



Darwin Initiative Annual Report



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Important note: *To be completed with reference to the Reporting Guidance Notes for Project Leaders:
it is expected that this report will be about 10 pages in length, excluding annexes*

Submission Deadline: 30 April

Darwin Project Information

Project Reference	19-010
Project Title	Developing Long-term Stakeholder Capacity for Elephant Conservation in Mali
Host Country/ies	Mali
Contract Holder Institution	Wilderness Foundation-UK
Partner institutions	Direction des Eaux et Forêts, Ministry of the Environment International Conservation Fund of Canada, The WILD Foundation
Darwin Grant Value	£240,510
Start/end dates of project	1 April 2012 – 31 March 2015
Reporting period (eg Apr 2013 – Mar 2014) and number (eg Annual Report 1, 2, 3)	Apr 2013 – Mar 2014 Annual report 2
Project Leader name	Dr Susan Canney
Project website	http://www.wild.org/where-we-work/the-desert-elephants-of-mali/
Report author(s) and date	Dr Susan Canney 30 th April 2014

1. Project Rationale

Increasing human pressure throughout the migratory range of the 550 Mali elephants is heightening the potential for human-elephant conflict at the same time as degradation impoverishes livelihoods and reduces the resilience of the ecosystem to cope. And yet successful mitigation methods, such as land-use planning and the integration of elephant conservation into community natural resource management plans and development plans, are still possible if action is taken soon, particularly as poaching has been non-existent.

In their NBSAP, Mali has identified the Gourma as an area of great significance with regards to biodiversity. The elephants are singled out for particular attention as they are regarded of national and international importance for several reasons. They represent 12% of all West African elephants. This population is the most northerly population in existence, and is accorded a high priority in the regional elephant strategy of the World Conservation Union (IUCN), making an amazing circular migration of over 600 kilometres annually from Mali to Burkina Faso and back. The African elephant is listed in Appendix Two of the CMS and the subject of a MoU. This population is listed under Appendix I of CITES. Government resources are wholly inadequate to cover this vast area: a different approach is needed.

Scientific studies and community consultation indicated that the threats to the elephants were the same as the threats to the livelihoods of the local population and the resilience of the ecosystem to cope with environmental change, namely:

- Population pressure from the south, as people search for new land to farm. Meanwhile dispossessed herders try shifting agriculture that ultimately results in soil erosion and loss.
- Well intentioned development interventions that have exacerbated the problem e.g. the thoughtless provision of water-points encouraging settlement and a natural resource “free-for-all”; and financial incentives to develop market gardens around water holes attracting agriculturalists from elsewhere.
- Livestock pressure from the river towns where middle classes amass huge “prestige” herds that need to travel further and further afield to find pasture
- Urban commercial interests cutting trees and gathering non-timber forest products.
- The disinclination to respect the resource management systems of another ethnicity.

Underpinning all these is the anarchic use of natural resources by multiple interests and ethnicities. The resultant “free-for-all” has led to resource degradation, habitat destruction, impoverished livelihoods, and an increase in human-elephant conflict.

The strategy is to protect the elephant migration route by establishing consensus-based community land-use planning and natural resource management systems, effectively putting “the commons” under community management. These empower the local population to sustainably manage the natural resources on which their livelihoods depend, reverse ecosystem degradation, make provision for elephants, generate income and equitably share revenue. This strategy has been developed at Lake Banzena in the “Elephant Partial Reserve”, the last accessible water for elephants at the end of the dry season and the lynch-pin of the migration. The approach worked better than expected and is being extended throughout the elephant range.

The area covered by the project’s work lies between the following co-ordinates: 3.3°W and 0.9°W; and 14.6 °N and 16.9°N. The location of the elephant range in West Africa is shown in Figure 1a, and the communities with which the project works are shown in figure 1b (although not all are included as we still have to collect GPS co-ordinates for them). This shows that the project has extended its work to the communities in the north and west between the elephant range and the river, as many of the migratory herds using the elephant range come from these areas.



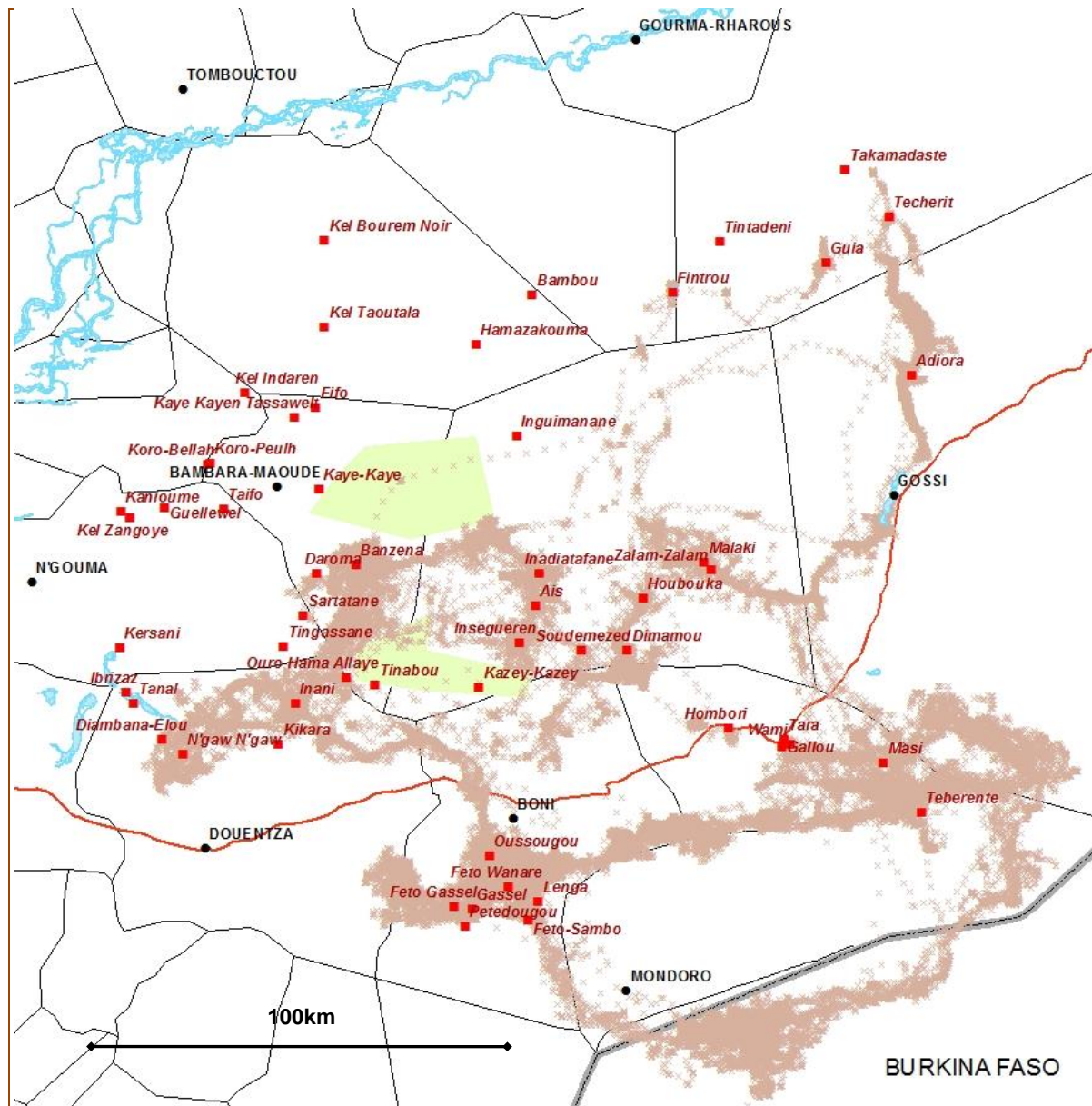


Figure 1 – (a) Map showing the elephant range (brown) in its West African context (b) Map showing the communities with which the project has been working over the past year (red squares), the elephant range is shown in brown, the main road in red, commune boundaries in black, lakes in blue, and pasture reserves designated pre-conflict in green.

2. Project Partnerships

Co-operation and collaboration are the essence of the Mali Elephant Project's (MEP) approach, as community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) is not possible without this. The project always involves all local organizations in its meetings – traditional community leaders, elected leaders, government technical services from all relevant departments (forestry, agriculture, herding, communities, planning), government administration, NGOs, other projects and programmes.

In its activities the MEP has built bridges between the top levels of government and grass-roots subsistence farmers. It also involves other Ministries in its activities, as for example in bringing 11 Ministries and local representatives together for the Reconciliation workshop, and is currently working with the Ministries of the Environment and Defence to submit a proposal to the US Embassy / USAID HAP for the repair of infrastructure in the Gourma.

The partnership with the Malian Ministry of the Environment and its Direction National des Eaux et Forêts (DNEF) is excellent and fruitful, and continues to strengthen. We continue to work closely together, and the DNEF supports us in any way it can.

Since 2007 the project has enjoyed excellent relations with the successive Ministers of the Environment, briefing them personally. It has also identified key allies within the DNEF and supported them through helping them in their work, including them in project activities (while working to keep less helpful elements at arm's length), and enabling them to share in the project's success, particularly in the eyes of the Ministers and Secretary Generals. Over the years these have risen to key positions of power and now provide a supportive environment that makes it easier to constrain unhelpful elements. This has manifested in various ways in the past, although this year civil servants were much occupied with restoring normal operations post-conflict and with the preparations for elections and the formation of a new government. They have sent high-ranking representatives to attend key local workshops, thus sending a message to the local communities that their initiatives are regarded of great importance by the government, and will continue to be supported. This has been of particular importance in the post-conflict situation to reassure the local communities that all agreements and conventions made up to now will continue to stand.

This year DNEF has replicated the approach in other protected areas in Mali, having created local community "Brigades de Surveillance" in the Faya reserve, the Biosphere Reserve of the Boucle de Baoule and Nianfolia, modelled on those of the Gourma. The DNEF has also been inspired by the community model to work towards the creation of a separate agency charged with the management of the country's protected areas, and the project has put the Direction in contact with an American Fund that could provide the required technical assistance.

3. Project Progress

The Mali Elephants Project (MEP) is focused on completing the next steps required in the process of securing the Gourma elephant range at the local level through the establishment of community natural resource management systems that include the protection of the migration route and key elephant habitat. These are based on the model developed with the communities of Lake Banzena and the original plan was to extend these progressively to adjacent communities, until the whole of the elephant range was secured.

While this continues to be the goal, and the same tools are being used (community meetings, workshops, training, local and inter-communal conventions etc.) events have required the modification of this approach to adapt to the current circumstances and ensure maximal effectiveness of funds. The Tuareg rebellion reignited by the return of mercenaries from Libya in 2011, the coup, the withdrawal of government, the seizure of the elephant range by armed groups of rebels and jihadists in 2012, and subsequent lawlessness posed enormous danger for the elephants. The project managed to continue its work throughout the conflict by adapting its activities and meet the threat to the elephants by working with the local people to protect them. In addition to protecting the elephants (only 8 out of approximately 550 have been killed), these prevented the recruitment of young men by the jihadist groups. One might describe the project's approach as "war-tested".

In the post-conflict situation the residual insecurity poses more threats, both direct and indirect, and makes these activities more important than ever. Groups of young men who had joined the jihadists now find they have nowhere to go. They feel unable to return to their communities due to shame and/or fear of being handed over to the authorities. They have been hiding in the forests surrounding water-holes in the more remote areas, robbing vehicles and people. All the project infrastructure – borehole infrastructure, solar panels, generators, tent and equipment of new forestry post – have been broken or stolen within the last year. Around a third of the population are displaced and fear to return because of this residual insecurity. In addition the social divisions and upheaval created by the conflict mean that the project has needed to include community reconciliation as an integral part of its resource management activities.

