



**Darwin Initiative/D+ Project
Half Year Report
(due 31st October 2019)**

Project reference	26-003
Project title	Securing the long-term future of Kenya's largest freshwater wetland
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Kenya
Lead organisation	Nature Kenya (The East Africa Natural History Society – EANHS)
Partner(s)	The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), The Inter-ministerial Technical Committee for the sustainable management of Kenya Deltas (IMTC), County Government of Siaya, County Government of Busia, Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), Yala Ecosystem Site Support Group (YESSG), Yala Planning Advisory Committee (YPAC), Lower Nyandera Water Resource Users Association (WRUA) and Muweri WRUA
Project leader	<i>Serah Munguti</i>
Report date and number (e.g. HYR3)	30/10/2019 HYR1
Project website/blog/social media etc.	www.naturekenya.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).

Output 1: The 8,404-ha Community Conservation Area (CCA) within the Yala Delta is protected effectively and in perpetuity through formal gazettement and development of a management plan and associated governance bodies and regulations (Indicators 1.1, 1.3)

Awareness activities as a first step towards formal gazettement of the Yala Swamp Indigenous and Community Conservation Area (ICCA) were initiated. Community sensitization meetings were held in 15 villages around and within the swamp to create awareness about ICCA and land use plan (LUP) with 1027 people (693M, 334F) reached (Annex 1). Communities and other stakeholders are in support of ICCA set up including the area covered.

A preliminary GIS land use and land cover map of CCAs was produced showing land use, land cover and extent (Annex 2). This map covers the area to be targeted for management planning and will be validated by stakeholders during formulation of the Yala Swamp ICCA management plan. The map shows that wetland degradation has increased two fold since 2015, underscoring the need to implement the LUP and protect the ICCA (Annex 3).

The GIS map includes degraded areas of Yala Swamp. Based on this map Yala Ecosystem Site Support Group (YESSG) was supported to do ground truthing and identify 100 ha of degraded swamp. YESSG then used this information to prepare an action plan for restoration of degraded areas with a target to plant 100ha initially starting with 50ha of papyrus (Annex 4). Nature Kenya and YESSG have signed an MoU for the restoration work

with funds for this action transferred to YESSG account (Annex 5). For the first time, a map on degraded areas within the lower River Yala was produced (Annex 40). These areas constitute the ICCA and will be targeted with restoration using papyrus and indigenous tree species.

15 community based organizations affiliated to YESSG have established tree nurseries with technical support from Kenya Forest Service (KFS) (Annex 6). The groups have collectively raised 106,837 seedlings with 34,737 of these being indigenous tree species (for restoration of degraded riparian areas) and 72,100 exotic species (for establishment of own farm woodlots). Discussions are underway to explore preferred approach for setting up ICCA management committee. It is likely to include crop farmers, livestock herders, fishermen, wildlife guides and other user groups who constitute YESSG. They will form the ICCA governance structure in partnership with county and national government agencies following the Tana Delta model.

The project supported scientists from the National Museums of Kenya carry out baseline surveys on water quality, key bird species ('papyrus endemics' such as Papyrus Yellow Warbler, Carruthers' Cisticola, White-winged Swamp-Warbler and Papyrus Canary); Sitatunga; and key fish species (Annex 7) based on an agreed methodology (Annex 8). Key biodiversity species being monitored by the project forms part of ICCA justification.

Output 2: The key 'user groups' in the delta are enabled to jointly manage the CCA through the provision of training and on-going support (Indicators 2.1, 2.2)

With training local groups are beginning to safeguard Yala Swamp ecosystem services. The YESSG is at the forefront in championing the interests of crop farmers, livestock herders, fishermen, wildlife guides and papyrus product weavers in county planning and other decision making. The YESSG management committee convened meetings on 20th September 2019 to deliberate and generate responses on a proposed hydroelectricity project at Ndanu falls along River Yala (Annexes 10 and 11). On 7th-18th October 2019 YESSG represented Yala Swamp communities in stakeholder validation workshops at Ward and County levels for the Draft Siaya County Spatial Plan. The group urged the county government to incorporate land use plan and ICCA into the spatial plan (Annex 12).

7 YESSG members (6 males; 1 female) gained hands on experience in biodiversity monitoring (birds, fish, mammals, water) when they worked as field assistants for a team of scientists from the National Museums of Kenya during the baseline biodiversity survey. 17 YESSG members were trained as Trainer of Trainers in organizational capacity assessment (OCA) (Annex 9). TOTs will conduct OCA for WRUAs, Beach management units (BMUs), farmer groups, and papyrus product weavers to build the capacity of these user groups in governance and ICCA management.

