level and regarding sacred sites and the performance of rituals. All chieftains interviewed indicated that the number of sacred sites they are responsible for ranged from four to eight. Though the chieftain title was and is held by a few people, there are many ridge leaders responsible for one ridge and who report to the chieftain. These are recognised individuals who accompany chieftains during the performance of rituals.

When rituals would be performed, the chieftain contacted the native doctor and requested him to accompany the group to the sacred site. The chieftain communicated to his people through the ridge leaders. Ridge leaders had shrines at their residences where the community would convene and where the ridge leader would pass on information from the gods to them. From the shrines, ridge leaders went up the mountain and when they came back, community celebrations were held at the shrines and ridge leaders distributed blessed seeds to people to take to their gardens for better yields.

The leadership structure was very much respected in the Rwenzori peoples' culture. Through this leadership structure, community mobilisation was done and disputes and misunderstandings were settled. The structure was passed from father to son from one generation to another.

Currently, the traditional leadership structure has changed; sacred sites inside the national park are under the jurisdiction of UWA and have been since the park's gazettement. This is consistent with UWA's mandate as established by an act of Parliament to manage national parks and all the resources therein. The existence of sacred natural sites in RMNP has been overlooked for many years, and in general UWA has not sought to manage the sites as did traditional leaders. This has led to conflict between the custodians of tradition and protected area managers, and has resulted in resentment from the local community. During interviews, some owners of sacred sites indicated that they look at the rangers and people in UWA uniforms with resentment. This is where the CVCP becomes relevant in helping to clearly define functions and roles of different parties in the management of sacred sites through a negotiation process between UWA and OBR. In the Sacred Natural Sites: Guidelines for Protected Area Managers (Wild and McLeod, 2008) that aim at enhancing the recognition and sympathetic management of sacred natural sites located in legally designated protected areas, they advocate for productive and respectful collaboration between protected area managers and traditional custodians. Exploration of these guidelines can provide a basis upon which more practical management plan of sacred sites in the RMNP can be developed.

As alluded to previously, there are issues of disputed ownership and unclear management at several sites, including instances where it is unclear who owns the sacred site and even the ridge leaders do not know the owners, as well as a site which is claimed by two or three owners. Similarly there are site management issues, wherein, for example the chieftain in Kisinga pointed out a case in Kyondo where a ritual was performed by a person other than a true and designated person. This resulted in calamities befalling the family of the person who performed the ritual. During the interview, the chieftain confidently stated that he was certain that performing of the ritual "illegally" was the cause of death of the family members. However he hastened to add that ownership issues of sacred sites are already being dealt with and will soon be solved. Figure 7 is a scan of a letter calling upon the chieftain of

Kisinga and Kyondo to have a meeting at the sub-county level to clarify issues of ownership of some sacred sites there.

Figure 7: A letter written to a chieftain calling on him to clarify issues related to the ownership of a sacred site.

1.4.3.3 Conservation values of sacred sites

From discussions with the ridge leaders and chieftains, it was deduced that some sacred sites have and maintained rich biodiversity not as a result of proactive conservation but as a result of taboos and threats attached to these sites. For example one taboo was that the collection of bamboo from a sacred site would lead to the death of the children of the person who collected the bamboo. A follow up probe on this revealed that such a taboo was to ensure that the sacredness of the site was maintained. According to one ridge leader:

"*It is just like the churches these days, one is expected not to play from the altar, or collect money from the altar which Christians have offered to God, and this is for purposes of giving respect to a place that is considered holy. Similarly sanctions on sacred sites were put in place to keep the area holy.*"

Additionally, descriptions of what takes place during cultural performances do not indicate that conservation was necessarily intentional or inherent in the cultural rituals which took place at sacred sites. Table 7 below indicates the materials needed to perform a cultural ritual at a sacred site. However, all ridge leaders, chieftains and local community members interviewed agreed that many of the cultural norms, values and beliefs linked local people's lifestyle to resources in the mountains.

1.4.3.4 Basic requirements for performing rituals in sacred sites

Some of the materials which are required for performing rituals are shown in Table 7. In addition, it was common to light fire as part of performing some rituals.

Table 7: Materials required for performing rituals at sacred sites

Materials obtained from outside the park	Amount	Materials obtained from inside the park	Amount
Hen or cock	2 to 4 hens/ cocks	Grass for thatching	1 bunch
Eggs	2-8 eggs	Flexible branches of *mulyangote* to construct shrines	50 pieces
Bananas	2 bunches	Dry pieces of wood for lighting fire	Many
Sugar cane	20 stems	*Emikole* as tying material during construction of shrines	Many strands
Yellow bananas (purple in colour)	4 clusters		
Goats	Usually 2		

During consultations with OBR staff, it was revealed that although sacrifices, worship, communication, cleansing, healing, and peace-making activities take place in some sacred sites, the materials used in these practices are restricted. OBR expressed a desire to sacrifice with all of the sacrificial elements required including animals. It is important to have an understanding of these materials in order to assess whether any ritual performance would pose potential risks to biodiversity in the park. During the survey, respondents identified some ways in which they would minimise the potential risk. For example, a fire would not be

left burning in the forest after performing a ritual and in fact it was a taboo to do so. In instances when a goat is required for sacrifice, some respondents suggested the carcass can be removed later by someone who is not associated with the ritual, for example rangers. To vet and implement respondents' suggestions would require a coordinated process, including potentially through the proposed code of conduct to be used by all people accessing sacred sites.

At the international level, traditional ownership of sacred sites within protected areas are now supported by a number of programmes, conventions and declarations. These include the Man and the Biosphere Reserve Programme (1970), the Ramsar Convention (1971), the World Heritage Convention (1972), the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992), the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007). The latter references and provides support for the protection of those sacred natural sites of indigenous peoples by affording a greater level of rights to manage them and maintain traditional practices associated with them (see Box 1 below). In line with these international conventions, the RMNP management plan was revised in 2010 to incorporate provisions which allow local people to have access to sacred sites and perform cultural rituals in those sites. So far, two of the sites, Bulemba and Katwekali, are accessed as per negotiated MOUs between UWA and OBR. This report gives more information that will guide the negotiations in developing the overall management plan for all of the sacred sites in the national park.