Rather than working with communities according to a strict plan, the project has had to work with communities in ways that address the greatest need and involve local people over the widest area possible, initially in less depth as the focus is on maximal coverage, but then returning to support the next steps. Maximal coverage has meant first addressing with the most pressing needs of the community in question and these may be different from place to place. For example in many areas the project's initial work with a community has been through training in the construction of fire-breaks to conserve pasture as much pasture as possible to reduce conflict between humans, livestock and elephants; using

these training sessions to demonstrate the impact of resource management, and including the need for elephant protection as a part of the training.

This is because a conflagration of factors has resulted in extreme scarcity of pasture and water this year, forcing humans, livestock and elephants into closer proximity. These are shown in figure 2 on the next page and can be summarized as:

- The rains of 2013 were poor reducing the amounts of water and pasture available
- The dam/bridge at Gossi is still broken, draining the Gossi corridor and its chain of lakes stretching almost 100km. This meant that pastoralists from the river that were used to using this area for pasture were no longer able to and were seeking pasture elsewhere
- People are reluctant to linger in areas frequented by the bandits for fear of livestock theft.

By working with communities to prevent the loss of pasture to fire, and particularly the riverine communities to the north and west of the elephant range, the need for these communities to find pasture in the elephant range is removed.

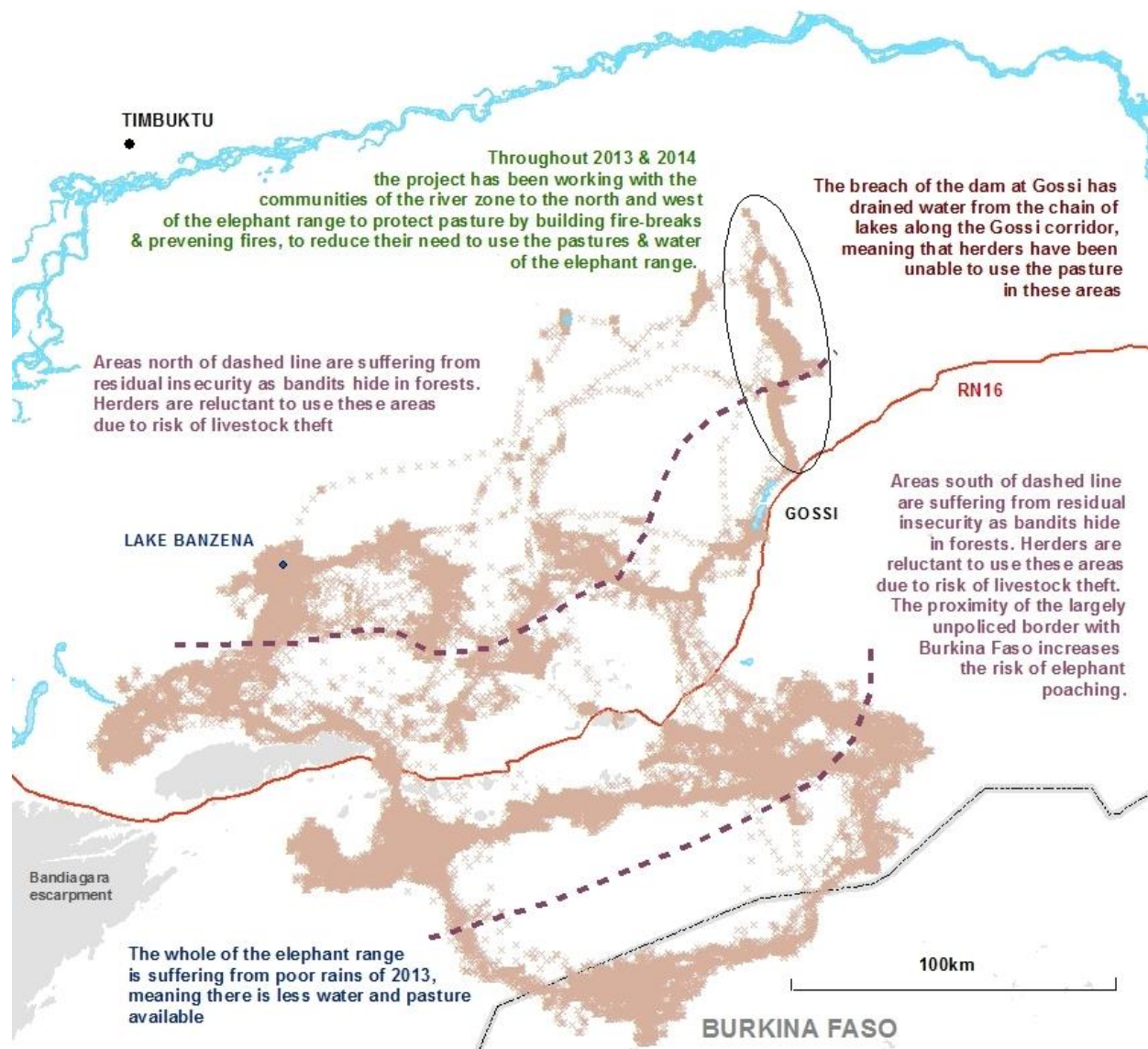


Figure 2 – The co-occurrence of forces reducing the amount of pasture and water available in 2013-14

The project has also had to reinforce trainings in areas where it has already worked but where a high proportion of community members have left, and the remaining members of the management committee and brigades need support in reconstituting these systems.

The result is that the project has engaged at a local level with more communities than planned, as shown in figure one, in a more even though less predictable way, that is arguably a better approach than the one initially envisaged. There is much support and enthusiasm from the local people and at national level, something that has been cultivated by the project's willingness to adapt to local needs, and indicated by the adoption of the project approach by the DNEF in other areas.

In summary the past year has been about assessing the situation in project areas; working with communities to re-affirm project achievements and re-launching initiatives where necessary; including government technical services in community initiatives and agreements made during their absence; reintegrating communities so they can work together in resource and elephant protection; providing training and support to the re-establishment and further development of community NRM; extending vigilance networks to continue watching over the elephants, together with a great deal of fire-break construction to protect pasture in a year of poor rains and little vegetation growth, both of which provide an occupation for the youth.

3.1 Progress in carrying out project activities

Output 1 – The development and implementation of a model for the protection of the pastoral areas of the elephant range

To reduce the pressure on Banzena and the elephant range, the project extended its zone of influence to work with communities along the river and to the west to build fire-breaks to protect their pasture, even though they are outside the elephant range. This is so they would not need to leave the river to find pasture and thus reduce pressure on the elephant range and Banzena.

The benefits of wise resource management are not immediately apparent, and because the local culture has a tendency to attribute its fate to God's will, it is important to provide a forum for local people to discuss the impact of their collective activities and raise awareness of how collective action can benefit and empower all. Locations of the meetings rotate to ensure that each community hosts meetings for their grouping, and there is some cross over between community groupings to ensure co-ordination between operations.

Community meetings, workshops and training for the implementation of CBNRM systems

Two four-day meetings were held at Debere and Sartatane for the communities of the communes of Bambara-Maoude, Karwassa, Banzena, Sartatane, Tinabou and Dimamou; and at Wami and Inani for the communities of Boni-Hombori, and the west respectively, and covered the following areas:

- Taking stock of progress made, lessons learned, reviewing the rules of resource use, discussing current threats to the elephants and how to monitor and protect them
- Identifying the needs for resource management, defining the roles and responsibilities of committees, brigades, and for surveillance of the bush.
- Sharing experiences of the conflict and post-conflict situation to foster empowerment through solidarity
- Discussing the social crisis and need for collaboration within and between communities, and with government foresters for effective resource protection.
- Developing resource management systems and protecting key elephant habitat in new areas in the south and west of the elephant range.

The next step was a series of three large awareness-raising workshops to ensure that the wider community understood the decisions taken, bring them together with government technical services, and enable them to discuss their experiences of the conflict and afterwards, the social impacts, their opinions of activities already undertaken, their thoughts as to future action, local rules, and how to co-ordinate activities; and most importantly to make them aware of the nature of the threats to the elephants and how to combat them. These proved particularly important in facilitating the co-ordination of activities between communities, with government technical services, and between the commune and local levels. The length of these meetings depended on the degree to which resource management systems were already in place.

- 3 days at Dimamou in the commune of Inadiatafane for the communities of Dimamou, Insegueren, Ais, Houbouka, Zalam-Zalam, and Malaki
- 3 days at Wami in the commune of Hombori for the communities of Hombori and Haire (Boni).
- 8 days at Kikara in the commune of Gandamia for the communities of Inadiatafane, Gandamia and Haire (Boni).

Once the collective decisions and rules had been made and understood at all levels, training was delivered to 465 individuals on implementation and the operation of community resource management committees and brigades.

Place of training	Number of days	Number of participants
Wami	8	42
Karsani (Djaptodji)	6	43
Daka Songhai	8	93
Sartatane	8	85
Karsani Bella	2	48
Dimamou	2	48
Inani	5	48
Ouro Allaye Kisso	4	58
Bambara-Maoude/Haribomo	8	52
Gogoro (north of the Porte des Elephants)	5	15

At the same time as training these communities in fire-break construction and pasture protection, the project has covered the importance of elephant protection and CBNRM, and given the youth an occupation to prevent their radicalisation and/or recruitment by the armed groups. In responding to this need, communities over a wider area have been engaged by the project than originally intended, dealing with one of the causes of the problem in the elephant range and thereby providing a supporting context for the actions of communities in the elephant range.

Numbers of people and livestock and people at Banzena had been low throughout the year until February when they rose sharply for reasons explained above. A series of 5 general assemblies were held in March 2014 for the communities of the communes of Inadiatafane, Banzena, Haribomo, Gandamia-Debere, and Dallah-Gogoro, to underline the importance of leaving Banzena for the elephants and ensuring the functioning of surveillance systems; reassuring the population that the borehole infrastructure in the relocation zone would be repaired by the end of April, so there would be no need to use Banzena. These assemblies were to counter rumours spread by migratory herders that Banzena would no longer be protected because of the sabotage of the borehole infrastructure by jihadists. The Director-adjoint of DNEF, the Minister's special advisor (a former Director-adjoint) and the Regional Directors were all present to provide the reinforcement by the Malian government

Output two – a plan for the resolution of human-elephant conflict in the agro-pastoral and agricultural south of the elephant range frequented by elephants during the wet season. The socio-economic survey has been completed. The report has been awaiting input from the Deputy Director National who has been taken up with changes of government and demands of aid donors, however he is currently in the Gourma with the Field Manager to add his contribution to the report. Meanwhile the project has begun working with the communities in the south of the elephant range, using the same approach as in the north, to establish resource management systems that include the protection of the elephant migration route and key habitat, and vigilance networks to protect elephants and help in resource protection. The map in figure one shows the location of these communities.

Output three – an inter-communal convention covering the whole of the elephant range. Meetings were held at the commune level to integrate the government technical services and administration into the elephant protection and resource management decisions taken by the local people to the west of the elephant range. The opportunity was taken to re-affirm the need for collective, co-ordinated action to meet the problems of life in the Gourma; as well as to test opinions regarding social divisions, their experiences and thoughts about the impact on local livelihoods.

These commune level workshops were followed by a series of "restitution" workshops of 1-2 days held at Diona, N'Gouma, Boudoukoli and Kerena, to ensure that all community leaders were aware of the conclusions, were able to discuss them until all were in agreement and pledged to support their implementation. The final step will be to bring all the individual commune agreements together in one.

