

**Darwin Initiative Main/Post/D+ Project**  
**Half Year Report**  
(due 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017)

**Project reference:** 24-001

**Project title:** Improving forest governance for Cross River gorillas and Nigerian farmers

**Country(ies)/territory(ies):** Nigeria

**Lead organisation:** Wildlife Conservation Society

**Partner(s):** Conservation Association of Mbe Mountains (CAMM); Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria (CRIN)

**Project leader:** Inaoyom Imong

**Report date and number (e.g., HYR3):** HYR1

**Project website/blog/social media etc.** Website: <https://nigeria.wcs.org/>; Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CRgorilla/>; Twitter: [https://twitter.com/WCS\\_Nigeria](https://twitter.com/WCS_Nigeria)

**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).**

Progress on activities planned for the period covered by this report:

*Activity 1.1. WCS and CAMM visit target communities and hold meetings to introduce project; identify and select cocoa farmers from each of the nine Mbe communities to participate in Farmer Field School and receive training; identify contact person(s) in each community to assist with organising farmers; identify suitable demonstration farms and agree a schedule with farmers and CRIN.*

Progress on this activity was postponed due to a delay in the recruitment of a livelihood officer for the project, which in turn led to the late implementation of planned livelihood activities. Finding a suitably qualified candidate to fill the position was challenging and took longer than envisaged. However, WCS has successfully recruited and trained a livelihood officer and an assistant and is now moving forward with the proposed training for cocoa farmers and bush mango collectors. A joint team of WCS staff and CAMM representatives has visited the nine Mbe communities and held meetings to introduce the project and identify beneficiaries for cocoa and bush mango training and support. The team has also identified a contact person in each of the communities to assist with organising cocoa farmers and women's groups for the training, which is expected to commence in the coming weeks. WCS is working with CRIN and CAMM to identify suitable demonstration farms and agree on a plan for the training.

*Activity 1.2. WCS conducts a BNS survey in target communities to establish well-being baseline.*

Having successfully trained the livelihood officer and assistant on proper survey techniques, WCS is now finalizing plans for a Basic Necessities Survey (BNS), which is expected to commence in next few weeks. In addition to BNS, the livelihood officer and assistant were also trained on the Natural Resources Governance Tool (NRGT) by the WCS Africa program's socioeconomic team, led by Dr. Michelle Wieland. Using this tool, WCS will support CAMM through a baseline governance evaluation and subsequent training to strengthen the group's authority and capacity to govern resources in the Mbe Mountains.

*Activity 2.1. WCS and CAMM visit target communities and hold meetings to introduce project; identify and select cocoa farmers from each of the nine Mbe communities to participate in Farmer Field School and receive training; identify contact person(s) in each community to assist with organising farmers; identify suitable demonstration farms and agree on a schedule with farmers and CRIN.*

See comment in *Activity 1.2* above.

*3.1 WCS supports CAMM to launch the process for the official gazettement of the Mbe Mountains as a community wildlife sanctuary with the Cross River State Government; hold meetings with the MCCF, and other relevant government agencies involved in the gazettement process*

As a first step in the gazettement process, the project has assisted CAMM with applying to the Cross River State Government, through the Ministry of Climate Change & Forestry and the Cross River State Forestry Commission, therefore formally launching the process for the official gazettement of the Mbe Mountains as a community wildlife sanctuary.

*3.2 WCS supports CAMM to follow up with the Cross River State Government to ensure legal endorsement of the Mbe Mountains as a community wildlife sanctuary.*

WCS is supporting CAMM to engage with relevant government agencies including the Cross River State Ministry of Climate Change & Forestry, Cross River State Forestry Commission, and the Ministry of Lands & Housing to move forward with the gazettement process. WCS is also assisting CAMM to reach out to other organizations in the region who have experience in securing land tenure rights and certification. WCS will continue to provide technical support to CAMM through the gazettement process in order to ensure its success.

*4.2 WCS supports CAMM and Boki LGA to develop new bylaws for improved governance of Mbe Mountains that are ratified by MCCF.*

With support from WCS, the General Assembly of CAMM has developed a set of bylaws to strengthen the protection of the Mbe Mountains. The bylaws have been reviewed by CAMM's Legal Adviser, and have been presented to the Boki Local Government Legislative House for consideration, ratification, and formalization.

*4.3 WCS produces and shares monthly, quarterly and annual patrol reports with CAMM, Boki LGA, MCCF, and other stakeholders.*

Each month the Mbe ecoguards carry out four anti-poaching patrols to help reduce illegal activities in the Mountains. Using SMART, WCS monitors attributes such as distance walked and the number of patrol days completed, as well as human threats such as the frequency of wire snares, hunting camps, and empty shotgun shells discarded by hunters. This information is presented in maps (patrol coverage and distribution of human activities) and tables in monthly, quarterly and annual reports which are shared with CAMM. Information from previous patrols is used to plan subsequent patrols. Since the start of this project, WCS has produced and shared eight monthly and two quarterly reports with CAMM, and will continue to produce and share patrol reports regularly with CAMM to improve governance within CAMM and the protection of the Mbe Mountains.