Box 1. Key elements of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of relevance to sacred natural sites

"Recognising that respect for indigenous knowledge, cultures and traditional practices contributes to sustainable and equitable development and proper management of the environment.…

Article 11

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to practice and revitalise their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artefacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature.
2. States shall provide redress through effective mechanisms, which may include restitution, developed in conjunction with indigenous peoples, with respect to their cultural, intellectual, religious and spiritual property taken without their free, prior and informed consent or in violation of their laws, traditions and customs.

Article 12

Indigenous peoples have the right to manifest, practice, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites; the right to the use and control of their ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of their human remains.…

Article 25

Indigenous people have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used land, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.

Article 26

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.
2. Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired.
3. States shall give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories and resources. Such recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions and land tenure system of the indigenous peoples concerned.

Article 29

Indigenous people have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for indigenous people for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.…

Article 32

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources.
2. States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilisation or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources.
3. States shall provide effective mechanisms for just and fair redress for any such activities, and appropriate measures shall be taken to mitigate adverse environmental, economic, social, cultural or spiritual impact.

Article 34

Indigenous peoples have the right to promote, develop and maintain their institutional structures and their distinctive customs, spirituality, traditions, procedures, practices and, in the cases where they exist, juridical systems or customs, in accordance with international human rights standards."

In order to recognise the rights of indigenous people in relation to sacred sites, CVCP and other stakeholders need to consider supporting the re-construction of traditional structures and make a concerted effort to reach and enlist the commitment of the full range of site users. Maffi and Woodley (2010), provide examples from Ethiopia and Uganda which show how projects that aimed at re-constructing traditional structures enabled the conservation of biodiversity. In Ethiopia, a project on conserving sacred sites led to the continuation of traditional practices in order to convince the government of the biodiversity conservation value of these practices. In Uganda, the promotion of traditional medicine acted to strengthen the ongoing activities of healers and their relationship to biodiversity.

Currently the CVCP is mainly working with OBR, ridge leaders and chieftains as repositories of traditional knowledge and customs including spiritual observance. However this survey reveals other stakeholder groups which should be engaged including herbalists, hunters and clan leaders. Similarly, in addition to sacred sites, there are other cultural aspects to identify and consider including those which are magical or religious in nature and those associated with traditional beliefs and taboos that were practiced by various categories of people.

Cultural values of sacred sites: The phrase “cultural values” is meant to cover complex and often multi-layered ownership, management and institutional situations tailored towards the sacredness of sacred sites. A defining feature of sacred natural sites is that they serve the cultural interests of the community for a very long time. There is no doubt that the Rwenzori Mountains are revered as a symbol of the identity of the mountain people. However, the claims that several respondents made about the mountain and the sacred sites therein show that management and use of cultural values is through guardians of tradition working with the people collectively. However, because the Bakonzo and Baamba have not accessed the sites for many years, a careful analysis is needed before their claimed traditional practices and rights are restored. Therefore identifying and interacting with cultural values of sacred sites requires great sensitivity, respect and trust building. This is historically difficult, politically charged and tense because it appears that neither UWA nor the local people trust each other. The legitimacy and authenticity of the sites to be recognised as sacred cannot be assumed as for many years the sacred sites have not been publicly managed and used. Matters are further complicated by the fact that the central government established a different management structure from the traditional ridge leaders and chieftains that were responsible for sacred sites. Overtime, traditional authority has eroded and local community interests and values have been influenced by mainstream religions that do not respect or believe in sacred sites and their role in conservation and society. An important challenge in reviving the management and use of sacred sites by communities is to ensure that their systems of decision making are broadly representative and developed in ways that are inclusive of and accountable to members of their communities. The results of this surveying indicate that this can be spearheaded by OBR.

Conservation values of sacred sites: There is an expanding body of research demonstrating that many sacred natural sites support high levels of biodiversity (Maffi & Woodley, 2010). It is increasingly recognised that this fact is not incidental but is due to the protection afforded to these sacred areas by the custodian communities themselves. However, from the descriptions of what used to take place in the sacred sites in the Rwenzori Mountains, the link between conservation and cultural performances is not direct. Apart from attaching threats, taboos, sanctions and management structures through which people had to first seek permission to access sacred sites, there is nothing to show that biodiversity conservation was intended. There is no doubt that what was in place traditionally ensured restricted access and hence there was no over exploitation of resources. It can thus be concluded that, based on contemporary understandings of conservation, biodiversity conservation was not intended but rather it could have occurred unintentionally.

In examining 98 references from across the globe, Bhagwate and Rutte (2006) performed one of the more comprehensive reviews of biodiversity in sacred sites. The study demonstrates higher biodiversity values for sacred natural sites in several places including in India, Kenya, Ghana and Tanzania; they do not mention Uganda. Examples of sacred natural sites in IUCN categories (Verschuuren, 2006) also do not include Uganda. This means that the sacred sites in the Rwenzori, despite being a World Heritage site, are not yet recognised as forming a cultural heritage site. Books about the history of the Rwenzori Mountains by historians such as Stacey (2003), biologists such as Osmaston et al. (1998) and anthropologists such as Pennacin and Wittenberg (2008) even do not allude to the important role that sacred sites in the Rwenzori Mountains play in defining the culture of the Rwenzori mountain people. Although the mountains were declared a World Heritage site in 1994 by UNESCO (Oryema, 1996), the conservation and management of the park placed more emphasis on the ecological attributes of the mountains than the cultural attributes (Muhumuza et al., in prep. a).

However, studies by Erjen Khamaganova, an indigenous leader of the Buryat people from the Lake Baikal region of Russia, provide links between the conservation values of sacred natural sites and the management practices of their custodians from which the Rwenzori Mountains cultural values and conservation efforts could borrow:

> "*More and more people are recognising the correlation between the spiritual work of a native person in a sacred place and the corresponding higher level of biodiversity associated with such sites. The devout attitude of native persons to sacred places and both their inability and impossibility to destroy the inherent harmony of these places has created conditions for the conservation of biodiversity. Sacred sites are the cornerstone of our cultures' world views and native philosophies, not mere conservation activities. The efforts of indigenous people to protect biodiversity and to preserve our cultures are interconnected and inseparable. Rare species of flora and fauna exist today by virtue of the special place in traditional*

cultures and their protection and regeneration within sacred sites. In the course of centuries, indigenous people have been protecting sacred sites with special care and thus protecting and promoting sacred birds and animals, sacred plants and trees and associated landforms and waterscapes." (Cited in Wild and McLeod, 2008 p. 9)

As a result of a lack of access to sites in RMNP, there may prove to be changes in how rituals in sacred sites are conducted as a new generation takes up management responsibility. Recognising the changes, prospective impacts and possible mitigation strategies will be important in ensuring the ongoing conservation value of the sites.

