



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

Project reference 23-022

Project title Developing long-term stakeholder capacity for elephant conservation in Mali

Country(ies)/territory(ies) Mali, West Africa

Lead organisation Wild Foundation

Partner(s) The Mali Government: Ministry of the Environment, with its Direction Nationale des Eaux et Forêts (DNEF) as the principle contact; other Ministries as appropriate.

The US Embassy to Mali

The British Embassy to Mali

The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)

Project leader Dr Susan Canney

Report date and number (e.g., HYR3) HYR3

Project website/blog/social media etc.

Website: <https://www.wild.org/mali-elephants/>

Blog: <https://www.wild.org/category/blog/mali-elephants-blog/>

Twitter: @MaliEleProject

Facebook in Mali: <https://www.facebook.com/gourmamali/>

WILD Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/wildfoundation/>

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).

Despite high levels of persistent insecurity the project is on course to achieve its targets (subject to approval of the 2018 change request), although is operating in an environment of ever increasing unpredictability. The insecurity, caused by an increase in jihadist attacks and G5 anti-terrorist operations, has meant the project has had to continually innovate to be able to deliver its community empowerment model for CBNRM across the elephant range. This combines developing income-generating activities for women with capacity building of communities to manage their natural resources and includes recruiting eco-guards to gather information about elephants and protect natural resources. Working with government on redrafting the elephant reserve is also underway.

Output 1: Revision of existing “Partial Elephant Reserve” text and boundaries re-drawn to cover the whole of the elephant range with Lake Banzena as a core protection zone.

Activity 1.1 Local community validation meetings **Ongoing**

Construction of the well at Mayfata for the relocation of Banzena communities is still underway (see AR Y2). Community engagement has been completed for the stages so far, however we are now awaiting the next stage which can take place once the well has been completed in the

relocation area. It was not finished before the beginning of the rains (June) due to G5 anti-terrorism manoeuvres meaning that work had to be suspended for periods. Work will begin again shortly and it is hoped that it will be completed in December 2018.

Activity 1.2: Text finalized Ongoing

The revision of the legal text and boundaries of the existing partial reserve (whose text prohibits nothing but elephant hunting) has continued sporadically throughout 2018 to establish a new Protected Area, based on the Biosphere Reserve Model, that includes the whole elephant range. Under this model there will be 2-3 areas of strict protection (including Lake Banzena and its immediate surrounds as one of them), while the rest of the Reserve legislation will be that of the CBNRM conventions. This allows DNEF and government foresters to support local communities in the enforcement of their NRM conventions and provides a complement whereby the “top down” support of government facilitates the “bottom-up” community initiatives. Following a 2-day meeting with DNEF officials in March, the text is currently under review for signature.

Activities 1.3-1.5. Scheduled for Q3-Q4 Y3.

Output 2: Training provided to improve capacity in habitat protection, natural resources management and benefit sharing.

In order to adapt to the deteriorating security situation the project has continued to develop and implement its commune-approach for delivering the CBNRM activities through engaging the Mayor’s office of each commune, closely monitored and supported by the project team. This empowers the Mayor’s office to organize the convening activities based on the MEP’s existing model, guided by the field team. Not only does this reduce the need for the project staff to travel but it enables the CBNRM approach to be adopted simultaneously by communes across the elephant range (the only restriction being the level of funding available). It also means that community NRM plans can be directly integrated into the commune social and development plan, thereby increasing its sustainability.

Activity 2.1 Workshops for target communities Ongoing

Darwin funds contributed to the implementation of activities described below.

In April 72 people from 17 villages in the commune of Gossi attended meetings held by local representatives and ecoguards over two days to discuss and put in place a commune-wide convention. This was followed by 3-day community workshops attended by 226 people in BM (55), Gossi (54) and Douentza (117) to discuss the implementation of the new communes approach and the integration of existing activities within its framework.

Activity 2.1 Workshops for Banzena communities Ongoing as security allows

Output 3: Women’s associations created to manage and nurture NTFPs in the four test zones, thereby developing a model for sustainable revenue-generation from forest resources.

Activity 3.1 Preliminary meetings held with interested women from four test-zones; associations formed Completed

Activity 2: Meetings and training workshops for the women Ongoing

Five 3-day workshops were organized to provide support to 378 participants, including 222 women, around the following points: 1) What is an income-generating activity (IGA), 2) Identifying an IGA, 3) Feasibility and choice of IGA, 4) Planning of AGI-related activities, 5) Implementation of activities, 6) Monitoring and evaluation of AGI. Participants included 88 people from N’Gaw-N’Gaw in Korarou, 79 women from Daka-Kouko women’s association in Hombori, 68 people from Sartatane in Bambar-Maoude, 76 women from Kazey-Kazey women’s association in Inadiatafane and 67 women from Bore women’s association in Dangol-Bore. Although IGA were originally developed to support women, the initiative has proved so successful that many men have been keen to join and the project has had to expand the scope

of its activities accordingly.

