

Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects
Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus

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Report that you do not wish to be shared early highlight this.

Submission deadline: 31 October 2023

Project reference	29-022
Project title	Community-led fisheries management in the Mara Wetlands, Tanzania.
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Tanzania
Lead partner	WWF-UK
Partner(s)	WWF-Tanzania, IHE Delft, Tanzania Fisheries Research Institute (TAFIRI), Victoria Farming and Fishing Organization (VIFAFIO), Lake Victoria Basin Water Board (LVBWB), Mara Regional Administration and Local Government Authorities
Project leader	Katherine Elliott
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	31 October 2023 HYR2
Project website/blog/social media	https://www.wwf.org.uk/

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

Over the past six months (April to September 2023) good progress has been made towards the project's objectives against the implementation table, outlined below:

Output 1 - Fisheries and wetlands co-management

Activity 1.1.5: IHE Delft has continued work on the consolidation and assembly of the mapping data for analysis of how the wetland extent and habitat have changed since previous updates. Plans are underway for a second field visit in collaboration with TAFIRI for further ecological field sampling from 25 November - 5 December 2023. This will follow up on the results of the Year 1 field survey with a focus on plankton, benthic invertebrates, and aquatic plants.

Activity 1.2: Following Year 1 activities on ecological and fisheries mapping, WWF-Tanzania facilitated the formation of four Community Management Units (CMUs); 2 in Butiama, 1 in Rorya, and 1 in Serengeti district councils. These CMUs, composed of 320 dedicated community members (27% female), are playing a pivotal role in spearheading local conservation efforts. With 65 individuals (28 female and 37 male) identified as executive committee members of the CMUs, these community governance structures will play an important role in empowering communities to participate in conserving the wetlands ecological and socio-economic values. Training was provided to CMU members on natural resources management (with a focus on sustainable fishing practices), governance and leadership, and conflict resolution.

Activity 1.3.2: WWF-Tanzania and LVBWB have provided training and equipment for 39 citizens (18 female, 21 male) from two Water Users Associations (WUAs) in North Mara and South Mara areas, to enable them to collect monitoring data as citizen scientists on wetland and river health. River Health Assessment (RHA) data collection in North Mara and South Mara areas started immediately after the training. These citizen scientists are currently collecting data once per month across 18 points, to monitor the health of the Mara River catchment. This valuable data provides early detection and response to pollution incidents, reducing the risk of harm to people, flora and fauna in the Mara River and wetlands.

Output 2: Build capacity for sustainable fishing practices and co-management plans

Activity 2.1.1: Following a Training of Trainers (TOT) organised by TAFIRI and LVBWB, a team of 12 members from BMUs and CMUs trained 520 fisherfolks, from 9 villages, in natural resources management, conflict resolution, leadership and governance.

Activity 2.2.1: During August-September 2023, TAFIRI led on campaign activities to engage communities on the impact of improper fishing gear on community livelihoods and biodiversity. Steps included mapping of fishing villages based on fishing intensity and accessibility, engagement with respective district and municipal councils and updating the District Executive Director. At each village a Public Address System was used to invite fisheries stakeholders to participate in an open meeting, with presentations and discussion with community members about sustainable fishing practices. The TAFIRI team engaged approximately 504 individuals (30% women), including fishers, traders and processors and consumers, to raise awareness on fisheries regulations and the impacts of illegal fishing gear. In total 10 riparian villages were reached, and 160 brochures and 51 posters were published.

Activity 2.1.2 and 2.1.3: 27 enumerators from CMUs and BMUs were identified from the Mara Wetlands communities for training on basic fish species identification using indigenous names. From this group, 14 enumerators representing seven landing sites were trained on how to collect catch and effort data using the mobile application Electronic Catch Assessment Survey (eCAS). They were provided with smartphones that will be used to deliver fish data to the TAFIRI database on a daily basis. Data collection commenced on 4 September 2023.

Output 3 - Fisheries value chain to improve local livelihoods

Activity 3.1: VIFAFIO has continued work on strengthening fishery value chains, particularly engaging women to diversify and increase their incomes. During this reporting timeframe, 8 villages were visited, identifying a further 60 women from marginalised households to receive training.