1.4.3.5 Sacred sites to be developed for cultural performances

As noted earlier, many of the sacred sites in RMNP have not been openly accessed by local people for some time. Access has been under cover and illegal. Likewise, many of the sites are comprised of temporary structures with no sanitation facilities. The respondents said they need legal and authorised access to the sites and basic sanitation facilities at them.

Though it proved difficult to determine and weigh the cultural importance of one site compared to another, ultimately and based on the survey, Kyogyo in Bundibugyo, Kaghoma in Kabarole, and Bulemba and Mbulikirire in Kasese were suggested for development. Though outside of the park, Mbulikirire sacred site is a major site, and respondents labelled it as more spiritual. It is located in Nyabirongo Parish but in the mountain, approximately 10km from Kilimanga in Kisinga. There are several other sites that were mentioned which are not on the list of mapped sites nor documented anywhere. As previously mentioned, OBR is in the process of documenting some of these other sites and ideally will eventual geo-reference them.

Table 8: Sites selected to be developed for cultural performances

District	Rank	Name of cultural site	Notes
Bundibugyo	1	Kyikyo	This is found in Buhundo Parish. It is owned by Kibugha Muhima, a chieftain.
	2	Buthatsimbwa	Soft ground used for rain making and health.
	3	Kyomukama	Found in Bupomboli Parish, this is only used by the ridge leaders. It is believed that this is where the first king was made. It is said that this man was so brave that he used to live at this site despite the presence of a lion. Since the lion did not eat or harm him, it was believed that he had been blessed and chosen by the gods to be king.
	4	Kakuka	
	5	Ikondere	This is found in Bupomboli Parish, Kitsimba village and in Bupomboli ridge.

	6	Kalindere	This is ranked as the most important ridge of them all. Because of it is cultural importance, before cultural ceremonies are undertaken on other ridges, they would first seek permission from this ridge.
Kabarole	1	Kaghoma	
	2	Kiwumu/Kanume sites	The two sites are in one location and along tourist routes.
	3	Katwekali	
Kasese	1	Bulemba cultural site	This is about 500 meters from the royal tomb. OBR has bigger plans for developing Bulemba, i.e. to become a royal burial site for the kingdom's royals. It is here that the first king was buried and it is here that a museum has been constructed just outside the park. The major destination of Ihandiro cultural walk.
	2	Mbulikirire	This is accessed via Kisinga where there is a monument to Tamwenda, Nyamutswa and Kapolyo. It is close to Iherya sacred site in Nyabirongo Parish Kyondo village and accessed through Kisinga. However, both Mbulikirire and Iherya sacred sites are outside the park.
	3	Nyamwereka	
	4	Katwekali	Accessed through Kilembe. It is a starting point of cleansing for the Butale chieftaincy. It is visited 14 days before a coronation ceremony.

Two sites, Bulemba and Katwekali in Kabarole have so far been developed and are accessed through specifically negotiated MOUs between UWA and OBR. The other two that could potentially be developed based on the consultations with the local people are Kakuka in Bundibugyo and Katwekali in Kasese. The site in Bundibugyo was suggested in an effort to involve each of the districts and to fairly distribute resources. Katwekali in Kasese was suggested on the basis that it is located on the ridge which houses the king's palace.

In the case of each site and based on interviews with respondents, it seems that the concept of "developing sacred sites" has two connotations. One connotation is about accessing sites to re-launch and renew cultural performances, recover traditional practices, and as a by-product realise economic benefit. The second connation expressed by some respondents was more and solely focused anticipated economic benefits associated with re-accessing sacred sites and constructing tourist and camping sites.

Part 2: Proposals for Managing Sacred Sites in the Rwenzori Mountains National Park

2.1 Introduction

Compared to sacred natural sites that were established thousands of years ago, modern protected areas are newcomers onto the scene of land management. As the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) concluded in their 2005 report *Beyond Belief*, "sacred sites are probably the oldest method of habitat protection on the planet."

During the rapid expansion and development of modern protected areas, there has been a consistent disregard of pre-existing community uses of the lands newly designated for protection. For example, communities were formally consulted prior to the creation of the protected area in only one of the eleven case studies featured in the IUCN Best Practice Guidelines on Indigenous and Traditional Peoples and Protected Areas. Although this sample size is small, it likely reflects a general pattern of minimal consultation during protected area establishment (Beltran, 2000). Similarly the creation of the RMNP did not consider the rights of indigenous mountain people. Many other examples of poor or inadequate consultation exist as detailed in Muhumuza et al. (in prep. b). The low level of consultation further indicates the hitherto exclusionary protected area model where native people have been seen as inimical to conservation and, in many cases, have actually been removed from government established protected areas at considerable social and economic disruption and hardship (Agrawal & Redford, 2009).

The last 50 years, however, have seen the emergence of alternatives to exclusionary models of protected areas and a shift to more people-inclusive models. The protected area discussion over the last 20 or so years has hinged largely on this shift and many important studies have documented this evolution (Schroeder, 1999 and Adams, 2004). The movement to be more inclusive started with community education programmes in the 1980s in the United States of America, and then expanded in the 1990s with the widespread application of integrated conservation and development programmes worldwide but more especially in the tropics. In Uganda, although the study of nature was taught in secondary schools in the early 1980s (Ofwono-Orecho & Bagoora, 1996), it was not until 1994 that community-based conservation programmes, community environmental education programming and integrated conservation and development projects started to appear, beginning with Kibale National Park as a pilot site (Mugisha, 2002).

In RMNP, the park administration has proposed and implemented the following since 1996 (Oryema, 1996):

- **Revenue sharing:** 20% of all gate collections should go to communities neighbouring the park.

- **Involvement of the local people in the park management committee:** The local community would select some of its members to represent them on the Park Management Advisory Committee.
- **Employment opportunities for local community members**: Local people would be given priority whenever there were any vacancies.
- **Regulated access to the park:** Some members of the community, after obtaining a permit, could access restricted resources in specific areas of the park.

