

## Darwin Initiative Main/Post/D+ Project Half Year Report (due 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018)

<b>Project reference</b>	23-015
<b>Project title</b>	Guinea-pigs as guinea-pigs, reducing bushmeat hunting while improving communities' well-being
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	Democratic Republic of the Congo
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Wildlife Conservation Service
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Union des Eleveurs de Cobayes au Congo (UECCO) Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN)
<b>Project leader</b>	Dr Michelle Wieland
<b>Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)</b>	October, 31, 2018, (HYR3)
<b>Project website/blog/social media etc.</b>	

### **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).**

#### **Output 1: Project beneficiaries have the financial and technical capacity to set up and manage small enterprises.**

- 60 new beneficiaries from Kasheke and 60 new beneficiaries from Kajeje (111 guinea pig keepers and 9 non-guinea pig keepers) were selected for the microcredit scheme. However, only the 60 inhabitants at Kajeje (32 women and 28 men) were trained in enterprise development and financial literacy. People from Kasheke will be trained over the next field mission planned at the end of October 2018.
- 30 of 120 beneficiary guinea pig keepers (14 men and 16 women) have sold guinea pigs on the local market at three sites, Kajeje, Kasheke and Bitale.
- 10 of 120 beneficiaries who diversified their livelihoods were ex-bushmeat hunters (all men).

#### **Output 2: Improved guinea pig production and breeding techniques in target sites.**

- Following an increase in UECCO interventions, we observed a decrease in the guinea pigs mortality rate from 28% in March 2018 to 17% in September 2018.
- UECCO provided two training sessions to new cavy beneficiaries on good husbandry and breeding practices (figure 1).
- Three training sessions on micro-enterprise development were conducted by WCS.
- Monitoring and technical support were provided by UECCO in three villages (Kajeje, Kasheke and Bitale) totalling 316 visits of the guinea pig keepers.

#### **Output 3: Increased availability and adoption of guinea pig meat by communities in target sites.**

- 270 cavy were sold on the markets in three sites (Kajeje, Kasheke and Bitale) which is an increase of 35% from the baseline.

**Output 4: Law enforcement and awareness raising activities effectively deter bushmeat hunting and the establishment of new mining sites in KBNP.**

- The eco-guards located one new mine within the KBNP during the last six months. No change has been noted in comparison to the baseline.
- 30 people were interviewed by WCS at the intervention sites (Kajeje and Kasheke) stated that they are discouraged from hunting in the park due to the risk of being caught and prosecuted. A total of 416 people have now been interviewed, regarding their hunting activity in the national park, which is an increase of 41% from the baseline.
- No current beneficiaries were arrested for illegal activities within the park.
- 120 people were sensitized on the effect of illegal hunting on wild animal populations. A total of 484 people have now been sensitized, which is an increase of 186 % from the baseline.
- 351 patrols were conducted by the eco-guards of the ICCN covering 1966km within the park. Information on patrols, infractions and wildlife were entered into the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART).
- A total of 156 bushmeat snares and have been removed and 1 poacher arrested for illegal hunting within the park.
- Two awareness campaigns were conducted on environmental/conservation laws at Kajeje and Kasheke (120 individuals, 46 females and 74 males)



*Figure 1 Cavy husbandry training at Kajeje, June 2018*

**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.**

- Insecurity at Kasheke prevented the completion of the 60 new beneficiaries. We are hoping that the security situation will improve in the coming months so that we can conduct this activity.
- The project has suffered from the free humanitarian aid (goods and services) received by the communities, especially in Bitale, Cifunzi and Fendula, where the implementation of the activities hasn't met the expected results. During our last evaluation in August 2018, it became apparent that the local communities of Cifunzi and Fendula were no longer motivated to continue this project. Together with the partners (ICCN and UECCO), we have decided to stop all cavy activities in Fendula and Cifunzi. As a result, two new sites will be selected in November 2018. To avoid the problems encountered in Cifunzi and Fendula, a feasibility study will be conducted in the selected villages before

implementation. Although this only leaves 6 months for the intervention, training, credit, and monitoring can be successfully deployed.

- Monthly credit reimbursement only started this semester in two villages (Kasheke and Kajeje) as the Community Conservation Committees (CCC) who monitor credit reimbursement from beneficiaries have been inactive. This was due to a lack of rigor from members of these associations as well as insufficient monitoring of the beneficiaries who have not always applied the knowledge they got from the training. WCS will conduct several meetings to identify the different problems encountered and consequently be able to best support improving capacity as needed.
- For this reason, WCS has decided to hire 5 field community monitors (2 based in Kasheke, 2 based in Kajeje, 1 based in Bitale) who assess on a monthly basis the activities of the beneficiaries and provide guidance. In addition, the micro credit recipients complained that the profit obtained through cavy production/selling was not sufficient for monthly credit reimbursement.
- Following this experience, WCS has allowed future beneficiaries to conduct cavy production/selling in parallel with another income revenue activity that could generate enough funds to allow repayment of the credit. In addition, since April 2018 more resources are dedicated to monitoring the beneficiaries.
- Over the last semester, we recorded a 17% cavy mortality at the three sites (Bitale, Kajeje and Kasheke), which is a decrease of 11 % since year 2 of this project. This was due to an increase in supervision from UECCO agents, from 127 visits (October 17-March 18) to 316 visits (April 18-September 18). However, we are still encountering problems such as low temperature in the cages, lack of hygiene, and food. To further reduce the mortality of cavy, we are currently training four community members in cavy production/husbandry to supervise the cavy breeders. Additional community members will be trained from the two new villages. The data will be collected via the Kobotoolbox application.

**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: No

Formal change request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance 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?**

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 R24 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](mailto: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**