Output four – community ecosystem protection initiatives. Three new sylvo-pasture reserves were created this year, bringing the total to 5. A total of 206km of fire-breaks were built by 221 young men over a period of 89 days in 2013. These areas were located to the north of the elephant range to protect pasture along the river and reduce the need for herders in these communities to use pasture of the elephant range; to the north west in the Karwassa; and in the south-west of the elephant range in Gandamia, Kourarou, Dalla and Kerena and near the Porte des Elephants. None of the pasture burned in these areas, thus reducing the pressure on the area of Banzena, and regular fire-watching patrols were organised. According to project staff, there was great pride in not only having been able to protect pasture, but also in their role as providing benefit for all and to have escaped the dangerous trap of recruitment by the armed groups.

A further 580km were built in 2014 by the communities south of Banzena (Kazey-Kazey, Tinabou, Ouro Hama Allaye Kisso); by those now living in the relocation area at Mayfata, Tinsabara, Tinhohsa to the north of Banzena; by communities to the east Ais, Insegueren, Inadiatafane and Indamane; and in the south of the elephant range at Saradina (south of Hombori), Dadiem, Ibossosotane (near Wami), Lenga (near Boni).

At least 20 forests are protected from abusive cutting, exploitation and clearance by functioning community resource management systems including the axis from Feto Gassel to Masi, stretching just over 100km in the south of the elephant range.

Unforeseen activity - Elephant protection in the post-conflict period of residual insecurity. Thanks to the activities of the Brigades de Surveillance and the Vigilance Networks, all the perpetrators of the 8 elephant killings have been identified: those harbouring the ivory of four of the elephants have been identified; the accomplices within the community allowing the poaching of the first elephant have been arrested, as have those responsible for the two elephants killed post-conflict. In addition the tusks of the first elephant have been recovered thanks to the vigilance and intelligent action by the brigades and vigilance networks in the Inani area who sent herd-boys to follow individuals deemed suspicious. These achievements are also evidence of how the community has been working in synergy with government foresters.

There are 6 main groupings of vigilance networks recorded with their initial numbers, however since these data were recorded, more have joined. For example in the south of the elephant range (Mondoro, Boni, Hombori), all the youth of the communities on the axis from Feto Gassel in the west to Masi in the east have joined increasing the numbers of recruits from an initial 67 to over 300 in these areas:

Zones	Number of individuals
Banzena, Indamane, Ais, DImamou, Hombori, Ebanguimallen	42
Ibrazaz, N'gaw N'gaw	5
Inani, Karwassa, Boudoukoli, Karsani	58
Tinabou, Ouro Allaye Kisso	5
Mondoro	35
Boni, Hombori	32

Unforeseen activity – Support to reconciliation at national and local levels. Post-conflict the project has had to respond to new threats that have opened up for the elephants. The conflict has opened up old rivalries and left communities divided. The project has undertaken a study of the local population prompted by the question, "why did some people leave to become refugees/displaced people and some people stay? What were the motivations for fleeing or staying? What are the implications for post-conflict aid and reconstruction in the Gourma?" The aim was to understand the social impact of the conflict to guide the design of post-conflict activities and ensure that these correctly target the situation, and these considerations have been incorporated into existing project activities as described above.

It is clear that reconciliation is an essential pre-requisite not only for the creation of resource management systems that protect elephants and their habitats, but also to learn from the experience of past droughts and conflicts in the 1980s and 1990s and ensure that any aid and reconstruction activities are correctly targeted, do not exacerbate social tensions, and do not create environmental degradation in the future that undermines local livelihoods, as has happened before. At the same time natural resource management and protection activities are a means to reunite communities, and provide employment for young men. We are, therefore, holding meetings of reconciliation to rebuild community cohesion as an essential prerequisite to establishing community natural resource management systems.

In partnership with the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation and the Ministry of the Environment, we convened a 3-day 11 ministry workshop for top-levels of national, regional, and local

government together with community representatives, two previous prime ministers, and members of the national reconciliation commission, to discuss these issues and develop an action plan. The aim was to learn from lessons of the past and prevent well-intentioned aid and reconstruction initiatives unwittingly exacerbating social wounds and setting up the conditions for future social and environmental problems (see below) The workshop report is attached and the study results are contained in an annexe of the report.

The chief conclusions were that:

- Reconciliation within and between communities is a pre-requisite for aid and reconstruction activities,
- All efforts should aim for the reconstruction of communities as they were pre-conflict
- Local communities must be involved in the design of post-conflict aid and reconstruction to ensure that these activities are correctly targeted and achieve the desired results.

The report is available in English and French (the English version is attached) and can be found on the project website, with the Darwin Initiative acknowledged on the front page. It has yet to be shared with Mali's financial and technical partners (see also <http://www.wild.org/blog/post-war-mali/>).

3.2 Progress towards project outputs

We are well on target to achieve the outputs of the project, although not necessarily in the exact manner originally envisaged.

Output 1 – Rather than working with communities according to a progressive plan, as was the case during development of the model at Banzena, the impacts of the conflict and the urgency to protect the elephants and resources throughout the elephant range has meant that the MEP has had to work with communities in ways that involve local people over the widest area possible and address the greatest local need. For example in many areas the project's initial work with a community has been through training in the construction of fire-breaks, as described previously. CBNRM systems have been established in around two-thirds of the pastoral zones (i.e. 40% of the range). Training course have been delivered and resulted in community action. Less abusive cutting has been observed, no fire in areas where firebreaks have been built. Despite the difficulties of the post-conflict situation, the number of cattle at Banzena was much reduced for most of the year down from over 50,000 in 2009 to 700-1,500 in 2013. However since February there has been a sharp increase due to forces already described and the MEP is working together with the DNEF to remedy the situation, and will be described in the next report. The systems to charge outsiders for resource use have not yet been implemented due to the sabotage of the boreholes.

Output 2 – The plan is being finalized. CBNRM systems have been initiated in around 60% of the south by area, substantially more by population.

Output 3 – government has been included in the establishment of three intercommunal conventions that protect the migration route and key elephant habitats of the elephant range. The integration into one convention will occur in 2014-5

Output 4 – the first three indicators have been achieved, while the fourth is a longer term measure.

Existing assumptions still hold, although we continue to enjoy strong support from all levels of government, and the interest and commitment of communities to continue in resource protection at local and communal level in the post-conflict situation. In particular the young men are very proud to have an occupation that has status. The Field Manager reports great enthusiasm for these activities among the local community in being empowered to make a difference, however the upheaval of the conflict and the departure of refugees has left a situation where different communities have different needs. Numbers attending the workshops and meetings are impressive, as are the achievements of the brigades and vigilance networks in protecting the elephants, finding poachers and ivory; the amount of pasture, and numbers of lakes and forests protected under local resource management agreements; and the fact that most of the elephant range is protected at commune level.

However independent documented evidence is sporadic and difficult to come by as the team are working on many fronts at once. Due to the security situation, verification by the Project Leader has been impossible.

3.3 Progress towards the project Purpose/Outcome

The project is moving steadily towards its Purpose. It has engaged with communities to some degree in around 80% of the elephant range, as well as with communities between the elephant range and the river, something that was not originally intended but which has an important impact on human-elephant relations in the elephant range (see 3.1). The purpose-level assumptions still hold true, and the project is on-track to achieve the purpose by the end of funding.

3.4 Goal/ Impact: achievement of positive impact on biodiversity and poverty alleviation

The original goal was “Effective contribution in support of the implementation of the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Conventions on Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS), as well as related targets set by countries rich in biodiversity but constrained in resources.

The project addresses the three main objectives of the CBD by conserving biodiversity (community-forester patrols and habitat protection initiatives); sustainable use (community based NRM, and habitat regeneration for fuel, pasture, and NTFPs); and equitable benefit-sharing (transparent consensus-based community structures). With the advent of elephant poaching, the project has mobilized the population to protect the elephants throughout the conflict and is working with the government to develop this, thus addressing the CITES Appendix I listing. The project has good relations with the administration of the protected area on the Burkina side of the border, where the elephants spend some of the wet season, however more needs to be done and closer collaboration is planned to combat poaching. Project work addresses the remaining two priorities of the appendix to the CMS MoU on West African Elephants: to at least maintain numbers (community protection, engagement and outreach to resolve human-elephant conflict); and to improve elephant habitats (habitat protection and regeneration).

The Gourma is mentioned in Mali’s National Biodiversity Strategy as one of the four natural regions of highest biodiversity value in Mali. The elephants are an important population in their own right but also function as an umbrella species. The project’s habitat protection activities favour the Gourma’s biodiversity rich habitats that are key for ecosystem services and resilience. These are supported by the community-ranger patrols enforcing sustainable resource-use practices, and controlling the illegal exploitation of game species (including the vulnerable red-fronted and dorcas gazelles).

Local people value elephants for aiding forest regeneration and seed dispersal via dung. The elephants also shake down fruits, leaves and seeds from unreachable places which are eaten by other animals, including livestock, and also collected by women for use and sale, offering nutrition and income in difficult agricultural years. Their dung is used to treat conjunctivitis, a common affliction in these zones. The elephants also dig holes in water courses to access water in the dry season that are then be used by other creatures. In the Gourma, where few large mammals tread, and with its water resources widely dispersed in discrete water holes, the Mali elephants are important vectors of aquatic organisms.

By establishing community resource management systems across the elephant range, the project aims to create the structures required to enable the eventual reintroduction of species that have been lost.

The contribution to human development (poverty alleviation) and welfare is covered in section 5.

4. Project support to the Conventions (CBD, CMS and/or CITES)

The progress in helping Mali meet its obligations under the three major biodiversity conventions have been discussed in section 4.4 as this was the original Goal of the project. The project works closely with the DNEF, and has inspired the directorate to use its approaches elsewhere in Mali and move towards the establishment of a dedicated protected areas agency (see section 2). As the Gourma is one of the four highest priority areas for biodiversity in Mali, the project directly contributes to helping Mali achieve Aichi targets 1, 5, 7, 12, 14, 15, and 18 (in italics followed by project contribution).

Target 1 - *By 2020, at the latest, people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably.* The project achieves this through the tangible results of resource management demonstrated to local communities and national government, as well as using these results in outreach and awareness activities internationally.

Target 5 - *By 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced.* The project is

preventing habitat degradation, ensuring the protection of forests, lakes and pasture, and promoting habitat restoration.

Target 7 - *By 2020 areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity.* Community-devised local and inter-communal conventions enshrine sustainable resource use that prevents degradation, for example by banning practices such as abusive tree cutting, and tightly regulating resource extraction and hunting.

Target 12 - *By 2020 the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline, has been improved and sustained.* This unique elephant population is being prevented from extirpation and nurtures biodiversity through its role as an umbrella and keystone species.

Target 14 - *By 2020, ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are restored and safeguarded, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable.* By restoring ecosystems and preventing degradation the project improves the lives and livelihoods of local people (see also section 5). The relocation of the population around lake Banzena and provision of clean water in the relocation area meant that the incidence of water-borne disease dropped dramatically.

Target 15 - *By 2020, ecosystem resilience and the contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks has been enhanced, through conservation and restoration, including restoration of at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems, thereby contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to combating desertification.* The project is preventing forest clearance, annual burning of pasture, habitat degradation.

Target 18 - *By 2020, the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and their customary use of biological resources, are respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, at all relevant levels.* The project is founded on the effective participation of local communities.

The CBD focal point, Mr Boureima Camara is involved in discussions and meetings concerning the Gourma and the elephants at national level.