Despite these conservation efforts in the RMNP, resources have continued to be illegally harvested (Loefler, 1997) and the park boundary encroached (Muhumuza, 2006). A study conducted by Loefler (1997) showed that many species formerly abundant in the mountains, such as the wild buffalo, were rare as a result of anthropogenic activities. Biodiversity loss and resource degradation at the hands of the local people have persisted since the early 1990s up to present (Rwenzori Mountains Environmental Conservation Education strategy, 2004).

Research by Nkonya et al. (2002) showed that there is conflict of interest between the local community for the need to have access to park resources and UWA for conservation and tourism activities. This could explain why the local communities still carry out illegal activities such as poaching, accessing restricted areas without permits and harvesting of resources.

Bids by the park administration to prevent illegal activities from occurring have met with resistance from the local people (Rwenzori Mountains Environmental Conservation Education Strategy, 2004). The communities bordering the park have developed negative attitudes to the existence of the park, shown especially when some of the community members are caught in the park while illegally obtaining resources or when the park authorities enforce by-laws (Tamale and Nzirambi, 1996). Research shows that the local people in villages that neighbour RMNP say that they are being regarded by UWA staff as less important than the monkeys and baboons in the park (Tamale and Nzirambi, 1996).

Many natural calamities such as floods, landslides, soil erosion and erratic seasonal changes are common phenomena in the Rwenzori region (BBC Online, 2010; Majungu and Basalirwa, 1996; Muhumuza et al. (2011); Protos-DWRM, 2012; Rwenzori African Development Foundation, 2010), and the local community blames this on the park administration for failure to allow them into the park to evoke and appease the spirits that had for generations protected them (CVCP Report, 2007).

With the current conservation efforts failing to effectively stave off biodiversity loss in RMNP, more approaches on how to engage local people and integrate their rights into the management plans of protected areas have emerged. It is in this pursuit that a management plan for the sacred sites in RMNP is being sought.

2.2 Park management structure and how it can accommodate sacred site management

A review of the management structure of protected areas is important when making a management plan for sacred sites located inside protected areas. In RMNP, management is done at different levels. The level that is in direct and regular contact with the community is the outpost level. Some communities have outposts while others do not.

The outpost level hosts a number of key functions and positions including:

The Ranger In-Charge of the outpost - This position is the overall administrator of the outpost. He/she creates and monitors work plans and is responsible for reporting to headquarters. He/she often participates in activities, especially community meetings. This individual is likely to play an important role in integrating cultural values into the management plan. During interviews, all of the wardens in charge of outposts visited indicated that they are positive and that they looked forward to engaging with the implementation of the CVCP in RMNP especially in the management of sacred sites.

The Law enforcement rangers – Typically three to four people fulfil this role at an outpost. They are responsible for patrols and function as the intelligence network of the outpost. These individuals could support monitoring to ensure that the terms and conditions for accessing cultural sites are followed.

The Community conservation ranger - Typically one person fulfils this role. He/she is responsible for mobilising and carrying out sensitisation activities with communities on conservation objectives, disseminating information about the law to communities, discussing the process of dealing with vermin animals with communities, training communities in sustainable development programmes, and networking with CBOs on conservation issues among others. The community conservation rangers could therefore be vital in the implementation process of cultural values programming.

Generally, the park management structure and the general management plan accommodate the management of sacred sites as cultural entities, especially when the individuals at the various outposts are properly oriented and engaged. The implementation of the MOUs for accessing Bulemba and Katwekali cultural sites provides good experiences so far.

2.3 Analysis of stakeholders

The following stakeholders were identified during the research process, but more could be identified for engagement.

***Uganda Wildlife Authority*:** This includes UWA staff at the headquarters of RMNP and at the ranger outposts in Kasese, Kabarole and Bundibugyo Districts. These UWA offices are charged with managing the national park and the resources therein in which the sacred sites are located.

Culture, Values and Conservation Project: This project has spearheaded the integration of cultural values and conservation in the management of RMNP to date. As a finite, donor-dependent project, CVCP will one day cease to exist. Among CVCP's current priorities, the project must work to facilitate the process of signing an agreement between UWA and OBR to monitor and manage access to sacred sites, support OBR to attain sustainable levels of funding and capacity to manage and coordinate the usage of sacred sites, and identify other local organisations and private sector actors that can work in partnership with OBR to develop and manage different sacred sites.

Obusinga Bwa Rwenzururu: OBR is a cultural institution whose activities among others are to engage and promote the cultural values of the Bakonzo and Baamba people. All of the chieftains and ridge leaders subscribe to this cultural institution. Given that ridge leaders and chieftains are considered repositories of traditional norms and cultural information, OBR has traditional rights over sacred sites and they are the primary stakeholders. It is suggested that OBR takes the lead in negotiating access and management agreements with UWA.

Rwenzori Mountains Cultural Values and Conservation Association: RweMCCA is a community-based organisation whose membership targets individuals interested in conserving the culture of the mountain. It was formed and became active before OBR was formally recognised by the central government. They continue to work with OBR on cultural related issues of the mountain and, in addition, they engage in other conservation related projects for the conservation of natural resources of RMNP. RweMCCA is the only organisation or stakeholder group whose members share the vision of conserving the mountain's resources through cultural values; thus, its members are stakeholders in the management of the sacred sites in the mountains.

Resource users: This broad category includes all of the people who seek to use resources and especially sacred sites in and from RMNP. These include hunters, herbalists, native doctors and other members of the public who, before accessing resources in the park, have to perform certain rituals. These actors may or may not subscribe to the aims and objectives of any of the institutions mentioned above.

***Community-based organisations (CBO)*:** These are organisations whose objectives are related either to the conservation of the Rwenzori Mountains or the promotion of the cultural values and traditions of the mountain people. These organisations include: Kisinga anti-poaching group, Save community conservation and environment, Kisinga agro-forestry association and Nakota herbalists association.

