
**FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES
PALLISA CAMPUS
THE INTERNSHIP REPORT CARRIED OUT AT MOUNTAIN ELGON
NATIONAL PARK, KAPKYORWA
BY
ETIKOLT JOSEPH
BU/UP/2024/3412**



**REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT
SCIENCES AS PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF BACHEALORS IN
TOURISM AND TRAVEL
NOVEMBER ,2025**

DECLARATION

I Etikolt Joseph to the best of my knowledge declare and affirm that the content in this report is the original piece of my work, with the help of the lord that I managed to accomplish, and it has never been compiled and submitted to any faculty or institution by any student.

Date: 19th / January / 2026

Signature: *Etikolt*

APPROVAL

This is to certify that this report has been prepared and prepared and submitted by Etikolt Joseph upon completion of his field attachment period at mountain Elgon National Park under supervision and guidance of Mr. Wampande Jayalie Ahmed (supervisor)

ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR

Name: Wampande Jayalie Ahmed

Signature: *[Handwritten Signature]*

DEDICATION

I dedicate this report to the Almighty **GOD** for always walking with me and my parent (KIWALA TABISA PEACE) as a single mother at all times and enabling her to be supportive to me in all my study journeys, prayer and guidance.

Not leaving out all the people that have passion in wildlife and conservation including my lecturers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I express my sincere gratitude to my academic supervisor, Mr. Wampande Jawalie Ahmed for providing advice, guidance and go abouts during the field training, I really appreciate.

I do acknowledge the great assistance offered to me by the administration of Mountain Elgon National Park for all the support and advice which enabled me succeed in accomplishing my training at mountain Elgon National Park, and generally a supportive staff of the entire Mountain Elgon National Parks' family for their support and encouragement during the field training process. This training has been successful with Uganda Wildlife Authority permission, thanks a lot for the support given.

ABSTRACT

Field attachment training is a study process that equips learners with hands on skills to achieve a more practical approach of learning.

The internship training was aimed at imparting practical skills in the areas of tourism and hospitality management and get exposed to dynamics of applying theoretical knowledge into practice. Permission for the field work was sought from Uganda Wildlife Authority through my Institute. I was able to learn a number of practical skills that could make me compete favorably in the world of work and create linkage between the areas already mentioned on completing my course, skills acquired include; communication skills, customer care services to clients, record keeping, waste management skills, data analysis skills, tour guiding techniques and report writing, among others.

The report has been organized into five chapters which are;

Chapter one, which includes the introduction and background.

Chapter two covers the materials and methods used in the field to attain internship objectives.

Chapter three covers the discussions on the results attained from my internship project, it bases on the activities that were done during the training.

Chapter four is about the skills learnt during the field attachment and how relevant the are to my professional and career growth. This chapter also covers the SWOT analysis of Mountain Elgon National Park which involves the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats facing the park. It also includes the activities other activities assigned by the field supervisor, level of accomplishment and how relevant the activities were to my professional growth.

Chapter five covers the general conclusions and recommendations of the entire field trip

At the end of chapter five, some reference books used have been quoted. Appendices have been attached of documents that were involved in the process of field work. Photographs taken during the training in the park have also been attached as appendices where necessary in the entire field report. The report has been fairly comprehensive, covering all the activities done with in the period I spent at Mountain Elgon National Park Kapkwai Exploration Centre

ABBREVIATIONS.