Output 3: The Land Use Plan (LUP) for the entire delta is adopted as official policy by the governments of Busia and Siaya counties, and capacity is established within these governments to implement the plan effectively (Indicators 3.1, 3.2)

On 8th July 2019 five members of the Inter-Ministerial Technical Committee on Sustainable Management of Deltas in Kenya (IMTC) met in Siaya to discuss and prepare presentations on the LUP and SEA (Annexes 13-15) to catalyse county government endorsement of the LUP and SEA.

On 10th and 12th July 2019 the IMTC presented these presentations to 48 (40 M, 8F) members of the Inter-county Land Use Planning Committee and 58 (47M, 11F) members of the Yala Planning Advisory Committee respectively). 3 members of Siaya and Busia County assemblies attended the meeting and committed to support adoption of the LUP and SEA as policy (Annexes 16 and 17). On the same dates key outcomes and outputs of the project were presented (Annex 18). Since then County Executives for Lands in Siaya & Busia counties have prepared a policy brief (Annex 19) in readiness for submission of the LUP and SEA to be presented to the respective county assemblies for adoption of LUP and SEA as policy.

In July 2019 the final LUP and SEA were signed by H.E Cornel Rasanga, Governor Siaya County and H.E. Sospeter Ojaamong Governor Busia County. On 27th September 2019 the LUP and SEA were signed by H.E. The Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga Prime Minister, Republic of Kenya (2008-2013) and African Union High Representative for Infrastructure Development

(Annex 20, Annex 21). Nature Kenya will leverage on this high level political endorsement during advocacy for adoption of the LUP and SEA as policy documents by County Assemblies of Siaya and Busia. From 5th June 2019 YESSG in collaboration with the provincial administration held awareness meetings on LUP, SEA and Yala Swamp CCA in 15 villages within the Yala Swamp reaching 1027 people (693M, 334F) (see annex 1). 3 members of county assembly were reached during these meetings. Awareness will continue targeting to reach all the 148 villages within the swamp.

Output 4: The poorest and most vulnerable people living in and around the Yala Delta are empowered to further enhance their livelihoods in ways that support the long-term conservation of the delta's natural resources (Indicators 4.2a, 4.3a, 4.4a, 4.5a, 4.6a, 4.7a, 4.8)

Between 15th-27th July 2019, a group profiling exercise was conducted for over 90 CBOs within the Yala ecosystem with the aim of identifying beneficiaries for various livelihood activities i.e. crop farmers, fish farmers, beekeepers, chicken keepers, weavers and tour guides. 1327 people (568M, 759F) participated. Group profiling was done by Nature Kenya staff, Yala Ecosystem Site Support Group (YESSG) and technical officers from the County governments of Siaya and Busia (Agricultural Crop Officers, Livestock /Veterinary officers, Fisheries officers). The exercise was conducted through informal meetings with target beneficiaries and site visits to conduct some technical assessments e.g. assess whether a target site has the right conditions for setting up an apiary for beekeeping etc. Using agreed criteria for each user group (Annexes 22– 28), an evaluation was conducted for groups and individual members. On the basis of this evaluation potential beneficiaries for various livelihood activities were selected (Annex 29). Subsequently on 9th September an IGA mapping meeting was held with 30 (22M, 8F) members of YESSG to gain a deeper understanding of the IGAs especially the farming ventures in terms of what is being done, action locations, production scale, demand for products, market links, etc. On 10th – 11th September a 2 day field visit was conducted by the project leader to inform decision making on which ventures to invest in and also develop strategies to ensure the success of the livelihood ventures from the very initial stages (Annex 30).

As a result of the group profiling exercise:

93 (46M, 47F) beneficiaries for beekeeping enterprise were identified and supported to set up three apiaries with a total of 100 beehives provided (Annex41)

182 (60M, 122F) beneficiaries for fish farming were identified and supported to set up 17 fish ponds with 12 ponds stocked with tilapia (*Oreochromis niloticus*) and 5 ponds stocked with catfish (*Clarias gariepinus*)

17 (4M, 13F) members of Kanyibok Youth Group were identified for support in climate smart agriculture to produce fast maturing high value horticultural crops using soil and water conservation methods including ridging, organic manure, drip irrigation using solar powered water pump among others.

50 households (100% women) were identified for support in chicken farming targeting indigenous chicken.

50 farmers (25M, 25F) were identified for support in climate smart agriculture. They will be supported to grow fast maturing high value crops including green leafy vegetables, capsicums, tomatoes and other horticultural crops.