Other stakeholders include academic institutions that engage in conservation and cultural programmes ranging from advocacy to research, individuals in the community, traditional chieftains, ridge leaders and families. Currently UWA is working with some of these

stakeholders, including through resource use agreements with resource users, ridge leaders and chieftains, and with traditional footpaths associations. OBR staff pledged to streamline management of sacred sites in consultation with UWA. Other suggested stakeholders include WWF, UNESCO, NFA, local government and the Tooro Kingdom. The staff further suggested that the identified partners could be part of the committee that coordinates all of the sacred sites. However, in order to bring some of the identified partners on board, including for instance the Tooro Kingdom, more painstaking collaboration strategies, stakeholder meetings, seminars and workshops are needed.

It is important to note that sub-county authorities, local leaders, CBOs and the community at large have shown interest in the conservation of RMNP through cultural values as evidenced from the effort and conservation initiatives already started. Given the myriad of people, organisations and institutions considered as stakeholders, a careful analysis of the way they relate and their roles in the management of the sacred sites would be useful. It is important to look into existing initiatives in order to create mechanisms for collaboration and to verify the level of commitment to conservation by stakeholders.

2.4 Proposals for collaborative management

Based on their mandate to manage the national park and its resources, UWA's involvement in managing the sacred sites is unquestioned. There is no way another individual, group or organisation could take charge. However UWA staff expressed awareness of the presence of other stakeholders, appreciation for their efforts and a willingness to work with them. Two suggestions came up during consultations with different stakeholders on how UWA could collaboratively manage sacred sites with local communities.

2.4.1 Proposal 1

Proposal 1, as presented in Figure 8, was made mainly by UWA personnel. Their view was that RMNP currently has in place provisions which allow local people to access the park's resources through resource use agreements. According to this proposal, UWA would sign agreements with resource users (individuals) who wish to access sacred sites. These individuals would need to provide information about the location of sacred sites and a detailed description of what they will do when they are at the sacred site. Among other roles, UWA would take part in the monitoring of activities at the sacred or cultural sites.

OBR and a local organisation or resource use group would serve as left and right arms of UWA to support regulated access and use of sacred and cultural sites in the park.

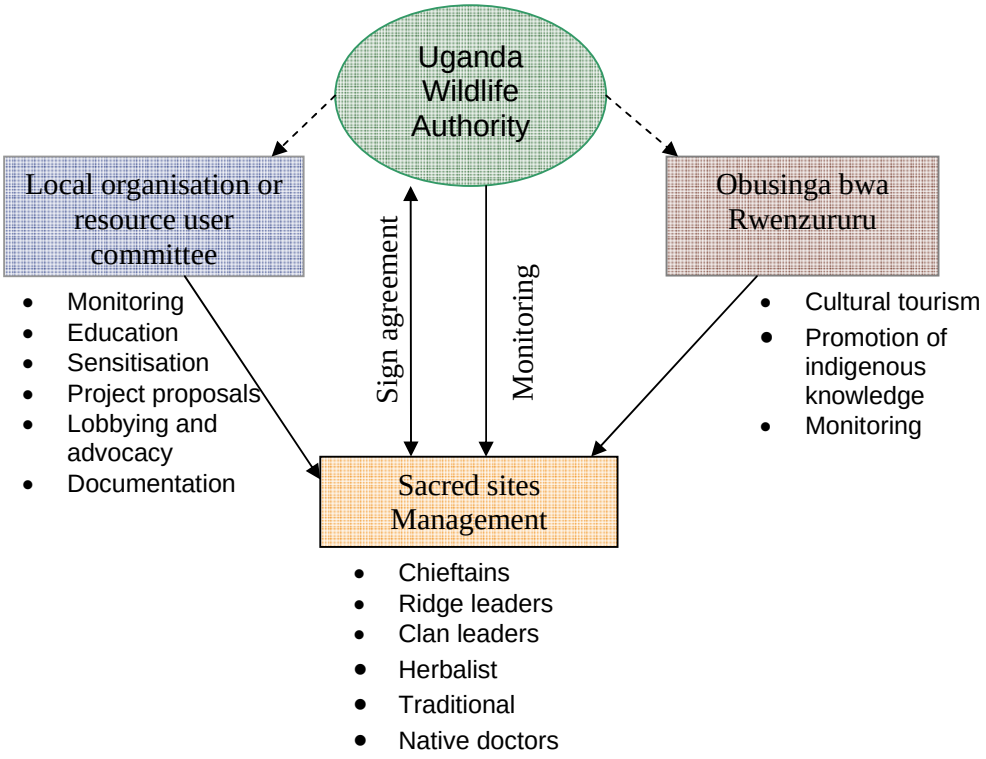

Figure 8: Management structure suggested in Proposal 1, reflecting input from UWA

2.4.2 Proposal 2

Proposal 2 was put forward by some community members, ridge leaders, chieftains and some staff of OBR. Their view was that access to and use of sacred and cultural sites could be done through the cultural leadership structure that was in place traditionally. All respondents agreed that ridge leaders are key cultural leaders with whom UWA should work closely as it is their cultural activities which are done in the national park. They added that since there are many sacred sites in the park which had regulated access coordinated by ridge leaders, the ridge leaders could be coordinated by OBR. Specifically, the Minister of Environment and Cultural Sites in the OBR Kingdom would be responsible for coordinating ridge leaders and chieftains.

Figure 9 shows how different stakeholders would collaborate in proposal 2 to manage access to and use of sacred and cultural sites. According to this proposal, a MOU concerning the use and management of sacred and cultural sites would be signed solely between UWA and OBR. UWA would monitor OBR activities, and OBR would monitor sacred site management through ridge leaders and chieftains who form the structure of the kingship. As legally mandated, UWA could also monitor the activities of sacred site management directly as part of its obligation to ensure sustainable management of the park. However, the agreement would spell out clearly that OBR is responsible for the management of the sites.