5. Project support to poverty alleviation

The project is alleviating poverty by working with local communities to improve the quality and quantity of the resources in water, pasture and forest, on which their livelihoods depend, making them more resilient to environmental and social disturbances. Resource degradation and desertification has occurred through a tragedy of the commons resulting from the mix of ethnicities sharing the zone. While they each have their own systems of resource management, they do not respect each others', but by bringing the communities together, common systems of resource management are devised, that protect habitat and resource extraction, as well as include charging outsiders for the use of water and pasture in order to control the influx of large migratory "prestige" herds belonging to the wealthy urban middle classes living hundreds of kms away. The latter was piloted in the relocation area for the population previously living at Lake Banzena but over the last year remnant pockets of young men who joined the armed groups sabotaged the boreholes and occupied some of the forests in the Banzena area. In April 2014 the bandits have left these forests and the boreholes are being repaired.

By preventing overexploitation, habitat destruction and controlling fire, these systems mean that there are many more resources available for the local population, and habitats that yield useful products such as game and wild foods in addition to pasture, water and browse. The community are also empowered to be able to act to better their lives, instead of assume that whatever happens is God's will.

Local communities are the direct beneficiaries. 792km of firebreaks have been constructed to protect pasture that would otherwise have burned. To give some idea of the benefits, the hay from 12 hectares of enclosed pasture just outside a small town yields an annual income of around \$17,000/year when sold in the market. We know that we have a minimum of 1,500,000 hectares protected pasture. In addition, at least 30 forests are protected from abusive cutting, exploitation and clearance by functioning community resource management systems.

Most importantly, the resource protection, bush surveillance and elephant protection activities provide employment for the young men, providing an alternative to joining the armed groups. Even though the project only offers "frais d'encouragement", these men have great pride in an occupation that benefits

and accords status within the community, rather than the risks and social alienation associated with joining the armed groups. All across the Sahel land is degraded; the young men have no employment and they risk radicalisation. This approach provides a model that could be adapted to local conditions and replicated elsewhere providing benefits in terms of security, poverty alleviation and conservation.

These kind of benefits become more visible over the medium-long term, and the creation of new community systems need support so that they become integrated habitually into local culture. The project aims to continue supporting communities in their efforts until they become autonomous. Other activities include helping communities develop income generating activities through part-funding, part-loaning money for enclosing pasture to be able to harvest a marketable crop of hay; cultivate Acacia Senegal trees for gum Arabic, and raise ostriches based on a model initiative in the south of Mali.

When security returns to the area the project will help the local communities in activities associated with elephant-based tourism, as the area is on a popular tourism route and adjacent to attractions such as the Dogon escarpment, the inner delta, Timbuktu and Mopti.

Noticeable achievements are:

- The ability to function throughout the conflict and in the post-conflict situation
- The development community elephant protection systems, which have led to only 8 elephants being killed since the conflict began and just 2 of these in the post-conflict situation, despite the availability of arms and proximity of armed groups. This is during an elephant holocaust that is decimating elephant populations throughout Africa as rebel groups seek “blood ivory” to fund their wars.
- The agreement of the population to protect the habitats of the elephant range and not to allow settlement on elephant migration routes.
- The mobilisation of funds from unconventional sources through framing elephant conservation in its wider socio-economic context, as for example in raising the substantial funds required to repair infrastructure destroyed by jihadis whose destruction has ecosystem wide impacts
- Preventing the young men of the Gourma from joining armed groups by providing them with an occupation that has status in the community
- Leading a national debate among high levels of the Malian government (11 Ministries together with representatives of local communities and civil society) into the requirements for effective aid and reconstruction that does not exacerbate social divisions or create future environmental and social problems.

6. Monitoring, evaluation and lessons

The Field Manager and project field team continually monitor the activity of the community management systems, assessing the degree to which meetings, workshops and training has led to community action, and what further project input is required. Unfortunately the Project Leader has not been able to visit the project area throughout the past year due to the insecurity, but speaks almost daily with the Field Manager.

Many of the project activities and goals have relatively straight forward measures such as amount of pasture protected, fire incidence, forests protected, percentage of the elephant range under different degrees of protection and level of protection, texts of local and intercommunal conventions etc.; elephants have unimpeded access to dry season water at Banzena; number of elephants killed and ivory retrieved etc.

While we have records of trainings and workshops delivered, numbers attending, achievements of the workshops, local conventions agreed, keeping records of exactly what communities are doing on the ground an ongoing challenge, particularly in the post-conflict situation where the project is having to take on additional challenges such as community reconciliation. Much of this information is available but needs to be assembled by the field team. They also need to be more assiduous in collecting GPS data when the security situation allows.

This year the team’s focus has been on avoiding danger while helping communities continue with these systems through the upheavals of the conflict and post-conflict situation; reaching as many communities as possible to ensure the elephants are protected across the elephant range at this time of considerable

threat; and extending activities to include reconciliation. These are enormous additional challenges which the team is managing valiantly.

The project has tried getting the brigades to keep a log of when they patrol and where, but they have no interest in such tasks. The MEP has the choice of either giving continued, intensive training to a few brigades/patrols to ensure they record their activities, or establishing larger numbers of patrols over a wider area. Given the extreme urgency of the situation we have taken the latter approach.

7. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)

Reviewer's comments requiring response are reproduced in italics and replies below:

Have activities that were delayed because of the conflict been implemented? These activities include having intercommunal conventions formalised by government, a planned demonstration visit to other sites e.g. PADES0 project in Sokolo mapping firebreaks and protected areas. The intercommunal conventions have been formalised by government but we still have not organised an exchange visit due to more pressing priorities, and the residual insecurity making travel risky.

Some new activities have been planned as a result of the conflict (extension of vigilance networks to cope with increased threat of poaching and involvement of project in aid and conflict resolution). It would be valuable to have some comments on the progress of these in the next report. Vigilance networks have been extended and the reconciliation activities are described in section 3.1.

The report mentions that it plans to strengthen links with the Saharo-Sahelian Interest Group and with other projects once work with agricultural communities in human-elephant conflict begins. It would be useful to report upon progress made in the next Annual Report. The Project Director has been invited to join the board of the Sahara Conservation Fund's Conservation and Science Committee. So far work with the agricultural communities has involved protecting forests to prevent their clearance for agriculture, and building fire-breaks.

The report suggests new strategies that will be implemented to record activities of patrols. A comment on the effectiveness of these strategies would be helpful in terms of lessons learned for future Darwin projects that involve training of communities with high illiteracy. See section 6.

The effectiveness of charging for access to water and pasture is important to assess sustainability. Any remarks on the livelihood contribution of this activity would be helpful once enough time has passed to judge. See section 5.

8. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

The project has managed to engage communities rapidly over wide area, because it has worked with communities in ways that address the greatest need and involve local people over the widest area possible, and because it uses systems, techniques and approaches that are familiar to the local people, rather than ideas imposed from outside.

Given the conflict and post-conflict situation the project faces many risks as it deals with the fall-out of huge forces beyond its control such as armed conflict, variable rainfall, and weak institutions, but enjoys great support within the community and government, and a flexible and talented team that have been able to respond.

One challenge has been the dissemination of report from the reconciliation workshop. The original idea had been to hold a workshop for the donor community, however workshop organisation requires time and the team has been fully occupied with meeting the challenges in the field and more urgent tasks have taken priority.

9. Sustainability

This project has an extremely high profile within the Ministry of the Environment, and enjoys 100% support, being regarded as a model for the rest of Mali. The Project Leader and Field Manager enjoy ready access to the top levels of the Direction of Eaux et Forêts, and to the Minister and Secretary General of the Ministry of the Environment. Project achievements have greatly boosted the morale of Eaux et Forêts and their profile within government. The result is that the top posts are now occupied by dedicated and effective individuals who make a strong supportive team.

The profile of the project is rising in other Ministries, particularly as a result of convening the Workshop on Reconciliation, Aid and Reconstruction, attended by representatives from 11 ministries, and covered

by the Malian national newspapers and television. The project is working closely with the Ministry of Defence and the DNEF to raise money for USAID support to the repair of infrastructure and brigades. It is also part of a wider regional initiative to mobilise capacity building for DNEF.

It is clear that DNEF are much more confident in their ability to take decisions to support elephant conservation, something that was noticeably absent in 2008, the first time that Banzena dried. They readily make their top officers available to work with the project and support its activities on the ground. They have also sought to introduce the model elsewhere in Mali.

The ultimate aim is that communities manage their own resources and restore the ecosystem thereby creating more resources while protecting elephant habitat and the migration route, however they need to be supported in this until the systems become familiar and a habitual part of their day-to-day activities, and can be seen to bring tangible benefits. This may take several years, and so the project is also seeking to help them develop revenue-generating activities based on sustainable resource management. This Darwin Initiative project is part of a long term initiative, the Mali Elephant Project that we envisage continuing until 2020 at least, when we envisage the whole of the elephant range being managed by integrated community-forester natural resource management systems, supported by an elephant range management plan, ready for the re-introduction of species that have been lost.

10. Darwin Identity

The project has posted the Darwin Initiative logo on publications and workshops, although it has been tended to be recognised as forming part of the larger programme together with the WILD Foundation and the International Conservation Fund of Canada. There was no awareness of the Darwin Initiative in the country among our partners before the project, but there was interest in what was regarded as a new and novel source of funding from Britain.

11. Project Expenditure

Table 1 project expenditure during the reporting period (1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014)

Project spend since last annual report	2013/14 Grant (£)	2013/14 Total actual Darwin Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs			0	
Consultancy costs			-36	We no longer need to buy-in cartography services as we recruited someone who also had adequate GIS skills
Overhead Costs			0	
Travel and subsistence			0	Money for international travel for the Field Manager was reallocated to national travel as he failed to get a visa
Operating Costs			23	Savings on the other categories were re-directed to community workshops and training
Capital items			0	
Others			-45	Fleeing jihadis had destroyed the broadcasting equipment of local radio stations meaning we were not able to use the money for radio emissions
TOTAL			0	

All changes have been discussed and agreed with the Darwin initiative.

12. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project during the reporting period (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes

I agree for the Darwin Secretariat to publish the content of this section (please leave this line in to indicate your agreement to use any material you provide here)

- The ability to function throughout the conflict and the post-conflict situation, and find creative ways of ensuring that forces outside the control of the project do not derail it
- Providing a model for securing areas against the advance of jihadist groups (and other groups paying large sums to recruit young unemployed men). The project has prevented many of the young men of the Gourma from joining armed groups by providing them with an occupation that has status in the community, thus having important security implications and furnishing a model that can be replicated all along the Sahel and beyond.
- Providing a model of community mobilisation to protect this elephant population through a time of complete lawlessness and awash with guns. Their achievements are astounding, particularly given the current African elephant massacre by armed groups to fund war. An important reason for this is that there was already a high level of trust between the community and the project, as the community had witnessed tangible results of benefit to them. Only one elephant has been killed in the past year despite the residual insecurity. Community brigades and vigilance networks have discovered the perpetrators and they are in prison helping the gendarmes with their inquiries. They have also discovered the tusks of the first elephant poached in January 2012 through sending herd-boys to discreetly follow people arriving on a motorbike who raised suspicion.
- Providing a model of an integrated approach to elephant conservation whereby communities work in synergy with the government.
- Leading a national debate among high levels of the Malian government (11 Ministries together with representatives of local communities and civil society) into the requirements for effective aid and reconstruction in the Gourma that does not exacerbate social divisions or create future environmental and social problems. This led to concrete and tangible outputs including a concrete plan of action with time frame.
- The mobilisation of funds from unconventional sources through framing elephant conservation in its wider socio-economic context, as for example in raising the substantial funds required to repair infrastructure destroyed by jihadis whose destruction has ecosystem wide impacts through demonstrating the benefits for security and human livelihoods; and in capacity building within the DNEF to combat elephant poaching, and curbing illicit ivory trafficking.

Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against Logical Framework for Financial Year 2013-2014

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2012 - March 2013	Actions required/planned for next period
<p>Goal/Impact</p> <p>Effective contribution in support of the implementation of the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS), as well as related targets set by countries rich in biodiversity but constrained in resources.</p>		<p>CBNRM systems have been established in around two-thirds of the pastoral zones (i.e. 40% of the range) mostly in the north; in the areas to the north and west of the elephant range, and initiated in around 50% of the south of the elephant range by area, although more if measured by population.</p>	
<p>Purpose Communities manage human-elephant coexistence and elephants become an integral part of natural resource management (NRM) and support local livelihoods in the Gourma through the generation of long-term capacity at all levels of decision-making</p>	<p>Communities report a reduction in incidences of conflict.</p> <p>An intercommunal convention covering the whole of the elephant range enters law and protects elephant habitat.</p> <p>Pastoralist communities are implementing sustainable NRM that includes habitat protection and restoration.</p> <p>A participatory plan for agro-pastoral and agricultural communities is developed, and used to raise money for implementation.</p> <p>Projects & programmes working in the area include the consideration of elephants in their programmes.</p>	<p>The project has been prioritising working with the communities most vulnerable to conflict in the establishment of resource management systems: Banzena, Porte des Elephants (Boni) and (since 2007); the Wami-Masi area where elephant forest has been cleared for gardens.</p> <p>Government technical services have been included in the intercommunal conventions so the elephant migration route and key habitats are protected at commune level and harmonised across communes.</p> <p>The participatory plan has not been finalised (it is awaiting input from the Director Adjoint of DNEF who has been very busy in the post-conflict situation), however CBNRM in the south has moved ahead anyway, using the findings that will be summarised in the report.</p> <p>The project is continually monitoring the activities of others with regards the impact on the elephant range and invites them to meetings.</p>	<p>Continuing to work with the communities throughout the elephant range in implementing the next stage of resource management systems, elephant protection and including community reconciliation.</p> <p>The extension of vigilance cells throughout the elephant range to protect the elephants post-conflict.</p> <p>Establishing a radio-communications system for the brigades to be able to communicate with armed back-up.</p> <p>Moving towards the creation of 10 additional forester posts throughout the elephant range: five fixed and five mobile.</p>
<p>Output 1. A model is developed and implemented for the protection of the elephant range in pastoral areas that cover 60% of the elephant range.</p>	<p>Community structures established and active</p> <p>Training courses delivered, effectiveness evaluated (see</p>	<p>CBNRM systems have been established throughout the elephant range and beyond as described above and elsewhere</p> <p>Training was delivered to 465 individuals this year on implementation and the operation of community resource management committees and brigades (and 5 in the use of</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The integration of the 3 adjacent Karwassa communities into the Banzena process • Extension of model to remaining pastoral communities <p>(Partially funded by Darwin Initiative)</p>	<p>16,19&20)</p> <p>Reduction in incidences of harmful and illegal activities in project areas</p> <p>Reduction in humans & cattle at Banzena</p> <p>An increase in forest cover, healthy ecosystem indicator species, and game species at Banzena (longer term)</p> <p>Wider community aware and supportive of rules of resource use and acting accordingly</p> <p>Income for the community from charging outsiders for resource use</p>	<p>GPS).</p> <p>Less abusive cutting has been observed in these areas, and no fire in areas where firebreaks have been built.</p> <p>Despite the difficulties of the post-conflict situation, the number of cattle at Banzena was much reduced for most of the year down from over 50,000 in 2009 to 700-1,500 in 2013. However since February there has been a sharp increase due to forces already described and the MEP is working together with the DNEF to remedy the situation.</p> <p>The wider community is aware of the project and generally highly supportive, although ongoing effort is needed to reach the migratory herders and distant herd-owners.</p> <p>The systems to charge outsiders for resource use have not yet been implemented due to the sabotage of the boreholes.</p>
<p>1.1 Activity Community meetings to integrate Karwassa communities into the wider Banzena initiative for community NRM</p>		<p>Completed</p>
<p>1.2 Activity Training of the wider Banzena community management committees in resource management administration and record-keeping</p>		<p>Completed</p>
<p>1.3 Training of the Karwassa patrols in duties and monitoring</p>		<p>Completed</p>
<p>1.4 Operation of community-government patrols</p>		<p>Community-government patrols have been reinstated</p>
<p>1.5 Demonstration visits to other projects e.g. the PADES0 project in Sokolo where community NRM systems have been used to mediate agriculturalist-pastoralist conflict</p>		<p>Not deemed a priority this year</p>
<p>1.6 Training of the community management committees and patrols established in remaining pastoral areas</p>		<p>This continues to be developed as reported above</p>
<p>1.7 Radio broadcasts to inform wider communities of the new resource management systems</p>		<p>Most of the radio equipment has been destroyed by the jihadis meaning that we were only able to use one of the radio posts.</p>
<p>1.8 Evaluation of functioning of community resource management systems with high-ranking members of the DNEF</p>		<p>Completed, and the DNEF continues to become more and more engaged with the project</p>

1.9 International meeting to share findings and define conditions for which the models developed are appropriate		End of project if still an appropriate task
1.10 Final report & conference proceedings written, academic papers submitted		End of project if still an appropriate task
Output 2. A costed and phased participatory plan for the resolution of human-elephant conflict, whose implementation will serve as a model for the management of conflict in the agro-pastoral and agricultural communities found over 40% of the range (not funded by the Darwin Initiative although supports and feeds in to DI activities, and vice versa)	<p>A team of four to undertake:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-economic survey plus consultation of all communities using a combination of community meetings and household visits. • A mapped assessment of conflict • Production of plan on the basis of findings <p>Final community workshop to share the plan.</p>	The socio-economic survey has been completed and we are awaiting the report (see above), but the findings are already being used to establish CBNRM systems in the south of the elephant range.
Activity 2.1. Socio-economic study of the communities in the key conflict areas of the south and production of a participatory plan of action		The survey has been completed, the report is being finalised
Activity 2.2. Community workshop to share plan		The findings are already being used to establish CBNRM systems in the south of the elephant range
Output 3. The establishment of an inter-communal convention covering the whole elephant range (not funded by the Darwin Initiative although supports and feeds in to DI activities, and vice versa)	10 meetings (one per commune, followed by 3 of integration) to identify the elephant route and associated regulations, penalties, means of enforcement & integration with community systems of outputs 1 - 3.	Meetings have been held to include the government technical services and administration in decisions made during the conflict, to enable the finalisation of the three established inter-communal conventions.
Activity 3.1 Meetings held in each commune to identify the elephant migration route, key elephant areas, rules of resource use in these areas, plus the enforcement mechanisms		See above
Activity 3.2 Signature of overall convention covering the whole elephant range		Year 3
Output 4. Sustainable NRM (output 1) is supported by the establishment of community ecosystem protection initiatives such sylvo-pastoral or forest	<p>At least 5 areas of habitat are protected for regeneration.</p> <p>An additional 3 fire-breaks are built &</p>	<p>An additional 2 sylvo-pastoral reserves delimited, patrolled and entirely protected by firebreaks although these have not yet been GPSd and so we don't know the area</p> <p>An additional 792 km firebreaks built this year and these areas did not burn</p>

<p>protection zones that increase resources.</p> <p>(Linked to output 1 and partially funded by Darwin Initiative)</p>	<p>maintained each year</p> <p>Reduction in percentage of area burned.</p> <p>An increase in forest cover, healthy ecosystem indicator species, & game species (longer term)</p>	<p>At least 20 forests are protected from abusive cutting, exploitation and clearance by functioning community resource management systems including the axis from Feto Gassel to Masi, stretching just over 100km in the south of the elephant range.</p>
<p>Activity 4.1 Establishment of at least 5 habitat regeneration initiatives</p>		<p>The target of designating two additional sylvo-pastoral reserves was achieved.</p>
<p>Activity 4.2 Construction of 3 firebreaks each year to protect community sylvo-pastoral reserves; and maintenance of existing fire-breaks</p>		<p>An additional 792 km firebreaks built this year</p>
<p>Activity 4.1 Evaluation of ecosystem restoration initiatives.</p>		<p>This will occur at the end of the project</p>
<p>5. Elephant protection activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension of vigilance cells across the elephant range • Deployment of a second anti-poaching ranger post 	<p>Area of the elephant range covered by vigilance cells</p> <p>Number of vigilance cell hubs</p> <p>Operation of a second ranger post</p>	<p>Vigilance cells exist over around 75% of the elephant range, although at varying density of coverage. The project is in the process of recording and registering the members.</p> <p>A plan for substantial support to DNEF in the elephant range is being developed with ANPN using money donated by Warren Buffet for “combating elephant poaching, curbing illicit ivory trafficking and strengthening NR governance”</p>
<p>6. Kick-starting and catalysing a process to extend the reconciliation process to the local level; ensure aid agencies are aware of the implications for their activities; and ensure that reconstruction activities are conducted with awareness of their social and environmental impact</p>	<p>Attendees and outputs of two workshops:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-days for the Malian government national – local • 1 day resultant report presented to Mali’s financial and technical partners 	<p>The workshop was a great success in providing a space for Malians to discuss the post-conflict situation and concrete outputs were produced including a specific plan of action with time frame.</p> <p>A full report has been produced but has not yet been shared with the international community, due to lack of time to prepare and organise a meeting, in the face of the urgency in the Gourma.</p>

Annex 2 Project's full current logframe

Highlighted activity is unlikely to be performed due to the security situation

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<p>Goal: Effective contribution in support of the implementation of the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS), as well as related targets set by countries rich in biodiversity but constrained in resources.</p>			
<p>Sub-Goal: To ensure the historic migratory path of the Mali elephants is secure and unimpeded by human development, and that the elephants have stable access to the natural resources key to their survival – water and food – while avoiding human-elephant conflict.</p>	<p>Project outcomes and evaluations show that the elephant range is protected from development by intercommunal and local conventions; that these are enforced by the operation of community-government resource management systems, and supported by habitat restoration initiatives.</p>	<p>GIS analyses to show the proportion of key areas in elephant range covered by resource management plans explicitly including consideration of elephants, and quality of protection.</p> <p>Monitoring data and evaluation reports showing impact on the ecosystem and undesirable human activities.</p>	
<p>Purpose: Communities manage human-elephant coexistence and elephants become an integral part of natural resource management (NRM) and support local livelihoods in the Gourma through the generation of long-term capacity at all levels of decision-making</p>	<p>Communities report a reduction in incidences of conflict.</p> <p>An intercommunal convention covering the whole of the elephant range enters law and protects elephant habitat.</p> <p>Pastoralist communities are implementing sustainable NRM that includes habitat protection and restoration.</p> <p>A participatory plan for agro-pastoral and agricultural communities is developed, and used to raise money for implementation.</p> <p>Projects & programmes working in the area include the consideration of elephants in their programmes.</p>	<p>Project reports on community consultation, workshops, and functioning of community systems; results of socio-economic and conflict surveys; the plan for agro-pastoral and agricultural communities; and habitat protection activities and monitoring.</p> <p>The legal texts of local and intercommunal conventions, designations of sylvo-pastoral reserves (<i>Decret de classement</i> and <i>Cahier de charge</i>), and the documents constituting resource management structures are formally signed and endorsed (<i>Constitution d'Association</i>).</p>	<p>Post-conflict community division can be sufficiently overcome</p> <p>Continued strong support from national, regional and local government, and limited turn-over of personnel.</p> <p>Sustained interest and participation of the local communities.</p> <p>Good collaboration with the newly constituted committee managing the extension of the World Bank's PCVBG-E</p> <p>Funding is available for the duration of the project</p>