*Activity 4.1 WCS trains CAMM eco-guards in SMART and implements monthly SMART-based anti-poaching patrols jointly with CAMM.*

During the period covered by this report, WCS trained 14 CAMM ecoguards in the use of SMART for law enforcement and gorilla monitoring. The training was conducted alongside patrols in the field. This training is ongoing and will be continued in the coming months to ensure that the Mbe ecoguards are proficient in the use of SMART for law enforcement.

During this period, WCS supported CAMM ecoguards to complete a total of 31 SMART-based patrols in the Mbe Mountains over 1,105 man-days, covering a total distance of 1,262 km. A total of nine persons were apprehended (2 persons for illegal hunting and 7 persons for illegal NTFP collection) and were reported to CAMM for sanctions. A system of fines imposed and enforced by CAMM is used to deter illegal activities in the Mbe Mountains. In addition, a total of 868 wire snares were removed from the forest and 5 hunting camps destroyed (Table 1). WCS will continue to support the CAMM ecoguards to carry out law enforcement patrols in the Mbe Mountains to reduce levels of hunting and other illegal activities.

**Table 1.** Encounter rate of hunting signs recorded in the Mbe Mountains during the period April to September 2017.

Sign	No of observations	Encounter rate/km
Wire snare	868	0.688
Empty cartridge	145	0.115
Hunting camp	5	0.004
Gunshots heard	11	0.009
Total	1,030	0.820

**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.**

Due to unforeseen delays in the recruitment of a livelihood officer for the project, WCS underspent on the livelihood officer's salary budget line for year 1 by six months. Consequently, WCS requested and obtained approval to use the unspent funds to support the training of the project's livelihood officer and assistant (to cover travel and subsistence costs for a socioeconomic expert from the WCS Congo program's socioeconomic team to visit Nigeria for the training), and to cover the salary of a livelihood assistant. Some of the unspent funds were also used to purchase tablets for data collection in the field. Recruitment of a livelihood assistant, training of the livelihood officer and assistant, and the purchase of tablets for field data collection were not originally included in the project proposal and budget. The training covered socioeconomic survey techniques such as BNS (to be used to establish wellbeing baseline for the target communities) and the Natural Resource Governance Tool that WCS will use to support CAMM to conduct baseline governance evaluation and to strengthen their authority and capacity as a group to govern resources in the Mbe Mountains. The changes to the year 1 budget do not affect the yearly budget spread for subsequent years as the additional activities are fully covered by the 6 months' salary amount underspent on the livelihood officer's salary for year 1.

**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
Formal change request submitted:	Yes
Received confirmation of change acceptance	Yes

**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?**

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**Appendix 1.** Project logframe, Activities and Timetable

**LOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

Darwin projects will be required to report against their progress towards their expected outputs and outcomes if funded. This section sets out the expected outputs and outcomes of your project, how you expect to measure progress against these and how we can verify this.

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<p>Impact: <b>Nigeria’s Mbe Mountains ecosystems are effectively conserved, providing critical, connected habitat for the recovery of critically endangered Cross River Gorillas and sustainable livelihoods for local communities.</b></p> <p><b>(Max 30 words)</b></p>			
<p>Outcome: <b>Critical habitat for Cross River gorillas in Nigeria’s Mbe Mountains is legally recognized and effectively co-managed, benefitting 12,000 people from improved cocoa production, bush mango harvesting and watershed protection.</b></p> <p><b>(Max 30 words)</b></p>	<p>0.1 <b>By end of Y4, there has been no decrease in gorilla nest counts per km (baseline = 0.17 nest sites per km during the period 2009-2014) and the area occupied by gorillas in the Mbe Mts increases by 10% compared to baseline established in Y1.</b></p> <p>0.2 <b>By end of Y4, there has been no net loss of forest within the corridor and rate of forest loss in the buffer zone decreases by 30%.</b></p> <p>0.3 <b>By the end of Y4, household wellbeing indices increase by 10% due to improved cocoa production and bush mango collection compared to baseline established in Y1.</b></p>	<p>0.1 <b>Eco-guard patrol SMART reports and mapping.</b></p> <p>0.2 <b>Analysis of Landsat 8 images.</b></p> <p>0.3 <b>Basic Necessities Surveys (BNS) of the 9 communities surrounding Mbe Mountains.</b></p>	<p><b>Benefits provided by improved cocoa techniques and sustainable bush mango collection, combined with effective law enforcement are sufficient to influence local attitudes and behaviours towards CRG and their habitat.</b></p> <p><b>Communities and Cross River State Government are willing to embrace sustainable management of their forests for conservation purposes and there are no competing commercial interests such as logging or oil palm development.</b></p>