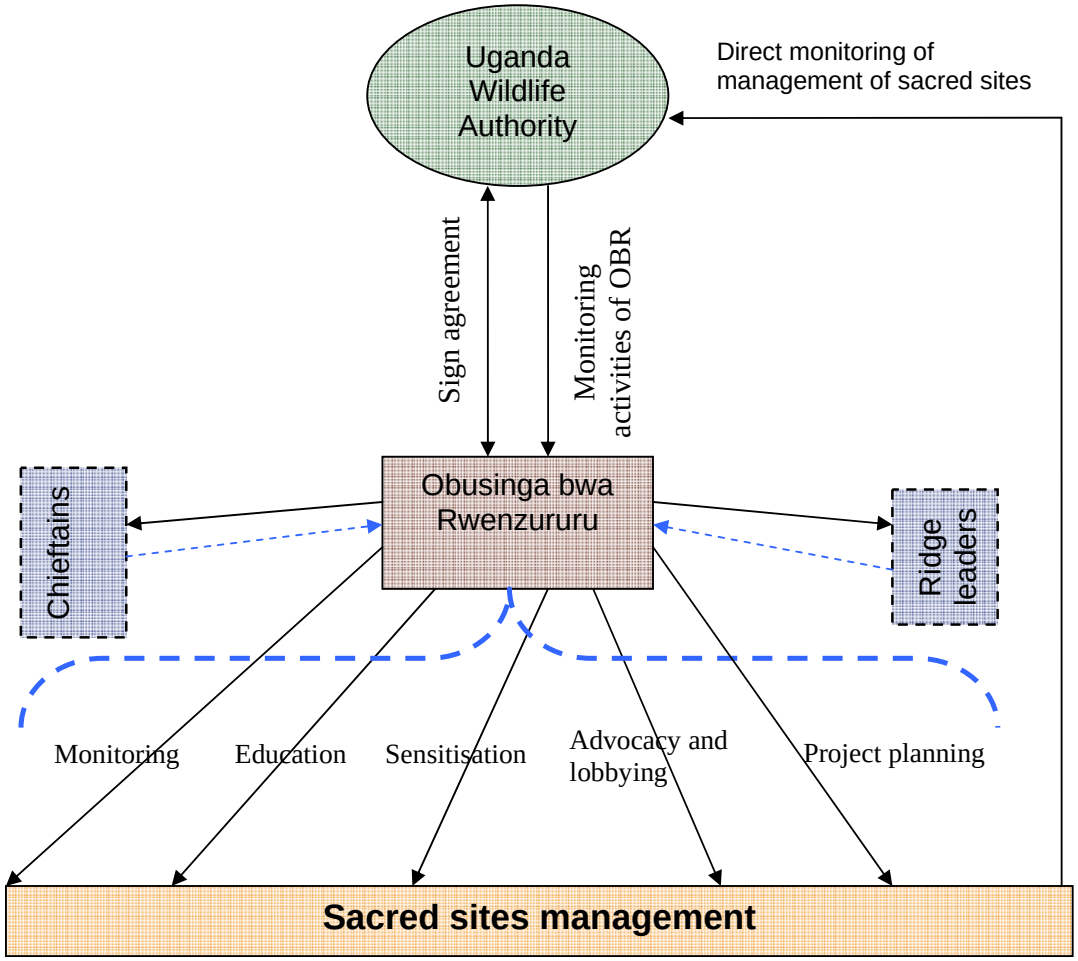

Figure 9: Management structure suggested in Proposal 2, reflecting input from community members

Other suggested roles of OBR under this proposal include:

- Mobilising all people of the kingdom to protect cultural heritage.
- Strengthening cultural values that link nature and the gods in the Rwenzori Mountains.
- Discerning cultural practices from evil practices.
- Facilitating the process of reviving cultural institutions.

The respondents suggested that OBR would be directly linked with local organisations. OBR could delegate some of the activities which it is mandated to do in the MOU with UWA to these local organisations.

2.4.3 Analysis of the suggested management options

Analysis of the proposals is based on the information gathered through interviews and observations, a review of the IUCN Sacred Natural Sites Guidelines for Protected Area Mangers Series number 16 and CVCP objectives, and RMNP's current status as a protected

area under UWA management which for many years restricted local people's access to sacred sites.

Proposal 1

Proposal 1 which calls for sacred site users to sign agreements with UWA is most likely to enable the protected area to maintain a clear line of authority in managing the park's assets for conservation purposes. UWA has experience in planning and therefore can bring a great deal of technical capacity and tools to the process. However, given the past history of resentment and conflict between UWA and the community members, engaging UWA and the local people to sign an agreement directly may not lead to attaining the objectives of the CVCP.

Based on interviews, it is apparent and has been documented that the local people do not trust UWA staff. Thus signing an agreement with UWA may seem to be the "same old story" and they may not be able to cooperate and work together in short or long terms. One factor that has been linked to the failure to conserve biodiversity in national parks in Africa is the failure of previous conservation initiatives (Musumali et al., 2007; Ormsbyl & Kaplin, 2005; Roe et al., 2000). Ormsbyl and Kaplin's study in Masoala National Park in Madagascar found that inconsistency in past and present park management goals led to confusion among the community regarding the park's programmes. The authors also reported that the park staff had raised high and unrealistic expectations among some communities which were not met. Similar findings are reported in Musumali et al. in a study that investigated the attitude of communities adjacent to the Chobe National Park in Botswana and the South Luangwa National Park in Zambia. In the case of RMNP, respondents pointed out that UWA is currently using the Natural Resources Management Act, which mandates UWA staff to hold and manage natural resources in trust for the people. According to respondents, this is not very practical and applicable to their community as the resources of the Rwenzori Mountains belong to them (the local people) since these resources were inherited from their grandparents. This shows that the mistrust and poor relationship can be attributed to the community being deprived of access to resources in the mountains and park, as well as a history of harsh treatment in the event of breach.

Secondly, as much as Proposal 1 recognises the existing structures put in place by UWA, it may prove impractical and therefore weak as it implies signing agreements with resource users for up to and over 100 sacred sites in the Rwenzori Mountains. Although it is possible to sign more than 100 agreements, it is practically complicated given that each agreement may have unique terms. Therefore it may be preferable for UWA to make a MOU with an umbrella organisation, which could then be mandated by the agreement to license and provide access to sacred and cultural sites.

Also, splitting roles among two different organisations might prove problematic. One organisation that integrates both culture and conservation in its activities could suffice

provided that its roles are clearly spelt out in the MOU. Although Proposal 1 suggests that a local organisation or OBR monitor resource users, there may not always be a direct link between UWA and OBR and a local organisation which may in turn limit the effectiveness of monitoring.

