

Darwin Initiative Main/Post/D+ Project Half Year Report (Due 31st October 2017)

Project reference	22-019
Project title	Supporting community conserved areas in Uganda for biodiversity and livelihoods
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Uganda
Lead organisation	Fauna & Flora International
Partner(s)	ECO Uganda, Nature Uganda
Project leader	Asuma Stephen
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	HYR3 October 2017
Project website/blog/social media etc.	www.fauna-flora.org

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end September).

1.1 Carry out ecosystem services assessments at 3 sites using TESSA and GRACE and other tools - Completed as previously reported.

1.2 Publish ecosystem services reports and promulgate through community meetings, seminars with local and national government bodies, cultural institutions and other stakeholders

The ecosystem services assessments and household survey reports that had been previously shared have been very valuable during meetings/workshops held this period to validate the five Community Conserved Areas (CCA) management plans and other stakeholder meetings, e.g. the CCA forum, as they helped to explain the status of the natural resources in the CCAs and the situation and viewpoints of the households. Over this reporting period, we also reviewed the reports and incorporated new information gathered over the last six months in preparation for a more formal publication of the assessment reports and drawing policy level lessons on the CCA approach. This output will be shared with all partners and stake holders in Quarter 4.

1.3 Develop and publish site-specific, locally appropriate CCA management plans

The five CCA management plans for the five CCAs (Minziilo, Kanabulemu, Gwanda, Bwamijja and Makanaga) were finalized through validation workshops for each CCA. The five validation workshops were attended by a total of 1050 members(595M; 455F) drawn from a range of stakeholder categories including relevant Ministries of Tourism and Wildlife, Water and Environment, Agriculture and Fisheries and Gender, Culture and Social Development. Also present were government agencies like Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and National Forestry Authority (NFA) and local political and technical leaders at the Sub county and District Levels. The five management plans have been approved at the respective sub county levels. The next step is obtaining endorsement at the respective district councils, which will be pursued before the end of the project.

1.4 Support UWA to forward District Council resolutions and CCA management plans to the Minister for Wildlife and Tourism for legal gazettment

As reported in the Y2 annual report, it was established that the CCA management mechanisms involved several Ministries beyond the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife where UWA lies. The CCA forum committee, constituted by all the relevant Ministries, e.g. Ministry of Water and Environment, Departments and Agencies e.g. NFA and UWA recommended that the CCA management plans be approved by the District Councils. Approval at this level, will give the plans sufficient legal basis for operating until a national CCA policy is developed and gazetted. As reported under 1.3, this process has been partially achieved. UWA therefore took part in the process of reviewing and validating the management plans at community level.

1.5 Support communities to work with District Councils to make resolutions to effect the gazetting of 3 CCAs –

All the five CCAs have been approved by the respective three sub county councils over this period under review. The project worked with the Best Practise Resource Management Groups (BPRMGs), the District Natural Resources Officers (DNROs) and sub county staff to achieve this progress. The management plans will now be forwarded for endorsement by the district councils. District council meetings for endorsement of the CCA management plans are scheduled for December 2017

1.6 Support Local Government planning processes to integrate CCAs into strategic and annual District Plans.

At all the three sub counties where the CCA management plans were approved recently, the Sub county councils instructed the sub county technical teams to incorporate all the activities in the CCA management plans in the sub county development and annual plans. Coincidentally several of the activities in the CCA management plans were already featuring in the local government plans. This enhances opportunities for attaining the CCA outcomes. As mentioned in the yr. 2 report, by working with the District Natural Resources Officers (DNROs) the project activities supported this outcome. Since District development and annual plans are drawn from sub counties, the CCAs will inevitably be integrated into the District Local government plans.

1.7 Support development of specific District Government regulations to conserve ecosystem

Though the project did not support a specific regulation on conservation of the ecosystem over this period, the importance of the ecosystem and significance of its integrity in ensuring the livelihood of the community and economy of the country is being promoted consistently by the project, for example during the validation of the CCA management plans. We have noticed a significant interest amongst communities to plant indigenous tree species, and they are advocating for it at other community fora.