<p>Outputs (add or delete rows as necessary)</p> <p>1. A model is developed and implemented for the protection of the elephant range in pastoral areas that cover 60% of the elephant range.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The integration of the 3 adjacent Karwassa communities into the Banzena process • Extension of model to remaining pastoral communities 	<p>Community structures established and active</p> <p>Training courses delivered, effectiveness evaluated (see 16,19&20)</p> <p>Reduction in incidences of harmful and illegal activities in project areas</p> <p>Reduction in humans & cattle at Banzena</p> <p>An increase in forest cover, healthy ecosystem indicator species, and game species at Banzena (longer term)</p> <p>Wider community aware and supportive of rules of resource use and acting accordingly</p> <p>Income for the community from charging outsiders for resource use</p>	<p>Signed conventions and other legal texts.</p> <p>Project reports on meetings & workshops.</p> <p>Surveys to assess understanding and take-up to form the basis of future training.</p> <p>Surveys to assess understanding of wider community</p> <p>Transect data from Banzena (already established)</p> <p>Management committee records</p>	<p>Some of the remaining pastoral communities have expressed interest, but not all communities have yet been approached.</p>
<p>2. A costed and phased participatory plan for the resolution of human-elephant conflict, whose implementation will serve as a model for the management of conflict in the agro-pastoral and agricultural communities found over 40% of the range.</p>	<p>A team of four to undertake:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-economic survey plus consultation of all communities using a combination of community meetings and household visits. • A mapped assessment of conflict • Production of plan on the basis of findings <p>Final community workshop to share the plan.</p>	<p>Report of findings plus a detailed and costed plan of action, that will serve as the basis for future fund-raising</p> <p>Report of the final workshop</p>	<p>That inter-ethnicity rivalry does not obstruct the process.</p>
<p>3. The establishment of an inter-communal convention covering the whole elephant range.</p>	<p>10 meetings (one per commune, followed by 3 of integration) to identify the elephant route and associated regulations, penalties, means of enforcement & integration with community systems of outputs 1 - 3.</p>	<p>Project reports of the engagement process documenting the meetings involved.</p> <p>2 signed intercommunal conventions, plus 1 covering the whole of the range</p>	<p>That the enthusiasm for subsequent inter-communal conventions will be as keen as for the existing one.</p>

<p>4. Sustainable NRM (output 1) is supported by the establishment of community ecosystem protection initiatives such sylvo-pastoral or forest protection zones that increase resources.</p>	<p>At least 5 areas of habitat are protected for regeneration.</p> <p>An additional 3 fire-breaks are built & maintained each year</p> <p>Reduction in percentage of area burned.</p> <p>An increase in forest cover, healthy ecosystem indicator species, & game species (longer term)</p>	<p>Boundaries are mapped using GPS</p> <p>Project visits & reports using data from completed patrol forms, and simple transect data</p> <p>Periodic photographs taken from fixed positions</p>	<p>That there are individuals willing to take responsibility for these within the community.</p> <p>That government foresters are able to undertake the monitoring involved.</p>
<p>5. Elephant protection activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension of vigilance cells across the elephant range • Deployment of a second anti-poaching ranger post 	<p>Area of the elephant range covered by vigilance cells</p> <p>Number of vigilance cell hubs</p> <p>Operation of a second ranger post</p>	<p>Information gathered by vigilance cells</p> <p>Activities undertaken by vigilance cells</p> <p>Action resulting from operations of vigilance cells</p>	<p>That money can be raised for these</p>
<p>6. Kick-starting and catalysing a process to extend the reconciliation process to the local level; ensure aid agencies are aware of the implications for their activities; and ensure that reconstruction activities are conducted with awareness of their social and environmental impact</p>	<p>Attendees and outputs of two workshops:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-days for the Malian government national – local • 1 day resultant report presented to Mali's financial and technical partners 	<p>Measures of engagement during the workshops (workshop reports)</p> <p>Reconciliation process taken to local level and involving local communities</p> <p>Mali's financial and technical partners including these considerations in their activities</p>	<p>This is an ambitious activity, but even raising awareness of the issues is a positive outcome.</p> <p>Receptivity of Mali's financial and technical partners</p>

Activities (details in workplan)

- 1.1 Community meetings to integrate Karwassa communities into the wider Banzena initiative for community NRM
- 1.2 Training of the wider Banzena community management committees in resource management administration and record-keeping
- 1.3 Training of the Karwassa patrols in duties and monitoring
- 1.4 Operation of community-government patrols
- 1.5 Demonstration visits to other projects e.g. the PADESO project in Sokolo where community NRM systems have been used to mediate agriculturalist-pastoralist conflict
- 1.6 Training of the community management committees and patrols established in remaining pastoral areas
- 1.7 Radio broadcasts to inform wider communities of the new resource management systems
- 1.8 Evaluation of functioning of community resource management systems with high-ranking members of the DNEF
- 1.9 International meeting to share findings and define conditions for which the models developed are appropriate
- 1.10 Final report & conference proceedings written, academic papers submitted
- 2.1 Socio-economic study of the communities in the key conflict areas of the south and production of a participatory plan of action
- 2.2 Community workshop to share plan
- 3.1 Meetings held in each commune to identify the elephant migration route, key elephant areas, rules of resource use in these areas, plus the enforcement mechanisms
- 3.2 Signature of overall convention covering the whole elephant range
- 3.3 Inclusion of government technical services and administration in the convention process in order to finalise the legal texts
- 4.1 Establishment of at least 5 habitat regeneration initiatives
- 4.2 Construction of 3 firebreaks each year to protect community sylvo-pastoral reserves; and maintenance of existing fire-breaks
- 4.3 Evaluation of ecosystem restoration initiatives
- 5.1 Extension of vigilance cells across the elephant range
- 5.2 Deployment of a second anti-poaching ranger post
- 6.1 A three day workshop for the Malian government at all levels ranging from Ministers to local councils to chart a way forward regarding community reconciliation, aid and reconstruction at the community level in the Gourma
- 6.2 Half or one day meeting to present the results to Mali's financial and technical partners

Annex 3 Standard Measures - Table 1 Project Standard Output Measures

Code No.	Description	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Total to date	No. planned for Y2	Total planned
6A	Number of people receiving training	94 + 107	470	671	100	295
6B	Number of training weeks provided this includes training funded by other donors	14.5	62	76.5	12	36
8	No weeks spent by UK project staff in country (Impossible to travel to project area, but travelled to Bamako to review progress etc with Field manager and work with project partners)	0	3	3	10	30
10	No guides/manuals	0	1	1	0	2
11A	No papers in peer-reviewed journals	0	1	1	0	1
11B	No papers to be submitted	0	0	0	0	2-3
12A	No databases	0	0	0	0	1
14A	No international conferences to be organised	0	0	0	0	1
14A	No national workshops to be organised these will be reduced in number as the need is greatest in the Gourma	0	1	1	3	12
14B	No conferences/ workshops attended	1	4	5	1	2-3
15	No.local/ national press releases in host country & UK	3	0	3	4	17
17A	No. dissemination networks established	0	0	0	0	1
18A	Number of local TV programmes/features in host country(ies)	0	1	1	0	0
19	No. national & local radio interviews in host country & UK	12	5	16	12	40
20	Laptop and printer plus an additional £72,000 raised for the anti-poaching unit (not Darwin)	£72,000				£9,790
23	Value of resources raised from other sources (£)	273,720	328,300	602,020	-	-
New Project specific measures						
	Kms of firebreaks constructed	925	792	1717		
	Area of pasture protected (to be determined when GPS can be used)					
	No. additional areas of reserve pasture	2	3	5	2	5
	Talks delivered and disseminated on YouTube	0	2	2	0	0

Table 2 Publications

All are free of charge

Detail	Publishers	Available from
Peer-reviewed journal papers		
Canney, S. & N. Ganame. <i>Engaging youth and communities: Protecting the Mali elephants from war</i> . Nature and Faune, 28 (1) 51-55.	FAO	http://www.fao.org/docrep/019/as290e/as290e.pdf
Reports		
Ganame, N. & S. Canney. 2014. <i>Reconciliation and post - conflict reconstruction in the Gourma region of Mali: towards a process to identify & implement the measures required for societal and environmental resilience</i> . The Mali Elephant Project, Bamako Mali - Oxford UK - Boulder USA - Chester NS *	The Mali Elephant Project	Author/The WILD Foundation
Briefing papers		
Canney, S. <i>Regional Security, Community Stabilization & Natural Resource Protection: Peace, Reconstruction & Elephants for Mali</i> , 2014	The Mali Elephant Project	Author/The WILD Foundation
Canney, S. <i>Empowering Communities to Conserve the Mali Elephants in Times of War and Peace</i> , 2014.		
Canney, S. & N. Ganame. <i>Development of draft urgent measures to address the upsurge of poaching of the Africa Elephant and illegal ivory trade: comments from The Mali Elephant Project for the African Elephant Summit</i> , 2013		
Canney, S. <i>Preventing the development of a West African ivory route: a model of community & government empowerment protecting the Mali elephants during war and peace</i> . Paper prepared for the London International Trafficking Symposium held at the Zoological Society of London, 2014		
Talks by the Project Leader – PPT presentations		
<i>Elephant conservation in Mali: engaging with a socio-ecological system</i> for the International Congress in Ecology, London, August 2013	The Mali Elephant Project	The author
<i>The Mali elephants: GIS & conserving an iconic elephant population</i> , King's College, London, January 2014.		
<i>Empowering Communities to Conserve the Mali Elephants in Times of War and Peace</i> , The for the Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group, Washington, January 2014		

Continued on next page

Newsletters		
Eleaf, the newsletter of The WILD Foundation, 2013	The WILD Foundation	http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs163/1102694216162/archive/1113288028120.html
Canney, S. <i>Protecting elephants through promoting peace</i> . The Darwin Initiative newsletter, January 2014	Defra- Darwin Initiative	http://darwin.defra.gov.uk/newsletter/Issue10February2014newsletterFINAL.PDF
Blog entries		
"Why do the local people protect the elephants?" February 2014	The Mali Elephant Project	http://www.wild.org/blog/why-do-the-local-people-protect-the-elephants/
Protecting elephants through promoting peace, November 21,2013		http://www.wild.org/blog/protecting-elephants-through-promoting-peace/
Camels: the key to sustainable elephant conservation in the Gourma, September 25,2013		http://www.wild.org/blog/camels-the-key-to-sustainable-elephant-conservation-in-the-gourma/
Post-war in Mali, June 4,2013		http://www.wild.org/blog/post-war-mali/
Other		
Interview with the Project Leader by Mongabay published in their e-newsletter in March 2014	Mongabay	http://news.mongabay.com/2014/0402-hance-canney-elephants.html
You Tube videos by the Project Leader		
Tedx talk <i>Punch Above Your Weight: the case of Mali Elephant Conservation</i>	TedxVail	http://bit.ly/KwOrxd
Presentation at the 10 th World Wilderness Congress, Salamanca, October 2013.	The Wild Foundation	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LCrCa1YQ90

Annex 4 Onwards – supplementary material (optional but encouraged as evidence of project achievement)

This includes photos; the executive summary of the Reconciliation, aid and reconstruction report; and the report summarizing the findings of our study into the displaced people and their motives for leaving (this also forms an annexe in the Reconciliation report)



Fire-break construction and the finished fire-break at Koriokouna



Brigade & vigilance network at Daka-Amadou; community meeting at Bambara Maoude



Preparatory meeting with local services techniques (forestry, agriculture, herding, communities, planning)



Intercommunal meeting to integrate services techniques in community decisions taken during the conflict
Annual Report template with notes 2014

MINISTRY FOR REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION, DECENTRALISATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT
MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SANITATION

Reconciliation and post-conflict reconstruction in the Gourma region of Mali

Towards a process to identify & implement the measures
required for societal and environmental resilience

Nomba Ganamé and Susan Canney

The Mali Elephant Project
a joint initiative of The WILD Foundation &
The International Conservation Fund of Canada



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Citation:

Ganame, N. & S. Canney. 2014. *Reconciliation and post-conflict reconstruction in the Gourma region of Mali: towards a process to identify & implement the measures required for societal and environmental resilience*. The Mali Elephant Project, Bamako Mali - Oxford UK - Boulder USA - Chester NS.