200 crop farmers (50%M, 50%F) were identified for support to grow high value drought resistant crops such as legumes, sunflower, sorghum among others. Some of the harvest from these crops will be bought by YESSG and used as raw material for formulation of fish and chicken feed (for use by group members and for sale to the wider community) with a milling machine bought under the previous Darwin project (project number 21-015).

55 weavers (33M, 22F) were identified for support in production of high value papyrus products. They will be supported to form cooperatives for production (through a workshop/product outlet established under the previous Darwin project), bulking, branding and marketing through the established networks.

Wildlife guides 30 guides (26M, 4F) were identified for mentorship in wildlife guiding.

A draft ecotourism booklet for marketing Yala Swamp exists. Contact has been established with the Siaya County Ecotourism Association to collaborate in finalizing the booklet. A YESSG member was recently elected to chair the association which presents an opportunity to the Darwin Project for delivery of the booklet.

Baseline socio economic surveys and business plan development is planned for November 2019.

Output 5: Application of lessons learned from the project at other large wetland sites in Kenya and beyond is encouraged through communication actions reaching all key stakeholders (Indicators 5.1, 5.4, 5.5)

In August 2019 the Physical and Land Use Planning Act, 2019 became law in Kenya with sections on land use planning borrowing heavily from the Tana LUP development process. The Yala LUP, SEA and ICCAs approach is modelled around the Tana Delta process. http://kenyalaw.org/kl/fileadmin/pdfdownloads/Acts/2019/PhysicalandLandUsePlanningAct_No13of2019.pdf

The project outcomes and outputs were presented to members of the Inter-County LUP advisory Committee and the Yala Planning Advisory Committee (see Annex 18).

YESSG was represented by two officials in the annual SSGs workshop held in September 2019. The workshop provided a forum for lesson sharing on ICCA, LUP and SEA approach with 22 other site support groups. This included Tana Delta and Dakatcha Woodland where ICCA approach is also under implementation.

IMTC members briefed H.E. Cornel Rasanga Governor Siaya County and H.E. the Rt. Hon Raila Odinga on project outcome and outputs (Annex 42).

Awareness creation is on-going collaboratively led by YESSG, the County government of Siaya, NEMA, KFS through events such as:

World Wetlands Day (WWD) held on 1st February 2019 with 103 people reached (52M, 51F) (Annex 31)

International Day of Forests held on 21st March 2019 with 1213 people reached (i.e. 475M, 238F and school children (223boys, 277girls) (Annex 32)

World Water Day (held on 22nd March 2019 with 250 people reached (168M, 82F) (Annex 33)

World Migratory Birds Day held on 12th May 2019 with 51 people reached (11M, 3F and school children (20boys, 17girls) (Annex 34)

World Environment Day held on 5th June 2019 with 518 people reached (158M, 150F and school children (100boys, 110girls) (Annex 35)

World Clean Up Day held on 21st September 2019 with 53 people reached (39M, 14F) (Annex 36)

World Migratory Birds Day held on 12th October 2019 with 122 people reached (21M, 7F and school children (56 boys, 38 girls) (Annex 37)

The project outcome and outputs were presented to Inter-County LUP Advisory Committee and Yala Planning Advisory Committee on 10th and 12th July 2019 respectively (See Annex 16 and 17).

Dissemination activities are on-going with publication of project activity updates in the Nature Kenya monthly newsletter, Nature Net (October 2019 Issue-Article "*A future for Kenya's largest freshwater wetland-Yala Swamp*") (Annex 38), Darwin Newsletter August 2019 Issue (Article "*Earning a living from papyrus stems and palm leaves*") (Annex 39)

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.

During identification of direct beneficiaries for livelihoods activities we noticed that women generally shy away from wildlife guiding. Traditionally this is a male dominated field even at national scale. To offset the deficit created for female beneficiaries the project will work with women only in chicken rearing. Traditionally more women engage in chicken rearing compared to men.

Endorsement of the LUP and SEA by H.E. the Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga was unexpected and a game changer. The national leader commands unquestionable following in the western part of Kenya including Siaya and Busia Counties. We expect his endorsement of the documents to bear favourably with members of county assembly during adoption of the documents as policy.

The Physical and Land Use Planning Act was enacted in August 2019 and provides national legal guidance to counties which has been lacking. It is now possible for County Governments of Siaya and Busia to adopt LUP as policy and even make county land use laws guided by the national law.

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?

None

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 R25 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 DO NOT send these in the same email.****

Please send your **completed report by email** to 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: 25-035 Darwin Half Year Report**