



UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE



CASE STUDY ON USAID CENTRAL AFRICA REGIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (CARPE)



This Case Study is from "Toolkit on Monitoring and Evaluation of Environmental Peacebuilding 2023" m-and-environmentalpeacebuilding.org/toolkit



The USAID CARPE initiative began in 2013 to sustainably manage forest landscapes, mitigate biodiversity threats in those landscapes, establish policy and regulatory environments supporting sustainable forest and biodiversity conservation, and strengthen capacities to monitor forest cover change, greenhouse gas emissions, and biodiversity in the Congo Basin.

In monitoring and evaluating this intervention, it became clear that cultural factors played a significant role in determining what information was sensitive. "Spiritual matters are given a very high priority by the inhabitants of the Congo Basin. This has direct consequences for social change endeavors, including governance and development initiatives, because of fatalistic attitudes and superstitions. People of the Congo Basin are reluctant to disclose their intentions—to marry, buy a plot of land, apply for a job, or take a trip — out of fear that the forces of the occult will interfere before their aims have been met. Secrecy is therefore a powerful cultural reality, and a political strategy as well. Political elites in Congo tend not to believe in transparency; on the contrary, they generally adhere to the belief that to wield power effectively, it must be done in secret."

AT A GLANCE

MONITORING

- Information Sensitivity

