



# EXAMINING THE CAUSES AND EXTENT OF HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT IN QUEEN ELIZABETH NATIONAL PARK: LESSONS FOR LASTING COEXISTENCE

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Lions are being poisoned in Uganda's National Park



## INTRODUCTION

Human-wildlife conflict (HWC) is a significant issue for communities near Queen Elizabeth National Park (QENP). The park, home to diverse wildlife like elephants, lions, and buffaloes, often sees interactions that lead to crop damage, livestock losses, and even human casualties. These conflicts arise from limited **resources, droughts, and restricted grazing land and water access. As populations grow and land pressures increase, coexistence with wildlife becomes more challenging, leading to negative attitudes toward conservation.** Although measures such as electric fencing and revenue-sharing programs exist, local communities feel excluded from decision-making and view conservation efforts as prioritising wildlife over their livelihoods. To foster harmonious coexistence, collaborative solutions that align conservation goals with community well-being are urgently needed.



Figure 1: Focus Group Discussions held in Nyakantazi Village, Katwe Kabatooro Town Council

## PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

### Causes of Conflict:

- **Prolonged dry spells** - Force pastoralists to enter the park for water and grass.
- **Limited access to park resources** - Herbal medicine, firewood, and grazing land are now restricted.
- **Limitations and insufficiencies of compensation** - Farmers receive delayed, inadequate, or no compensation for wildlife damage
- **Corruption in conservation efforts** - Revenue-sharing funds are mismanaged, and poaching is linked to bribery.

### Community Perspectives:

- Communities feel **excluded** from conservation policies and **neglected** by authorities.
- Cultural beliefs protect some animals (e.g., buffaloes are totems), but the lack of benefits fuels resentment.
- The electric fence **limits access to water and medicinal plants** while failing to stop some animals from entering villages.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Fair Revenue Sharing:** Allocate funds to real community needs like water projects and Lantana camara eradication.
- **Compensation Reform:** Create a fast, fair, transparent process for wildlife damage claims.
- **Alternative Livelihoods:** Promote and encourage ecotourism and sustainable livelihoods to reduce dependency on livestock and poaching
- **Better Communication:** Regular dialogue between UWA and local communities to foster collaboration.
- **Education & Mindset Change:** Conservation awareness programs and capacity-building to reduce conflicts.

Hindrah Akisiimire<sup>1</sup>, Hakiza Augustine<sup>1</sup>, Tasiwuka Moses<sup>1</sup>, Aggrey Siya<sup>1</sup>, Muhesi Nicholas<sup>1</sup>, Ongom Joel<sup>1</sup>, Baluku Robert<sup>1</sup>, Emmanuel Akampurira<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Uganda Wildlife Research and Training Institute, P.O. Box 173 Kasese Uganda

Corresponding author: Hindrah Akisiimire (1992hindrah@gmail.com)