Avant propos

"How can emergency humanitarian aid, indispensable in the post conflict phase, rapidly relieve present suffering, without exacerbating imbalances which are already threatening a viable future?"

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Executive summary

The Gourma of Mali lies within the regions of Mopti, Timbuktu and Gao. Its recent history has been marked by several crises. This is a society which has been devastated by conflict (including a year of occupation at the hands of separatist and jihadist forces before the armed intervention). Gourma society was already complex, bearing the scars of past rebellions, procedures for resettling refugees, and other operations which have not always taken into account the area's socio-cultural situation (multiethnicity, strained social relations over natural resources and strategically situated wells, the movement of people and livestock).

Important strategic questions follow concerning how to manage reconciliation, reconstruction, the return of refugees, and development more generally, without reigniting tensions or sowing the seeds of future problems which would be difficult to control. Nonetheless, all those involved (donors, NGOs, and possibly some UN agencies) are currently working on projects for "reconciliation".

It is in this context that this workshop is being held to share observations on the complex and delicate nature of the social circumstances and to encourage all participants to take these into account when they act.

A workshop was held on the 21st, 22nd and 23rd of May 2013 by the Ministry of Regional Administration, Decentralisation and Land Management and the Ministry for the Environment and Sanitation, with the methodological and financial support of the Mali Elephant Project¹. The workshop was entitled, "*A national workshop for reflection and the sharing of information on post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction in the Gourma of Mali*".

The goal of this workshop was to examine the deterioration of social relations since the armed conflict which has shaken the north of Mali in general and the Gourma in particular; to analyse and identify the measures and actions required for post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction in the zone of the Gourma.

The participants focused on three main issues:

- the deterioration of the social fabric which underlies all the current problems and the difficulty of reconstruction, and which must be addressed if all future interventions are to succeed,
- the insecurity which stems from the absence of government structures,
- the lack of understanding of the complexity of the social context, which is reflected in a confused response.

To help to address this complexity, a classification of displaced persons according to the motive for their displacement has been developed and discussed in depth. The eight categories are as follows:

¹ With thanks to The WILD Foundation, the International Conservation Fund of Canada and the UK Government's Darwin Initiative

- People who have remained behind despite the violence and insecurity
- Those who flee due to fear of reprisals owing to skin colour or links with central power.
- Those managing risks through the opportunistic quest for refugee status.
- Livestock herders who hope to come by land and natural resources and/or infrastructure for themselves after the conflict in the context of reconstruction (the return of refugees and displaced persons).
- Those undertaking commerce with armed groups and illegal trafficking.
- Those submitting to (e.g. employees), and collaborating with armed groups (combatants, guides, cooks,...).
- Those providing accommodation for armed groups and cooperating with the creation of the new order, particularly through the application of Sharia law.
- People who have specialised in forging civil documents (passports and cards).

Furthermore, the eight social categories can be regrouped into:

- those who were easy to integrate,
- refugees,
- displaced persons fleeing from the law.

Different considerations are needed in the case of each in order to achieve their effective reintegration and reconciliation. There can also be a spectrum within these groups -- and in particular the displaced persons -- meaning that integration can take many forms; in order to be effective, such integration should be adapted to people with due regard for the context. This means that local communities must be involved in reconciliation, and that their involvement must be a precondition for all interventions.

The process of defining a plan of action has shown that reconciliation, aid and reconstruction must involve local communities right from the beginning, and must take place at a local level to direct basic interventions accurately.

Moreover, this process of defining a plan of action has proved to be extremely valuable for helping participants to gain an insight into the situation and to identify how piecemeal interventions could support and reinforce each other.

In summary, the workshop recommended that:

1. Reconciliation, within and between communities, is a prerequisite for ensuring the social, economic and environmental sustainability of aid and reconstruction initiatives. We have used a study of the situation in Gourma to illustrate the fact that the reconstruction of local communities must be a principal aim for numerous reasons, notably:
 - a. Local means of subsistence demand healthy ecosystems, and depend on the availability of natural resources. Community cohesion is necessary to avoid overexploiting resources and to protect/replenish resources. In addition, development which places an added burden on the environment -- and therefore on already fragile local means of subsistence -- must be avoided.

- b. To minimise the risk of aid falling into the wrong hands or creating/exacerbating social imbalance.
2. Reconstructing local communities will also help to improve local, national and international security by minimising the risk of repercussions beyond Mali's borders. Young men who are unable to return to their communities and who have nowhere else to go risk becoming radicalised and/or engaging in criminal activity.
3. Local authorities must play an integral role in post-conflict reconciliation, aid and reconstruction, to ensure that these efforts are well targeted and to obtain the desired results. Their knowledge can aid the process of:
 - a. Disarmament - they know who has weapons and can help in recovering them,
 - b. Compensation - they are familiar with the pre-conflict situation, and can help to ensure that compensation is fair,
 - c. Redress, reintegration and bringing to justice -- they know who has committed what crimes, and can therefore help to bring the guilty to justice. They can also help to determine the needs of displaced persons who wish to return to their communities.
4. Such a huge task requires a coordinated effort and therefore an additional aim of this workshop was to sketch out a plan to help coordinate the efforts made by many parties with different agendas. It was to help official programmes and individual actions to support each other. For example, regarding the priorities for integrated infrastructure, the plan of action emphasises the importance of reconstructing government buildings to allow for the return of government structures, rather than creating new settlements, which were deemed undesirable by the participants.

For the next steps, the workshop recommends:

- Passing the conclusions of the present workshop on to the Commission for Dialogue and Reconciliation (CDR) for utilisation;
- Sharing the results of the present workshop at regional, local and communal levels across Gourma;
- Sharing information from the present workshop with the PTF and the ministries involved.

Annexe I - Social bonds and peace in Gourma: a priority shared by all those working in the current emergency?

Nomba Ganame, Field Manager of the Mali Elephant Project & Representative of The WILD Foundation in Mali, April 2013

I Introduction

State fragility, unchecked population growth, mass youth unemployment, enduring poverty, exposure to unbridled economic globalisation, urbanization and rural exodus, criminal economic networks, the geostrategic pursuit of neighbouring or powerful states, governments' ill use of scant resources and mineral profits, economic extroversion and abnormal borders inherited from colonisation, separatist claims, insufficient access to education, exposure to extremist ideologies and movements : factors liable to ignite armed conflicts are in no short supply in Africa. But once a conflict is in motion, it becomes extremely difficult to put a end to it. More difficult still is the return to a prosperous peace.

Not only do armed conflicts destroy the lives of those exposed to them, combatants and local civilians alike; they also disrupt the fragile balances which existed before. In many cases they devastate the economic environment, and the social and political balances of the areas affected. The insecurity created by residual banditry lastingly compromises the return of certain sensitive economic activities such as tourism. The displacement of persons and intercommunal tensions disrupt balances – and patiently developed rules - which enable rural people to make cautious use of fragile resources for their livelihoods. From now on, the exhaustion of resources and the instability of populations risk exacerbating one another in a vicious circle.

How can emergency humanitarian aid -- indispensable in the post conflict phase -- rapidly relieve present suffering, without exacerbating imbalances which are already threatening a viable future? Such is the question which is going to be asked - which has already been asked -- in the Malian (and Burkinabé) Gourma.

II The Gourma : balance disrupted in the management of natural resources and open wounds in society

The Gourma region lies at the centre of the interlinking spaces which form the Sahel belt. It is an area – a crossroads, particularly for transhumance, which is vital for the economic life of the surrounding regions. It is a site which welcomes people already damaged by great poverty. Furthermore it is a protected space for Sahel flora and fauna, including the elephants of West Africa, whose conservation is itself a national issue.

The armed conflict in north Mali has impacted heavily on the Gourma region. The following effects are to be noted:

- direct victims of the conflict, both combatants and civilians : deaths, disabling injuries, trauma...

- population displacement (refugees and displaced persons); with the resulting impact on the living conditions and health of these people wherever they find themselves, as well as on the areas of departure and arrival, and on the areas traversed;
- socio-ethnic tensions and conflicts reawakened or induced by the conflict itself -- these owing to the stances and strategies adopted by each side during the different stages of the conflict;
- banditry and residual insecurity;
- strain on and/or destruction of natural resources which are indispensable to the ways of life of the "local" populations (both resident and nomadic);
- the destruction of protected natural resources;

From what we have been able to observe while the armed groups were present and after they fled following the Franco-Malian intervention, it appears that population displacement is a key factor in destabilisation. According to the mayors of sixteen (16) of Gourma's communes: the *cercles* of Douentza and Rharous, the number of displaced persons and refugees borders on 100,000 out of a total population of 2,798,291.

As for those who have remained in the area, they are confronted with insecurity in a context of generalised uncertainty and instability. This has led them to develop short-term survival strategies, individual and collective, while they wait for the situation to improve and for the view ahead to become clearer.

More specifically, strategies developed by certain communities and ethnic groups are threatening historically established relations of coexistence. And the abuses committed by some representatives of communities and socio-ethnic groups are having destructive effects on how collectives are perceived, and are steadily poisoning relations between the socio-ethnic groups. This harmful dynamic of weakening social bonds, besides threatening the coexistence of current populations, also poses a threat to future generations: Gourma's scarce and fragile natural resources depend on their careful management which can only be implemented whilst peaceful social relations exist between different communities whose interests, especially their short-term ones, diverge. Failing that, and bearing in mind the natural environment's lack of resilience, a serious and lasting deterioration of the area's productive potential is looming. The survival and future of thousands of Gourma's children, obliged to succeed the present generation, depends on it. For if they are malnourished today, these children will be of no "use" tomorrow.

As is often the case, when an armed conflict erupts, environmental concerns are left behind: completely ignored while the conflict is going on, they are often hardly a priority in the post-conflict phase. So it is that in the wake of Gourma's huge population displacement towards areas considered to be more peaceful, thousands of hectares of pasture left behind have fallen prey to brush fires. The wildlife, including that of Gourma's partially protected elephant reserve, has not been spared.

More than 245 km² of pasture land has been burnt in the communes of Gossi and Mondoro, and 102 km² in the commune of Haribomo.

A significant portion of the wildlife, which was already damaged owing to climactic instabilities, has been slaughtered. This includes thousands of wild geese and hundreds of dorcas gazelles.

Africa's most endangered elephant and hippopotamus populations have fallen victim to massacre by rebel groups (7 elephants out of 344, and 3 hippopotamuses). This figure, by itself, might appear relatively low, but it symbolises a dam having just given way: what will happen if local populations no longer respect the ban on slaughtering these animals?

The challenge is to work simultaneously towards healing the wounds of past conflict -- with the necessary urgency -- and towards preventing further conflicts by demonstrating the requisite prudence. We should acquaint ourselves with the worst -- which has already come to pass -- so that we can remedy its destructive effects. It is equally indispensable, given the signs of tensions already present, that we should use foresight to avoid further social conflicts being triggered in this area of Gourma, whose resources are vital to the poor populations who live there.

III The findings

The method for gathering information

The information presented below was gathered in the course of regular discussions between Gourma farming communities and ourselves; these communities are our partners in working out how to protect the elephants and natural resources. During individual and small group interviews, we sought information relating to different armed groups: who they are, their aims, their motivation, the messages which they are circulating at local community level, their interests, and their behaviour towards inhabitants. These interviews were completed by telephone conversations, with refugees and displaced persons, but also with people with whom we had been in contact previously and who, during the conflict, had become involved with armed groups.