Proposal 2

Using the sacred sites management structure in the conservation and management of the park is bound to be influenced one way or another by the relationships between the parties involved. The first issue is negotiating management responsibilities of the sacred sites and the second is the planning and management of sacred sites as allowed in management plan. To facilitate the realisation of proposal 2, OBR needs to come up with a comprehensive process to engage UWA in negotiations toward integrating these values. The members of the local community through OBR could do the following:

- Participate in events connected with the park; here, ridge leaders could be instrumental in mobilising the community as has been the case for meetings and other activities.
- Sensitise the community on the importance of environmental protection including the cultural values of the park. Again, ridge leaders command respect from the community culturally and everything they say is to be believed as the truth. This dynamic could also be leveraged for conservation messages.
- Give park management information on what happens in the mountains.
- Deal with law breakers in their ridges.
- Control community access to the mountains. They can take up the role of locating the spots with the resources the community requires, finding out the number of people who need the different resources, and requesting for permission for the community to access the mountain for these resources.
- Monitor illegal activities on the mountains and report them to the authorities.
- Participate in developing the guidelines concerning the management of sacred sites.

2.5 Conclusion

This report had delved into issues pertaining to the current status, ownership and management of sacred sites in the Rwenzori Mountains. It was found that there are cultural and sacred sites with distinct characteristics in the Rwenzori Mountains. Issues concerning the development of sacred sites as tourist destinations and the potential effect of community cultural tourism on the sustainable management of sacred sites have been discussed.

It has been shown that although sacred sites are located on land that is currently under the management of UWA, sacred sites are traditionally owned by respective ridge leaders and ridge leaders still have interests in managing the sacred sites irrespective of their location inside the boundaries of the park. Some other sacred and cultural sites were traditionally

owned by individuals, families or the community but the ridge leaders held them in trust for the people.

Traditionally, the power of ownership was vested upon ridge leaders, chieftains and clan leaders to oversee the activities that take place in sacred sites. This power was passed on from father to son through many generations. The respondents consulted expressed a need to revert ownership not only of sacred and cultural sites but also of the land on which they sit to traditional ownership. OBR was earmarked as one of the umbrella institutions that would manage sacred sites and the land on which they are located in partnership with UWA. It was suggested that sacred and cultural sites outside of the park would also be jointly managed by OBR and communities through a traditional structure.

Most of the sacred and cultural sites are currently physically inaccessible, have temporary structures, lack sanitation facilities and lack legal means of access. Most of them were deserted due to changes from traditional to modern religion beliefs and due to insecurity in the mountains. However, it was found that there is a renewed interest among the mountain people to re-develop them. Re-developing these sites would involve securing legal access to them, making and maintaining access trails, constructing sanitation facilities, and developing some of them into tourist destination and camping sites.

There were a number of stakeholders identified that were associated with the use and management of sacred and cultural sites. Some of these include: individuals, chieftains, ridge leaders, families, OBR and UWA. Other potential stakeholders include WWF, UNESCO, NFA, local governments and the Kingdom of Tooro. It was suggested by respondents that some or all of the stakeholders identified need to collaboratively ensure proper use and management of the sacred and cultural sites. Two options on how different stakeholders would work with each other and with UWA to coordinate access, use and management of sacred sites were presented and discussed in this report.

2.6 Recommendations

The process for developing management plans for RMNP's sacred sites should consist of a series of workshops with representatives of the different stakeholders in the affected communities. OBR members and members of other identified local organisations should increase their knowledge and exposure to the sites and communities through field trips. This would enable them to work collectively in conducting an in situ analysis of what needs to be done in order to effectively manage sacred sites. Attention also needs to be given to strengthening the participation of cultural guides in planning and in guiding tourists in areas that include sacred sites.

Planning needs to be a relatively formal process with detailed consultations carried out by a group of selected, relevant parties. UWA needs to play an important part in this process

because they have the existing legal mandate. The traditional institutions will need to be involved as they are key interested parties, and OBR will need to be involved as they have been established to represent these kinds of interests and processes. Other partners could be part of the committee which could coordinate all of the sacred sites.

The increasingly used concept of free, prior and informed consent of all stakeholders will be important in the planning processes. The understanding coming out of the consultative process so far is that the mountains have significance as a whole. The sacredness of the Rwenzori Mountains as a protected area should be made explicit in the management plan and in interpretation and communications materials produced about it. People should know that the area is considered sacred by local communities and thus they should join the communities in respecting it. Planning for park-wide sacred landscape management, recognition and communication will be very different from the kinds of activities needed for planning and managing individual sacred sites.

The individual sacred sites need to be planned for in terms of the restitution of access for cultural and spiritual purposes. These planning processes can be small-scale and local once the larger access issues and planning issues have been resolved. Planning for large scale visitation that is of a cultural and spiritual nature will be required for certain sites but probably not all. The number of people involved in most rituals seems to be quite small and the occasions quite few.

Planning for tourism to cultural sites will require a different kind of process again. However, the most important and perhaps most difficult will be the landscape-level discussions in which the park will need to be planned as a sacred landscape. This will likely entail discussing and negotiating access overall, rather than for individual sites, and the implications. The process may prompt discussion and debate on difficult issues. For example, will local people want to prevent people from going up to the snowline in conformity with traditional beliefs? What would the implications of this be?

The park staff engaging in respectful partnerships with local people and especially the custodians of sacred natural sites can play a critical role in the survival and effective care of these special places and ensure the conservation of both nature and culture.

A successful sacred site management plan would require more participatory research and inquiry into some aspects that were pointed out in this report. Among other issues that require further investigation are: land tenure and ownership of land where sacred sites are located, the identification of other sacred and cultural sites and how to determine the authenticity of the identified sites, the factors underlying the need to develop sacred and cultural sites and testing out different integrated sacred and cultural site management options.