<p>Outputs:</p> <p><b>1. Local farmers have been trained to increase efficiency of existing cocoa farms.</b></p>	<p><b>1.1 By the end of Y2, 2,500 farmers (at least 30% women) trained in improved cocoa production.</b></p> <p><b>1.2 By the end of Y4, the average cocoa yield/farm increases 10% from baseline established in Y1.</b></p>	<p><b>1.1 Training reports, training course attendance certificates.</b></p> <p><b>1.2 Socio-economic survey</b></p>	<p><b>Farmers participate in training actively and fully to the end.</b></p> <p><b>Weather conditions remain favourable for cocoa.</b></p> <p><b>Market price for cocoa remains favourable keeping buyers interested.</b></p> <p><b>Conservation contracts are socially accepted and provide sufficient incentive to protect the forest.</b></p>
<p><b>2. Local women's groups and young men trained in improved bush mango collection, processing, storage and marketing.</b></p>	<p><b>2.1 By the end of Y4, bush mango value chain is enhanced (from processing to sale) to increase profits for 500 women and young men.</b></p> <p><b>2.2 By the end of Y4, the average wellbeing indices per household benefitting from bush mango increases 10% from baseline established in Y1.</b></p> <p><b>2.3 By the end of Y4, Conservation contracts negotiated and signed with 500 women and young men.</b></p>	<p><b>2.1 Training reports, training course attendance certificates.</b></p> <p><b>2.2 Socio-economic survey</b></p> <p><b>2.3 WCS and CAMM records</b></p>	<p><b>Bush mango value chain remains profitable for collectors and incentivizes forest protection.</b></p> <p><b>Conservation contracts are socially accepted by the women and young men and provide sufficient incentive to protect the forest.</b></p>

<p><b>3. Protection of the Mbe Mountains is enhanced and community land tenure secured through legal recognition of 127km<sup>2</sup> as a “Community Managed Wildlife Sanctuary”.</b></p>	<p><b>3.1 By the end of Y4, Mbe Mountains gazetted as a community wildlife sanctuary.</b></p>	<p><b>3.1 Government gazette notice</b></p>	<p><b>Government of Cross River State willing to recognise customary rights and local land tenure.</b></p>
<p><b>4. The effectiveness of law enforcement interventions of WCS and local communities is improved for Mbe Mountains ecosystem.</b></p>	<p><b>4.1 Regular patrols in the Mbe Mountains by WCS and CAMM reduces signs of poaching by 10% each year compared to Y1 baseline.</b></p> <p><b>4.2 New bylaws for improved governance of Mbe Mountains ratified by Boki LGA and MCCF.</b></p> <p><b>4.3 Governance scores of the Mbe Mountains in Y4 increases by 20% over Y1 baselines.</b></p>	<p><b>4.1 Monthly SMART reports.</b></p> <p><b>4.2 Boki Council records.</b></p> <p><b>4.3 Natural Resource Governance Tool (NRGT) scores.</b></p>	<p><b>Improved law enforcement supported by local communities and maintains a net positive impact on local livelihoods.</b></p> <p><b>Community-created sanctions act as sufficient deterrent and reduce levels of illegal activity</b></p>
<p><b>Activities (each activity is numbered according to the output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1)</b></p> <p><b>1.1</b> WCS and CAMM visit target communities and hold meetings to introduce project</p> <p><b>1.2</b> WCS and CAMM identify and select cocoa farmers from each of the nine Mbe communities to participate in Farmer Field Schools and receive training in improved cocoa farming; identify contact person(s) in each community to assist with organising farmers; identify suitable demonstration farms</p> <p><b>1.3</b> WCS, CRIN and CAMM agree a schedule with farmers</p> <p><b>1.4</b> WCS conducts a BNS survey in target communities to establish well-being baseline.</p> <p><b>1.5</b> WCS and CRIN establish Farmer Field Schools</p> <p><b>1.6</b> WCS, CAMM and farmers agree and sign conservation contracts</p> <p><b>1.7</b> CRIN conducts training on improved cocoa production through Farmer Field Schools, overseen by WCS.</p>			

**1.8** WCS monitors progress on cocoa training and application of acquired knowledge and skills by farmers, and evaluates impact.

**2.1** WCS and CAMM visit target communities and hold meetings to introduce project; identify and select women's groups from each of the nine Mbe communities to participate in training on improved bush mango collection, processing, storage and marketing; identify contact person(s) in each community to assist with organising women's groups for training.