1.8: Community Conservation Area Association (CCAA) established to link communities, local government administrations and conservation organizations, share information on CCAs values and ecosystem services, and provide guidance and capacity building for community-based management and conservation.

In September 2017, a CCA forum meeting was conducted at Hotel Africana in Kampala. During this meeting, the representatives from the Government Ministries and Agencies made presentations on the status of wetlands, forests and fisheries in Uganda with a bias on the project area. FFI presented the progress of the project and shared experiences and lessons learnt thus far. The forum members also shared their observations and concerns on the design of the CCA approach and its implementation and provided recommendations to improve project performance. The forum observed that the CCA approach is appropriate and effective but will require a bit of time to grow or expand in the landscape because it is a new approach, different from the usual government led conservation drives. 28 members of the forum (19M; 9F) participated in the meeting.

2.1 Undertake baseline surveys of target species at 3 sites

Baseline surveys of the target species of birds and fish were completed in Yr. 1. Data collection for Water quality in parts of Lake Victoria within project area and bird and fish monitoring were done in this period. The results will be available in Quarter 4.

2.2 Document ES assessments and link to stakeholder learning

The information from the Ecosystem assessments conducted earlier is being used as guiding tools in interactions/meetings with communities in efforts to rejuvenate the integrity of different ecosystems, because they help to illustrate the implications of continued degradation of the ecosystem on rainfall patterns and fisheries. Increasingly, more community members are appreciating the roles of trees and other ecosystems/habitats e.g. wetlands in stabilising the climate, a crucial factor in the livelihood of subsistence societies like theirs.

2.3 Organise awareness campaigns at community and district levels.

In this period, awareness was raised through production of Ecosystem services posters portraying the benefits of conserving ecosystems. 1800 copies were produced for the local community. An updated report on Ecosystems services, cultural values and household livelihood status was produced (300 copies) for the wider stakeholders. The purpose of this production is to strengthen the stakeholders' understanding of the CCA approach, its link to ecosystems services and cultural values and steps currently taken to address the unsuitable use of natural resources at the project sites.

2.4 Support monitoring of Critically Endangered bird species and diversity of fish assemblages at

breeding sites (data collection reporting and management)

The project's partner organisation, Nature Uganda, conducted bird counts at project sites in July - September 2017. Data collection on fish diversity is being done by community members trained by the project at the nine landing sites in Wakiso and Rakai Districts. The fish data is analysed by fish experts. The report will be produced in Quarter 4.

3.1 Organise training sessions on sustainable fisheries, agriculture, land use, agroforestry and biodiversity conservation

In this reporting period, Farmers were given on farm advice (technical backstopping on livestock husbandry, fruit and indigenous trees management) on 30 occasions. Monitoring of the farmers previously trained also took place and is continuous.

3.2 Support local capacity to conduct patrols to protect fishing sites and fish breeding zones

For the last eight months, the government deployed the marine section of the army to patrol the lake and enforce the fisheries law. Anecdotal information indicates that this militaristic approach has improved the fish catch. The project initiated a meeting with the commanders responsible for the marine section to explain the CCA approach and promote the role of the community in the CCAs in ensuring the rejuvenation of the fisheries in the area. We shall follow up on building the synergies in the course of the quarter.

3.3 Support monitoring of fisheries activities (fisheries data collection, reporting and management - keeping track of landings and size of fish)

As per section 2.4 on monitoring of fish assemblage diversity.

3.5 Organise Natural Resource Management groups peer to peer exposure visits

No peer to peer exposure visits were organized over the last half year but two exchange visits have been planned for December 2017.

3.6 Conduct trainings to BPRMGs on data collection, reporting and management of Critically Endangered bird species and diversity of fish assemblages at breeding sites –

No specific trainings were organized but project site coordinators routinely conducted data quality control with the fish monitors.