MENP; Mountain Elgon National Park

KEC: Kapkwai Exploration Centre

UWA: Uganda Wildlife Authority

KWS: Kenya Wildlife Service

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

MTWA: Ministry of Tourism Wildlife and Antiquities

FACE: Forests Absorb Carbon-dioxide Emission

UTB: Uganda Tourism Board

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Chapter three analyzes the details, on the results attained during the internship period that I undertook at Mountain Elgon National Park.	24
This part gives the clear view of the materials and methods used at the work place in mountain Elgon national park.	24
Binoculars	24
These are gadgets that maximize an object or any living thing that is far off for a closer view	24
I used the binoculars to clearly observe birds that were far off in the trees during the birding secession.	24
Phone	24
This is gadget that allows recording of data in either audio or video form. I used my phone to capture the data during the field trip and used it to take pictures during the field trip of which it became effective for me in that way.	24
Gumboots.	24
These are shoe like equipment that are required during the field trip for protection on the legs. I wore these boots during the secessions in the field of which they helped me to cover the whole journey well and successfully.	24
Documentation (book and pen)	24
These are requirements that help to note or summarize details on findings in the field. I used my book and pen to note down whatever was shared in the field by the tour guides that’s to say Mr. Mugalula Bashiru to mention.	24
My presentations of results and findings will base on the methods and materials that I used to collect data during the internship in the field at Mountain Elgon National Park, which were recording method, observation method to mention.	25
The following are the results that I got during the internship period;	25
The volcanic caldera and wagagai peak.	25
This stands at 4,321m, Wagagai peak and the 40km squared caldera represent the park’s most significant physical features. The interviews with the park rangers indicate that these are the primary targets for the long-distance hikers who visit the park.	25
Most of the visitors who visit the park go to the sipi falls because it requires less physical fitness and lower costs than the multi day trek to the caldera of mountain Elgon because some of them do not have the strength to climb till the top of it. This suggests that while the Caldera is the park’s crown jewel, the peripheral waterfalls are the economic engines for the local community.	25
Caves	25
The presence of caves like the kapkwai, tutum, kitum is noted that these caves are unique because they are salt lick caves, providing a rare intersection between geology and animal behaviour for example elephant visits.	25
The caves are not only geological sites but are also vital saltlick attractions for the wildlife for example the tour guide Mr. Mugalula Bashir told us that once a leopard resided in the Kapkwai cave.	25

This highlights a potential of human wildlife conflict but however, the local community people can benefit from guiding tourists to these sites.	26
Water falls.	26
These waters fall features include the sipi falls and the chebonet water falls were observed to be the most attractions, drawing the highest volume of the day trip domestic tourists that is to say tourists who visit for one time trip and they head back to their localities.	26
Picture at chebonet water falls	26
Picture at sipi falls.	27
Bird species.	28
The park is a home to over 300 bird species which were recorded. Some of the birds that are in the park include the secretary bird, Jackson hornbill, lesser striped swallows and then there are also rare bird species of which one of them is the endemic lammergeyer to mention.	28
The scarcity of large mammals in the lower forest zones, compared to the abundance of birdlife, indicates that mountain Elgon National Park is better positioned as a birding destination rather than a big five safari park. This suggest that the marketing efforts should prioritize specialized niche tourists (birders).	28
Cultural findings.	28
My cultural finds include the Imbalu circumcision and the history of the mountain and the history of the Kapkwai cave;	28
The Imbalu circumcision is carried out by the Bagisu people to the boy children were this to them shows a sign of manhood to the child and that it shows that the boy has now become a man.	28
the Bagisu people stress that the mountain was first founded by their great grandfather who is Masaba and his wife Kakai.	28
The Kapkwai cave was used as a calm place to settle the disputes between people that is to say the Bagisu and the Sabinu people. It was also used to carry out ceremonies on twins who were born on the same level.	28
Picture at Kapkwai cave	29
Farming.	29
I observed that the Bagisu people carry out cash crop growing in the area were they grow Arabica coffee. This shows that the attraction is not just the mountain, but the human heritage attached to it and so if there is integration the coffee tours into the park itinerary this will increase the multiplier effect ensuring that money reaches the locals directly.	29
The marketing of the park should be accompanied with more emphasis such that the park can be more visible worldwide such the interested tourists can be able to see what is offer in the park. When some of the Ads are provided on differ social media platforms the park’s information can run in the minds of the people.	29
There is too much need in sensitizing the local community about the importance of conservation of the protected area and how it provides revenue to the country at large.	29
There is ongoing conflict between the Uganda Wildlife Authority and the local community members that seems not to be ending. These unclear boundaries lead to accidental encroachment of the protected areas by some of the famers at the residence leading to a forceful confrontation by the UWA rangers responsible for protecting the park. For this case if the UWA would be able to clearly put a fence to establish clear physical markers this would help to reduce the violence.	29
The roads and bridges that lead to the park are too poor, often becoming impassable during rainy seasons. These poor roads and bridges that lead to the park limit the park’s revenue. The park has exciting features that can attract tourists but the transport infrastructure limits their visitation, and so improving transportation facilities would attract more international tourists and provide more reliable experience.	30
There is an issue of deforestation and agricultural encroachment on steep slopes which have increased the frequency of landslides and soil erosion of which these environmental disasters destroy livelihoods, disrupt tourism causing trip cancellations. And so the if the UWA would strengthen soil conservation measures and restore forest cover on these steep slopes, this would ensure human safety and ecological protection.	30
Large mammals like elephants’ raid crops in neighboring farms, leading to economic loss by the farmers/ families. And if the UWA would emphasize most on community compensation would lead to a positive attitude toward the wildlife by the local community people.	30