**2.2** WCS conducts a BNS survey in target communities to establish well-being baseline.

**2.3** WCS provides training in improved bush mango collection, processing, storage and marketing; WCS and CAMM support women's groups to identify accessible storage facilities and set up micro-enterprises.

**2.4** WCS monitors progress on bush mango training and application of acquired knowledge and skills by women's groups, and evaluates impact.

**3.1** WCS supports CAMM to launch the process for the official gazettement of the Mbe Mountains as a community wildlife sanctuary with the Cross River State Government; hold meetings with the MCCF and other relevant government agencies involved in the gazettement process to discuss progress.

**3.2** WCS supports CAMM to follow up with the Cross River State Government to ensure legal endorsement of the Mbe Mountains as a community wildlife sanctuary.

**3.3** WCS and CAMM support survey and official documentation of the area to be gazetted by the Cross River State Ministry of Lands and Housing.

**4.1** **WCS trains CAMM eco-guards in SMART and implements monthly SMART-based anti-poaching patrols jointly with CAMM.**

**4.2** **WCS supports CAMM and Boki LGA to develop new bylaws for improved governance of Mbe Mountains that are ratified by MCCF.**

**4.3** **WCS produces and shares monthly, quarterly and annual patrol reports with CAMM, Boki LGA, MCCF, and other stakeholders.**

**4.4.** **WCS monitors progress on law enforcement and evaluates impact.**

**25. Provide a project implementation timetable that shows the key milestones in project activities. Complete the following table as appropriate to describe the intended workplan for your project (Q1 starting April 2017)**

Please add/remove columns to reflect the length of your project. For each activity (add/remove rows as appropriate) indicate the number of months it will last, and shade only the quarters in which an activity will be carried out. The workplan can span multiple pages if necessary.

Activity	No. of months	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4												
<b>Output 1 Local farmers have been trained to increase efficiency of existing cocoa farms</b>																	
1.1 WCS and CAMM visit target communities and hold meetings to introduce project; identify and select cocoa farmers from each of the nine Mbe communities to participate in Farmer Field School and receive training; identify contact person(s) in each community to assist with organising farmers; identify suitable demonstration farms and agree a schedule with farmers and CRIN.	2	X															
1.2 WCS conducts a BNS survey in target communities to establish well-being baseline.	2	X															
1.3 WCS and CRIN establish Farmer Field Schools; CRIN conducts training on improved cocoa production through Farmer Field Schools.	20		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X				X		
1.4 WCS monitors progress on cocoa training and application of acquired knowledge and skills by farmers, and evaluates impact.	6				X				X				X				X
<b>Output 2 Local women's groups trained in improved bush mango collection, processing, storage and marketing</b>																	
2.1 WCS and CAMM visit target communities and hold meetings to introduce project; Identify and select women's groups from each of the nine Mbe communities to participate in training on improved bush mango collection, processing, storage and marketing; identify contact person(s) in each community to assist with organising women's groups for training.	2	X															
2.2 WCS conducts a BNS survey in target communities to establish well-being baseline.	2	X															

2.3 WCS provides training in improved bush mango collection, processing, storage and marketing; support women's groups to identify accessible storage facility and set up micro-enterprise.	18			X	X	X	X	X	X		X				X		
2.4 WCS monitors progress on bush mango training and application of acquired knowledge and skills by women's groups, and evaluates impact.	6				X				X				X				X
<b>Output 3 Protection of the Mbe Mountains is enhanced and community land tenure secured through legal recognition of 127km<sup>2</sup> as a "Community Managed Wildlife Sanctuary"</b>																	
3.1 WCS supports CAMM to launch the process for the official gazettement of the Mbe Mountains as a community wildlife sanctuary with the Cross River State Government; hold meetings with the MCCF, and other relevant government agencies involved in the gazettement process	2		X	X			X		X								
3.2 WCS supports CAMM to follow up with the Cross River State Government to ensure legal endorsement of the Mbe Mountains as a community wildlife sanctuary.	18		X	X	X	X	X	X	X								
3.3 WCS and CAMM support and survey official documentation of the gazetted area to be gazetted by the Cross River State Ministry of Lands and Housing.	2									X							
<b>Output 4 The effectiveness of co-management and law enforcement interventions of WCS, government and local communities is improved for Mbe Mountains ecosystem</b>																	
<b>4.1 WCS trains CAMM eco-guards in SMART and implements monthly SMART-based anti-poaching patrols jointly with CAMM.</b>	48	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4.2 WCS supports CAMM and Boki LGA to develop new bylaws for improved governance of Mbe Mountains that are ratified by MCCF.	12	X	X	X	X												
<b>4.3 WCS produces and shares monthly, quarterly and annual patrol reports with CAMM, Boki LGA, MCCF, and other stakeholders.</b>	48	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

4.4 WCS monitors progress on law enforcement and evaluates impact.	6				X				X				X				X
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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](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**