



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

Half Year Report

Submit to: BCF-Reports@niras.com including your project ref in the subject line.

Project reference	DARCC019
Project title	Building Government Capability and Capacity to Facilitate Human-Elephant Coexistence
Countries	Angola, Ethiopia, and Malawi
Lead Organisation	The Elephant Protection Initiative Foundation
Partners	1. National Institute for Biodiversity and Protected Areas Angola (INBAC) 2. Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA) 3. Department of National Parks and Wildlife, Malawi (DNPW)
Project leader	Hugo Jachmann, Technical Lead
Report date and number	October 2024, HYR2
Project website	https://www.elephantprotectioninitiative.org

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

During the first half of Year 2 (April to September 2024), the project has achieved notable progress in all three target countries, Angola, Ethiopia, and Malawi. Below is a summary of key developments in each target country:

Angola: In response to changes in government personnel at the end of 2023, the MoU between EPIF and INBAC was not signed until April 1st 2024, and consequently implementation of activities was moved to the second project year. With the MOU and the new Director of INBAC in place, the needs assessment was updated, whereby INBAC management selected SMART as the preferred monitoring system. By May, equipment needs for the SMART system had been identified, quotes gathered, and a comprehensive bid analysis completed to select the most suitable and cost-efficient items to equip the INBAC staff responsible for HEC management. The equipment was distributed by the end of August.

For the implementation of the SMART monitoring system, Julien Godfrey was recruited to lead the setup and deliver a five-day training session in Kissama National Park in September. This training was well received, with strong participation from government staff from INBAC Headquarters at Luanda and 5 target sites selected by management, marking a key step forward in Angola's ability to address wildlife conservation and specifically HEC. Because Angola is a vast country, with limited infrastructure and internet connectivity, it is anticipated that several follow-up visits of the SMART consultant and a few more years of technical and funding support will be required to have a fully operational country-wide monitoring system in place.

Ethiopia: Significant progress was achieved in Ethiopia during this reporting period, beginning with the successful completion of the National HEC Baseline Survey Workshop. The workshop

brought together 27 government personnel, including EWCA staff from Headquarters in Addis and park management from the majority of protected areas managed by the federal government. Following the workshop, a comprehensive baseline report was developed and submitted in April by the NHFP, Hailu Kassa. The report provided valuable M&E data collected by EWCA over the past two years, including the number of HEC incidents and community attitudes toward elephants and their conservation. The thoroughness of the data collected was commendable, showing overall improvements in staff capacity, as well as HEC management across all sites managed by EWCA.

In April, the Director of the EarthRanger Partnership, Bruce Jones, introduced the ER system to EWCA management. The Director General of EWCA expressed strong support for the system. EarthRanger aims to build interconnected data collection and management systems to improve biodiversity protection, resource allocation, research, and protected area management. The system's phased implementation began with an internal assessment of EWCA staff's technology skills and knowledge capacity in July, followed by a Technical Adaptation Plan (TAP), carried out by a consultant from Kenya. Among others, the TAP covered EWCA's organizational structure, technology assessment, selection and implementation plan and data model. The TAP assessment revealed gaps, which will guide the next phase of ER's rollout, including training, capacity building, infrastructure improvements, and the creation of digital policies. Planning for this second phase is currently in progress, with completion of the activity under the current project expected by the end of the year. Meanwhile, EPIF supported the participation of two EWCA staff, including NHFP Hailu Kassa, at the EarthRanger Workshop in Mombasa in September.

Additionally, some equipment essential for setting up the ER system was procured and distributed to EWCA staff in July, including five laptops, five mobile phones, five Huawei Wi-Fi dongles with two-year unlimited data subscriptions and a Canon IR 2206 printer. The equipment will assist EWCA staff in their ongoing efforts to manage HEC and improve conservation outcomes across Ethiopia. It is however foreseen, that setting up a country-wide operational ER system will require a few more years of technical and funding support.

Malawi: In April, SMART consultant Julien Godfrey conducted a 5-day Advanced SMART Training course for DNPW staff in Malawi. The training focused on advanced use of the SMART software, including how to capture field data using mobile devices, with focus on HEC information. A total of 12 participants attended, including staff from DNPW headquarters in Lilongwe (3), Lengwe National Park (1), Kasungu National Park (3), Vwaza Wildlife Reserve (1), Nkhotakhota and Majete Wildlife Reserves, both managed by African Parks (2), and Thuma/Dedza Salima Forest Reserves, managed by the Wildlife Action Group (2) on behalf of the Forestry Department. Participants were reinvigorated by the advanced techniques, leaving them better equipped to handle monitoring data, and specifically HEC data more efficiently.