The existing agreements where the locals were allowed to pick resources like the bamboo and firewood, are often poorly communicated. So, communicating always with the local people about resource extraction from the park would reduce illegal activities by giving them a legitimate stake in the park’s protection and survival.30

The tourism products at mountain Elgon National Park need to be diversified because it relies mostly on the niche market which involves, long distance trekking and mountain climbing, and so if it is to increase on the revenue generation at mountain Elgon National Park and also to stay competitive in the tourism market it should also develop soft tourism activities like community cultural trails, agro tourism (coffee tours) to mention of which this would attract more tourists to the destination. 30

As a class during the mountain climbing secession, we were told by our tour guide Mr. Mugalula Bashir that there are invasive plants which are growing in the protected are of which he said that these new species can at one point outcompete the native ones that the wildlife depend on for food of which these can alter the entire ecosystem, of which this is an issue that the UWA should consider and not outlook it for any case. 30

There is need for infrastructural developments like schools, clinics and hospitals in the local communities such that they can see the park as a benefit and not a burden. For this case the UWA should construct in the local communities the facilities such that they can encourage the continuity of the tourism sector in the area. 31

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.0 Introduction:

Most of the universities in the late 1970s in developed countries brought in the department of tourism and travel to enhance awareness through teaching of conservation and tourism to the students and people so as they can know the value and importance of nature in the world. Due to this culture of education the tourism industry is now one of the largest industries in the world due to economic and need to tour by the people that is to say the tourists.

I conducted my internship at the Kapkwai Exploration Centre within Mountain Elgon National Park managed by the wildlife Authority. Mountain Elgon National Park is a critical biodiversity hotspot and water catchment area. My placement at Kapkwai a specialized educational and trailhead hub, focused on the intersection of ecotourism and conservation education. The program aimed to provide hands on experience and knowledge in park operations, nature trail education and community engagement with the local sabiny and Bagisu cultures.

Mountain Elgon National Park was originally established as an educational facility for schools and researchers but later in 1993 it was gazetted as a national park. It is one of the ten [10] national parks run by Uganda Wildlife Authority which is a semi-autonomous government agency following the merger of the Uganda National Parks and Game Reserves.

The area was first developed as a forest reserve in 1929 which later renamed mount Elgon crown forest in 1940 and became a central forest reserve in 1951 under the forest department. During Uganda's period of unrest, the reserve suffered significant degradation due to encroachment and timber harvesting.

The reserve was officially upgraded to mountain Elgon National Park in October 1993, this change was driven by need to protect its vital water catchment area for the Nile and Lake Victoria and to conserve high altitude biodiversity under the Uganda Wildlife Authority.

The park was eventually recognized as a man and biosphere reserve, emphasizing its global ecological value and the need for the sustainable community management.

Mountain Elgon National Park is located on the park edge, about 13km from sipi town, at an altitude of approximately 2,050 meters.

To support growing tourism, the facility was expanded to include Kapkwai cottages, offering budget accommodation and stationery tents for hikers and nature lovers.

The centre manages three short trails through the forest allowing the visitors to see local landmarks like chebonet falls and Kapkwai cave which was historically used by local elders for ceremonies.

REFERENCES

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The Promise and Performance of Community Conservation edited by David Hulme and Marshall Murphree (2001).

Academic research such as Linda Norgrove's 2003 PhD dissertation analyzes community resistance to park policies.

Uganda: Bradt Travel Guide by Philip Briggs (2024), detailing trails and features like Wagagai peak,

John Bremner Purvis's early account Through Uganda to Mount Elgon (1909)

Uganda Handbook by Lizzie Williams (2014), which includes logistical details for hikers.

The Field Guide to the Forest Trees of Uganda (2020) by James Kalema and Alan Hamilton assists in identifying flora like Podocarpus and Hagenia abyssinica.

The Geology of Part of South-East Uganda by K.A. Davies (1952) and Alkaline Rocks and Carbonatites of the World: Part 3: Africa by Alan Woolley (2001) describe the volcanic formation and composition of the massif.