

#SheisWe

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Jolie Kavugho

Democratic Republic of Congo – She watches, We protect wildlife

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It was a man's world, but she persisted to fulfil her dream of becoming a park ranger. She now risks her life protecting the Congolese wildlife every day. She is Jolie Kavugho. #SheisWe #EDD18

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Story

Jolie Kavugho always wanted to follow in the footsteps of her father, protecting the endangered species, the environment and local communities of Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Yet, as a woman, she didn't think she would have the opportunity to join the Park's Rangers.

Virunga has been situated at the epicentre of a two decade-long conflict, and has faced numerous challenges from militias, poachers and smugglers who have exploited the vast natural resources of the Park. Over 175 Rangers have been killed whilst undertaking their essential work to protect the Park and the 4 million people that live within a day's walk of its borders.

In 2014, Virunga opened up ranger training to women as part of its work to bring new, equal employment opportunities to local communities. Jolie was among the first to apply, successfully pass the rigorous selection and training process and she is now one of the 26 women to risk their lives every day to protect the Congolese wildlife. And among them, the iconic Mountain Gorillas, whose remaining population is less than a thousand. A quarter of them lives under Jolie's meticulous watch. #SheisWe.

Link: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-14-547_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-547_en.htm)