In some villages, established sites of factions and nomadic camps accessible during the conflict in Gourma, we had conversations over tea with village chiefs, prominent figures, and young members of self-defence groups formed in villages in response to nocturnal banditry.

The numerical data was gathered over the telephone from mayors and communal counsellors who had either stayed put despite the conflict or who had left their communes for more peaceful towns, keeping themselves informed all the while. We must therefore approach these figures warily because those responsible for them are currently also focussing on emergency issues and reconstruction. The attention given to priority post-conflict issues remains insufficient.

General findings on the reasons for population displacements

When the conflict broke out, and during the military operations, there were huge community displacements in all the areas concerned. The effects of the conflict together with the extreme poverty of the affected populations and the displacements for diverse motives, have concerned all ethnic groups. Below, we propose a classification of displaced persons according to the motive for their displacement.

	Categories and motives for displacement	Categories of people concerned	Thousands of people
1	Fear of reprisals owing to skin colour or links with central power. Estimated number: 29,000	Unaware of the outcome of the conflict, these people preferred to take safety precautions. In particular these are people who have links with or who work with central power. This group includes prominent figures, elected officials, local project officers and NGO personnel, tourist guides and members of self-defence teams created when the conflict broke out and after the Gourma area and its major centres (communes, <i>cercles</i> and region) were abandoned by the administration and security services. These people hurriedly fled their homes without any belongings or material assets. Their goods, left behind, were often stolen by incoming armed groups as well as by young people from the local area.	29
2	Managing risks and the opportunistic quest for refugee status. Estimated number: 58,000.	These families have experience of conflict and post-conflict situations (the rebellion of the 1980s and 1990s) : they know that in leaving the area under the pretext of the war, they have a chance of benefitting from the advantages of refugee status (donations from NGOs, UN agencies and States). The strategy involves the majority of the family going to a refugee centre, leaving behind the able-bodied young. These young people keep the family goods safe, pursue economic activities if possible, and, in certain cases, become involved in organised banditry. "We don't put all our eggs in one basket," we were told by one family head who had fled Gourma when the conflict broke out.	58
3	Those who hope to come by land and natural resources and/or infrastructure for themselves after the conflict in the context of reconstruction (the return of refugees and displaced persons). Estimated number: 500	These families left their livestock in the care of shepherds from Bella and Rhymaibé for the most part. Animals are stolen, sometimes by those who are supposed to be looking after them, sometimes by rebel groups. After the conflict the livestock owners will profit from the support of the reconstruction to claim their animals which were stolen or lost following military operations. The claims will be made in several forms : <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to the State, they will declare that they have lost everything during the conflict and will claim subsidies to replenish their livestock. In the Gossi commune some large livestock owners have already spread the word that they have lost a significant number of animals. 2. to the Cooperation and Development partners they will maintain that the soldiers killed everything during the military operations and will request that there be projects for replenishing livestock. 	0.5

		<p>3. from the NGOs who will be involved in the reconstruction, they will claim support under the pretext that they have lost everything in their absence.</p> <p>4. they will also claim from the farmers who were responsible for looking after the animals, because (they will say) the former were complicit in the animals' theft.</p>	
4	Commerce with armed groups and illegal trafficking. Estimated number: 1500	Chiefly young people who – once the conflict had begun – reverted to selling trafficked or stolen produce (vehicles, weapons, drugs) and, in particular, goods freely distributed by humanitarian workers. These young people collaborate closely with armed groups and bandits.	1.5
5	Submitting to (employees) and compromising with armed groups (combatants, guides, chefs,...). Estimated number: 7500	<p>These people have committed or been involved in all manner of misdeeds such as :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. armed robbery 2. the theft of 4X4 vehicles 3. the theft of animals 4. the theft of goods from traders and hauliers 5. the rape of women <p>Young workers from the majority of communities fall into this category</p>	7.5
6	Providing accommodation for armed groups and cooperating with the creation of the new order, particularly through the application of Sharia law. Estimated number: 5000	<p>Often teachers, Koranic pupils and imams. Some have publicly whipped and amputated the arms or legs of victims who like themselves, belong to the local population. Others have made themselves enforcers of the new order: the obligation to wear the Islamic veil for women, the prohibition of music and cigarettes, forced marriages,...</p> <p>They are teachers and prominent figures from diverse communities.</p>	5 ?
Total estimated			100.5

Reversals of allegiance, opportunism, the renewal of survival strategies

On the 17th January 2012, the MNLA begin military operations in the Kidal area. Mali's armed forces focus on the areas of Gao and Timbuktu. On the 1st March 2012 the MNLA have possession of the town of Gao. On the 4th March, the leaders of the MNLA enter the Gourma region along the Gao – Gossi axis with the support of its members² residing there.

² Some Touaregs and Tamasheqs who share distant origins with the people of Kidal.

Very quickly, young people and some of Gourma's community leaders, through ethnic solidarity, join with the MNLA. Certain young people of the area are entrusted with positions of responsibility. And so, from March to June 2012, or six (6) months, the MNLA group reigns supreme over the Kidal, Gao and Timbuktu regions, including the whole of Malian Gourma.

At the end of June 2012, the MUJAO Islamists and Ansar Dine hunt down the MNLA combatants. The MNLA leaders abandon the areas they hitherto controlled and leave behind them their young contingent who, disorientated, are faced with the local people whose relationships with them have drastically deteriorated. From now on they must hide in the most thickly wooded areas around ponds and the relics of Gourma's forests. They then give themselves over to pillaging the belongings of farmers, shepherds and traders. Seeing that circumstances are not evolving in the MNLA's favour, most of them decide to join the MUJAO Islamist groups and Ansar Dine.

These Islamists, who are apparently better organised and have greater financial means than the MNLA separatists, decide to motivate the local youths by providing them with greater means. Thus all able-bodied young people who join forces with them are equipped with a weapon. In addition, a salary is offered to every young person who agrees to join the Islamist group (15,000 FCFA/day for a single man ; 25,000 FCFA/day for a married man).

Moreover, in all the occupied territories, a bonus of 50,000 FCFA is granted to every person who provides information which is useful for the operations of the Islamist group. The most sought-after information includes:

- places where cigarettes and alcohol are sold ;
- people who smoke and consume alcohol ;
- people who have links to Mali's armed forces or to the authorities ;
- people who work or have links with whites ;
- places where the belongings of civil servants, project officers and NGO personnel, and Catholics have been stowed ;
- all locations of sacred sites.

It is in this context that, from the 1st July to the 25th December 2012, nearly all the large villages, factions and established sites, camps and significant settlements of Gourma are occupied by armed Islamists. In each principal town of the commune or *cercle*, an Islamist post is created. Each post is manned by an Islamist assisted by several deputies. In certain settlements sheltering Koranic teachers, the latter play the role of deputy. In other villages it is the Koranic pupils who assume this duty. Recruited local youths oversee the movement of people, carrying out patrols to monitor the coming and going of vehicles.

It now appears that all the means which Islamist groups have placed at the disposal of their local collaborators are contributing towards controlling and oppressing the local people. The situation is becoming almost unbearable and many of those who did not want to leave their homes previously now decide to do so.

On the 7th January 2013, prompted by certain Koranic teachers, the Islamists decide to march on Mopti. The Ngymignama village, a crossroads between Douentza and Boré, is used as a stop-off place en route to capturing Mopti. Some Koranic teachers decide to provide combatants composed solely of young Koranic pupils.

On the 8th January 2013 there is a bloody clash between the Islamists and the Malian army. Late afternoon on the 9th January the Islamists occupy the town of Kona situated 55km from Mopti, the principal town of the 5th region. On the 10th January 2013, French military aircrafts intervene and block the progression of the Islamist groups. Then begins the reconquest of territory by Malian troops and their allies.

IV The problem posed

Regular expeditions to the principal towns of communes and certain large villages and established sites of Gourma factions (notably the communes of Bambara-Maoudé, Korarou, Inadiatafane, Gossi, Hombori, Boni, Diaptodji and the villages and established sites of Karwassa, Banzena, Kazey-Kazey, Dimamou, Sartatane, Tinhabou, N'Daki, Ebanguilmalène, Serma, Dalla and Lenga) have allowed for an appreciation of just how discontented they are with one another after the way each of them behaved from the beginning of the conflict onwards.

Discussions with certain local figures of responsibility have highlighted the breakdown in relations between socio-ethnic groups and the consequences of these for the future : **currently everything is moving towards a severe crisis of coexistence between communities and ethnic groups in Gourma.**

Today, with military operations being carried out in the areas affected by the conflict, those directly or indirectly involved with the rebel groups find themselves in an untenable social and economic position. With the gradual return of the administration they are, on the one hand, rejected by civilian populations and, on the other, sought after by soldiers and security forces since some of them are still in possession of arms. Where will they go, how will they behave, what use will they make of their weapons?

Young adults who have been seen carrying weapons by local people, and who are afraid of having to answer for their deeds, have no other alternative but to flee inhabited areas. Some have been able to escape from the region; others are condemned to wander about the bush. Since the 10th January 2013 they have been engaging in thievery and banditry on the different main roads, robbing travellers and itinerant traders in order to survive, and going as far as using their weapons in the process. Local shepherds and transhumants, who must regularly visit the perennial waterholes surrounded by pasture land, are exposed to threat by these armed youths. What will become of these youths after the conflict?

In certain communes of Gourma, there are social groups who lay claim to being the first people to have developed common paths; these are notably the founders of villages, the traditional Songhaï chiefdoms of Gossi, Hombori and Gandamia; and the traditional Fula chiefdoms around Boni and Kanioumé,... Despite the conflict and its accompanying violence, this group has remained calm. However, they now consider the displaced persons (who have fled Gourma) to be foreigners who do not care about the future of the region. Will the return of displaced persons in this context not create an explosive situation?

Examples of testimonies which we have gathered:

A traditional chief, from a founding lineage, on the return of displaced persons: « Flee to go where? It is impossible for us to leave our homeland in the hands of strangers and our doomed children. Those people, they stay if things go well and leave if they don't. In all circumstances, we are condemned to remain here. The people and families who have decided to leave have done so because they have something to be guilty about or because they have hidden intentions. History will be the judge. What is certain is that we will never let them have what they want in this region, not after the misfortune with which we have been afflicted. »

A traditional authority: « those who have committed dishonourable acts and their families are well known to all of us. We shall see what happens once this hot wind which has smitten us all has passed. »

A project leader: « I know perfectly well who was behind my vehicle being taken by rebel groups; his family are also well-known. If the army does nothing I will never forgive it. If I die before him, my children know him, and they will never let it go; this was decided at a family meeting. »

A soldier who was present in Aguelhok in January 2012 : « I was an eyewitness when my comrades, all 135 young soldiers, with their arms tied behind their backs, were disembowelled and had their throats cut where they stood. My father was burned alive during the events of 1991. This means that I no longer fear anything in this life. Those people and their accomplices will pay for what they have done. »

To facilitate a social and economic development process incorporating the management of land and natural resources in the regions affected by the conflict, it is urgent that a dialogue should be held within - and between - the different communities and ethnic groups in the aim of reconciling them and strengthening their social bonds.

Checklist for submission

	Check
Is the report less than 10MB? If so, please email to Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk putting the project number in the Subject line.	√
Is your report more than 10MB? If so, please discuss with Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line.	N/A
Have you included means of verification? You need not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	√
Do you have hard copies of material you want to submit with the report? If so, please make this clear in the covering email and ensure all material is marked with the project number.	N/A
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	√ Nomba Ganame
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	√
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