To assist with the value chain analysis and specifically how it relates to gender, IHE Delft will be undertaking activities to map the main value-generating activities of subsistence communities in the Mara wetlands (fishing, farming, livestock keeping) to prepare a livelihood-based value chain analysis. Using adapted research tools, IHE will conduct an analysis of livelihood, gender, and environmental outcomes of Mara wetlands fisheries, focusing on identifying aspects with the potential to improve women's livelihoods. A first IHE consultant visit occurred from 6-15 August for partner engagement, familiarisation with the project, and meetings with local communities. During a second visit (18 Sep - 8 Oct) a more thorough assessment and development of the methodology was conducted. This mission mapped the major value generating activities in one community in Kwisaro that identified actors and flow of products and information along the value chain. The value chain map will be a useful tool to guide the forthcoming research in Q3/4. Key initial results include how women rely on fisheries as a back-up/safety net for food and income when other activities are performing poorly.

Activity 3.2: 60 women fishmongers were provided training by VIFAFIO on fisheries livelihoods, particularly on post-harvest strategies to reduce fish spoilage. There has been good support from Local Government Officials, which has facilitated 20 Women's Groups (Wanawake wachuuzi) to develop constitutions and become registered at district level. 17 groups have started saving and opened bank accounts. Through the Training of Trainers

approach, the women were provided with training materials, which will be used to build the capacity of other women in their respective villages.

Activity 3.3: VIFAFIO undertook consultations with Women's Groups to identify priority solutions for reducing post-harvest losses from fisheries. As a result, VIFAFIO has purchased four deep freezers to be used by Women's Groups for the storage of fish, and also for storing horticulture crops during periods of low fish catch.

Output 4: Enabling conditions for scaling up

Activity 4.1: With a focus on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) WWF-Tanzania has collaborated with Water Users Associations (WUAs) to review, update, and implement three Sub-Catchment Management Plans (SCMPs). After incorporating feedback and finalising Swahili versions, the SCMPs were distributed for community-led implementation. This is a significant step towards the shared goal of conserving water resources.

Activity 4.3.2: IHE Delft has continued to finalise reporting of the outputs of the field activities of last December, including three MSc student thesis produced from that.

2. 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.

A new initiative for a sugarcane plantation at the Mara Wetlands, spearheaded by the Livestock and Fisheries division in the Rorya Local Government Authority, carries potential implications for the fisheries community and ecology surrounding the Wetlands. WWF-Tanzania is engaging with the relevant authorities to advocate for a comprehensive EIA involving all relevant stakeholders of the Mara wetlands.

During this reporting timeframe, the project has focused on the formation of Community Management Units (CMUs) for collaborative co-management of the Mara wetlands. The Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance subcommittee within the CMUs have been instrumental in conducting training sessions and campaigns against the use of illegal fishing gear. However, challenges were encountered in establishing a CMU in Tarime due to extreme seasonality in fisheries in the area, and difficulty in engaging enough fisheries stakeholders. WWF-Tanzania is planning to support the formation of a CMU in Tarime in year 3. We will update the project logframe to ensure that the difference between CMUs and BMUs is clear.

3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with NIRAS: No

Formal Change Request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance: N/A

Change request reference if known: N/A

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023)

Actual spend: ██████████

4b. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this financial year (ending 31 March 2024)?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £0.00

4c. 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 re-budget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a re-budget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.

NB: if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.

5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

Expenditure to date in this financial year is on track. We will shortly be submitting a Change Request as we would like to make changes between budget lines within the year 2 budget, to outline the change of IHE Delft funding from staff costs to a consultant to support the value-chain mapping.

If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response, or if your Annual Report Review asked you to provide a response with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

All new projects (excluding Darwin Plus Fellowships and IWT Challenge Fund Evidence projects) should submit their Risk Register with this report if they have not already done so.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with NIRAS through a Change Request. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email.****

Please send your **completed report by email** to BCF-Reports@niras.com. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number, followed by the specific fund in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 29-001 Darwin Initiative Half Year Report**