Activity 3.3 Monitoring of revenue received from NTFPs Ongoing

Results from the poverty perception survey conducted during Q3 and Q4 of Y2 and aimed at providing a baseline to monitor impact of IGA have undergone preliminary analysis. The survey was conducted in 9 communes of the elephant range with 420 respondents including 96 women and 324 men. Preliminary analysis indicate that 94% (394) of the 420 respondents perceive >50% of their community to be poor. The majority of respondents associate wealth to the possession of agricultural equipment, cattle, money, trade or IGA, means of transport and food, with 114 (27%) out of the 420 specifically identifying IGAs as a source of wealth. Activities such as the development of IGA and environmental regeneration conducted by the project are therefore in line with the aspirations of the communities. Data on the degree to which these activities have been spontaneously adopted by others in the community will be available by project end.

4. Habitat, elephant and biodiversity loss and degradation halted and reversed at four test sites

4.1 Livestock and people surveys at Lake Banzena

The field team monitors the situation at Lake Banzena and produces one report per year. A quantitative measure of cattle intensity has not been possible due to problems of accessing the area by the field team and because the trained anti-poaching unit were rotated out and replaced by an inexperienced team who were unable to operate the proposed drone count at the correct time (end of the dry season) – see change request.

4.2 Tree-cutting and bird surveys at test- control sites

Three of the four test sites have become difficult to access by the field team and so the baseline surveys could not be performed (see change request). The field team has not been able to repeat its tree-cutting and bird survey at the fourth site this year due to problems of security and access (an increase in jihadist attacks followed by G5 anti-terrorist manoeuvres), however intends to experiment with training ecoguards to perform an end-of-project survey before the project end (see change request)..

4.3 Maintenance of database recording elephant killings (MIKE data) Ongoing

Community ecoguards continue to provide monthly updates on elephant movements and poaching incidents. 12 elephants are confirmed to have been illegally killed in April and May (5 in Bambara-Maoude, 3 in Gandamia, 5 in Korarou). This sudden burst in poaching followed 14 months during which no elephants were killed as a result of the anti-poaching unit's deployment in February 2017. Unfortunately, as per the agreement the first unit was rotated out in February 2018, causing a lag in anti- poaching operations as the new team needed to be trained up before becoming fully operational. This, in a context of high insecurity, provided the opportunity for poaching to occur (12 elephants in April and May), however since then there have been no more reported

The field manager and members of the government also attended a workshop organized by MIKE in October.

5. Research outputs developed and shared with target audiences: local and national stakeholders/ communities; DNEF foresters and officials; local, regional and national government; international conservation and development community.

5.1 Briefing reports to government and partners Ongoing

5.2 Newsletter, blog updates, articles, talks and conference presentations Ongoing

The project has employed a part-time marketing assistant dedicated to sharing the project's activities and maintaining its presence on social media, particularly Twitter. The project's website has also been updated: <https://www.wild.org/mali-elephants/>

A 3 minute animation of the project developed in collaboration with Oxford Sparks at the

University of Oxford was launched on 8th October. This is aimed at making this conservation project available to a wider audience:

<https://www.oxfordsparks.ox.ac.uk/content/protecting-elephants-protecting-humans>

The project was also present at the October 2018 London Conference on IWT, presented a scientific poster at one of its side events “Evidence to Action” held at the London Zoological Society on 9th October, and participated in the “Community Voices” event on the 10th October.

5.3 Journal papers Ongoing

One paper has been submitted to a peer-reviewed journal – it is currently in review.

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 – While G5 operations appear to have caused disruption to the insurgency, the security situation remains extremely volatile with kidnappings, assassinations and attacks on civilians, military personnel and local leaders occurring on a daily basis. This situation has prevented and/or delayed the field team from carrying out certain planned activities (e.g. extension of the income generating initiatives to other areas, vegetation surveys to monitor the impact of CBNRM) because it has not been possible for the field team to travel to these areas. In addition to the G5 operations, the road to one of the study sites is mined, while the other two require travelling in areas of high risk of attack, particularly if they then start conducting surveys. To respond to this new difficulty, the project has devised a different model for delivering the CBNRM work which minimizes the need for the field team to travel. The project also aims to build the capacity of eco-guards so that they can carry out monitoring surveys.

Water scarcity leading to human-elephant conflict - Lake Banzena (the only late-dry season water accessible to elephants) had completely dried up by mid-May. Elephants were spending much of their time further west than they have ever been in recent times, in areas that used to form part of their range as recently as the 1970s but which they had subsequently avoided due to the density of human occupation and livestock. They were concentrating around areas such as lake Korarou to avoid the remote northerly water-holes subject to heavy poaching in 2015. This has put them into closer contact with people, and the project has been working with local communities to mitigate the impact for example by growing chillis as a crop around their gardens, and engaging them in alternative livelihood activities that promote sustainable resource management; while ecoguards have been digging holes next to livestock watering holes so that elephants can drink unhindered (see attached photo). In some areas, elephants have been avoiding livestock by drinking at night.

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 In process

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 . 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**