4.1 Support communities with designation and protection of 10 fish breeding areas/grounds (community-wide sensitization & demarcation of the breeding zones)

No new fish breeding zone were demarcated this period but project site coordinators kept close contact with the BPRMGs and the fishers to explain importance of the breeding zones and encourage compliance.

4.2 Support Fisher to Fisher community sensitizations

No fisher to fisher sensitisation campaigns took place this period but the project site coordinators continued to reinforce the message of good fisheries practises during their field trips. About 32 such visits happened over the reporting period. Anecdotal reports also indicate that amongst the communities in the same area, sensitization does happen.

4.3 Facilitate community efforts on tree nursery development and tree planting

In the previous reporting, 80,305 assorted trees including *Grevillea* spp, *Measopsis eminii*, *Milicia excels*, Neem tree *Bethodavia* spp, *Melia Volkensii*, *Albizia coriariand* *Podocarpus* were planted. In this reporting period, 5600 tree seedlings of *Cordia Africana*, and *Measopsis eminii* were planted. *Podocarpus* spp seeds that were sowed at the community nurseries, have just started germinating and will be planted in February 2018.

4.4 Support farmer group members with revolving credit for agricultural inputs

The project continued to supervise and backstop the top three Village Savings and Credit groups that are lending money to group members for school fees and farming activities. Monitoring reports reveal that the average loan recovery rate is 82%.

5.1 Conduct project inception and planning meetings with communities, local governments and cultural institutions to clarify roles and responsibilities, participation during project implementation.

Completed in Year 1

5.2 Design and disseminate information through public awareness campaign based on ecosystem services assessment reports

As reported in 2.3, posters and other awareness materials were produced for distribution. We plan to produce a documentary on the project activities in December 2017 or January 2018.

5.3 Convene multi-stakeholder CCA design workshops –

Completed in Year 1.

5.4 Organize community mobilization to select CCA committees and determine roles and responsibilities

CCA committee members were/will be drawn from participating BPRMG members and other key stakeholders. This process has already begun in Kanabulemu with the help of the community development officer guiding the group on how to form the committees. So far one CCA has formed the committee with clear roles and responsibilities. The other committees will be selected in YR3 Q3

5.5 Undertake cultural institutional analysis - Completed as previously reported.

5.6 Organize governance and resource use policy seminars – No seminar was organized this reporting period. In Year 3 Q3&4, FFI and the CCA forum committee will produce a paper on the CCA approach and present to conservation actors and policy makers in Uganda.

5.7 Establish CCA management committees - See 5.4

5.8 Establish CCA gazettement committees with relevant stakeholders including local and national government, community members and cultural institutions at 3 sites – As reported under 5.4

5.9 Support local communities in the develop community byelaws, Popularise, promote and implement community bye-laws - Scheduled for Y3 Q3.

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

The community role in patrolling the lake were considerably minimized due to government decision to deploy the marine unit of the Army to enforce the fisheries law. However after a meeting between the Army commanders and other Lake Victoria fisheries stakeholders, it was resolved that communities have to be brought on board and the army accepted to be included in community sensitisation meetings where they will explain their role. Fishermen who use acceptable gear, and abide by the rules have been fishing and reportedly have higher catch. While this approach might momentarily reduce the role of the community in managing the fisheries in their area, it might have opportunities to demonstrate the advantages of complying with the law. The deployment of the marine unit of the army to enforce the fisheries Act doesn't affect the project budget.

2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with LTS: Yes/No

Formal change request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No

3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g., more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project,

please submit a rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary.

4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

Nothing to raise

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document. Additionally, if you were funded under R23 and asked to provide further information by your first half year report, please attach your response as a separate document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with LTS International through a Change Request.**

Please send your **completed report by email** to Eilidh Young at Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk . The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 22-035 Darwin Half Year Report**