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Appendix 1: Lists of survey participants

First survey

Name	Portfolio
Bwambale Sossin	Chairman Rwemmc and Speaker Harugale Sub-county
Kule Geroge Willium	General secretary Rwemmca Harugale
Nyakihili Adnas	Treasurer Rwemca Harugale
Kahigwa Yosiya Kigora	Ridge leader Harugale
Dolice Kabugho	Member
Mukeka Robert	Community member
Maate Benenego	Community member
Katsanghali Jerema	Community member
Kule Eruya	Community member
Kahamba Abudu	Community member Bupomboli
Nyangoma Erinah	Community member
Bazalirwaki Tom	Community member
Kimanywenda Absolom	Community member
Muchindo Williem	Community member Bumate
Kalenzi Joseph	Community member Masule
Kibugha Muhuima	Chieftain
MaateJokus	Senior environment officer Bundibugyo (0774281622
Mbambu Lodia	Vice Chairperson RweMCCA
Masereka Emmanuel	RweMCCA chairperson interim
Mugume Evelyne	Environment officer, Kasese District
Thembo Amon	Director of Mupagasha telecommunication network (community television centre)
Gyakutaga Aoron	Community member Bukuku Sub-county
Basikania Abel	UWA/CVCP
Muhindo Jerome Mubbi	CCR-RMNP, UWA Kazingo
Mumbere George	Community member Bumati Bundibugyo
Matte Andereya	Community elder Nyarukamba
Bwambale Herizon	Bukuku S/C
Bukombi Mwani. G	Nyarukamba
Peter	Ranger Harugale S.County
Babu	Warden in charge Harugale Bundibugyo
Sale Matte Kishenene	Chieftain- Kakuka
JophesPandamure	L.C.2 Kakuka parish and Chairperson RweMCCA
Katusabe Safina	Treasurer RweMCCA, Ndugutu s/c
Bwambale Herizon	Chairperson RweMCCA Kazingo
Kibingo Uzia Kayeyi	Chieftain Ihandiro

KambereTabarwa Erieza	Chieftain Kisinga and Kyondo
Kareni	Director Backpackers Kilembe
Nelson Guma	Senior warden in charge
IsayaMaserekaMwirumubi	
Kahango Joseph	Co-Ridge leader Mihunga Sacred site

Second survey

Kule Walubya	Kasese
Kisobulu Ericana	Dasese
Emmanuel Masereka	Kasese
Nelson Baluku	Kasese
Mbogha Francis	Kasese
Bailhanda Ezra	Bundibugyo
Kahigwa Yosia	Bundibugyo
Itungu Esiteri	Bundibugyo
Kule Koroneri	Bundibugyo
Kingora Samwiri	Bundibugyo
Munyambara John	Bundibugyo
Kule Joseph	Bundibugyo
Maate Daneri	Bundibugyo
Bwambale E	Bundibugyo
Apolo Mukirana	Bundibugyo
Maate Adonia	Bundibugyo
Peresi Musale	Bundibugyo
Grace Mandela	Bundibugyo
Musoki Pelasi	Bundibugyo
Rutogho Silivia	Bundibugyo
Kabugho Bulemu	Bundibugyo
MaserekaTafio	Bundibugyo
Basikania Abel	Bundibugyo
Byabazaire Tom	Kabarole
Muhairwe Yokasi	Kabarole
Bukombe Semu	Kabarole
KaluIbuzahimu	Kabarole
Abundu Baguma Ekibanga	Kabarole
Thembo Agustine	Kabarole
Byakutaga James	Kabarole
Bwambale Hezron	Kabarole
Maate Andereya	Kabarole
Bukombi G. Mwani	Kabarole
ByakutagaAron	Kabarole
Mathe Makwera	Kabarole
Tumwine K. Jotham	Kabarole
Masika Silivia	Kabarole

Malisaba Medson	Kabarole
Yonasani Rujumba	Kabarole
Masika Beter	Kabarole
Bwambale Makisaba	Kabarole
Muhindo Syahaba	Kabarole
Kaganda Julius Malisaba	Kabarole

Appendix 2: Research instruments used in collection of data

Ecological survey of cultural sites

District _____ Sub county_____

Parish: _____ Village_____

Name of sacred site_____ Size_____

Location:_____ Owner_____

Human activities carried out in and around the site

In

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Around

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Describe the characteristics of the named sacred site. Your description can include but not limited to the following (animals and plants commonly found there, presence of water bodies, access route and any other futures special to this site)

_____
_____
_____
_____

_____
_____
_____
_____

If people are allowed to access the sites, what impacts do you think are likely to result from the cultural performances?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Research questions	Questions to ask the respondent	Remarks/follow up/ Probe questions
What is the nature and extent of usage sacred sites in the park? How has the performance of cultural practices changed with time? What indigenous knowledge, beliefs and practices were used while performing cultural practices in the park? and in what ways do these differ from those used at present? How were indigenous knowledge, beliefs and practices passed on from one person to another during the time when the use of resources in the mountains was not restricted? Do the local community members support cultural practices? What opinions do the local people have towards cultural values?	How many people, including yourself, live in your house?	
	Are you or any member in your household involved in work where you get money or things to use at home?	If yes, what activities?
	Do you or any one in your household carryout any cultural practice in the Rwenzori Mountains National Park?	If yes, name the cultural practices you or your household members carry out in the park?
	In which parts/ places of the park do you or your household carryout cultural practices?	
	How many times in a month do you and your household members carry out the cultural practices in the park?	
	For how long have you or your household members been carrying out the cultural practices in the park?	
	Why do you have to carry out the cultural practices particularly in the park?	
	Are there things that you or your household members do to ensure that that the park is not destroyed when carrying out the cultural practices?	If the answer is yes "Which things are those that you or your household members do?"
	Were there any things **(I will specify the years basing on the age of the respondent)** ago that you or your household members would do to ensure that that the park or the mountain is not destroyed when carrying out the activities?	If the answer is yes "Which things are those that you or your household members would do?"
	What things (either from home or the park) do you or your household members use when carrying out the cultural practices in the park?	Are the things different from those that were used **(I will specify the years basing on the age of the respondent)** ago? If yes, Explain?
	Do you or your household members carry out the cultural practices alone or other people go with you?	How many?
	When did you and your household members, last carry out a cultural practice in the Park?	
	Do you or your household members ALSO carry out the mentioned cultural practices from somewhere else other than the park? If yes, where?	
	Are there times when you or people in your household did not perform the cultural practices at a time when they were supposed to be performed?	If yes, What were the reasons?
	Do you think stopping people from going to the park to carry out cultural practices is a good thing?	What are the reasons for your answer?
	In your opinion, were people destroying the park and the things there while carrying out the cultural practices?	What are the reasons for your answer?
	What do you think should be done in order to enable people perform cultural practices in the park?	
	Do you think the places in the park where cultural practices are carried out from can be developed for tourist activities	If Yes, how can this be done?
	What sites four would you choose and recommend to be developed first for cultural performances **This is the end of my questions; would you like to mention anything that you feel is important for this study?**	Give reasons for choosing these sites

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Further queries should be directed to:

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