As of early September, 12 additional Smart Phones have been distributed to Kasungu National Park, to support their HEC M&E operations. Furthermore, the procurement of two motorbikes, intended to support the Rapid Response Unit to address HEC, is currently underway and expected to be completed with distribution set for the next quarter.

General: Participants from INBAC, EWCA, and DNPW attended the jointly-hosted HEC workshop by the EPIF and the World Bank's Global Wildlife Program in Nairobi in May 2024, which focused on addressing the escalating challenge of Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC), particularly HEC, in Africa. Alongside representatives from 21 other countries and experts from organisations such as Save the Elephants and Earth Ranger, they discussed the impacts of HWC on local livelihoods and emphasised the need for community-centred conservation strategies, evidence-based policies, and cross-sectoral collaboration. Participants from all three countries expressed their appreciation for the HEC support provided by the EPIF thus far and their eagerness for continued cooperation.

In summary, the project has made solid progress in line with the agreed implementation timetable, with several additional activities planned for completion in the final six months of the project.

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.

Angola: Angola started one year later than planned, setting up a monitoring system from scratch, in a massive country lacking infrastructure, internet, with few computer literate INBAC field staff. It will take another couple of years of technical and funding support to get the system fully operational at the country level.

Ethiopia: Because EWCA opted for EarthRanger, a far more demanding system than SMART, it will also take another couple of years of technical and funding support to get the system fully operational at the country level, with all federally managed protected areas covered.

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:

Yes (in progress)

Received confirmation of change acceptance:

No

Change Request reference if known:

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024)

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 2025)?

Yes ☐ **No** ☒

4c. If you expect and underspend, then you should 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 to your project 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?

No.

6. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent annual report. If your project was subject to an Overseas Security and Justice Assistance assessment please use this space to comment on any changes to international human rights risks, and to address any additional mitigations outlined in your offer letters. Please provide the comment and then your response. If you have already provided a response, please confirm when.

Annual Report April 2023 – March 2024; AR1; Queries Reviewer

Query 5. Review of Outcome level indicators to ensure that these can be tracked in light of the project implementation delays if a project extension is not being sought (**see Annex 1**).

Query 6. It is not clear whether the project has addressed the comments provided at award stage from the Darwin Expert Committee. Please review and respond in the half year report so it is clear you have considered them.

Comments provided by the Darwin Expert Committee during the award stage were addressed on **20 October 2023 at 14:48**, as an attachment to our first Half Year Report DARCC019.

Attachment: **20231017 – DARCC019 Answers to Darwin Expert Committee Queries.**

Checklist for submission

For New Projects (i.e. starting after 1 st April 2024)	
Have you responded to any additional feedback (other than caveats) received in the letter you received to say your application was successful which requested response at HYR (including safeguarding points)? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	N/A started pre-April 2024
If not already submitted, have you attached your risk register ?	
For Existing Projects (i.e. started before 1 st April 2024)	
Have you responded to feedback from your latest Annual Report Review ? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	Yes, see above.
For All Projects	
Include your project reference in the subject line of submission email.	Done
Submit to BCFs-Report@niras.com .	Done
Have you clearly highlighted any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	Done
Have you reported against the most up to date information for your project ?	Done
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	Done

ANNEX 1

Query 5. Review of Outcome level indicators to ensure that these can be tracked in light of the project implementation delays if a project extension is not being sought.

Monitoring & Evaluation: Due to a considerable time lag between setting baselines for all indicators and contracting consultants, setting up monitoring systems and training staff of the wildlife authorities in Ethiopia and Malawi, it will not be until the final stage of the project that we can report against our indicators. Moreover for some target sites, mitigation interventions implemented or supported during the final months of the project may contribute to the project outcome, and some success may be demonstrated. Ideally, this work should be followed up by a project of at least another two years, first, to provide support for Angola and Ethiopia, where monitoring systems were set up from scratch and where it will take more technical and funding support for the systems to be fully operational, second, to be able to determine trends in key indicators, and third, to provide communities affected by HEC with locally relevant solutions to conflict, whether mediation between groups of people, or hands-on practical interventions to mitigate conflict, or a combination of both.

Although the basic indicator framework has not changed, primarily because it more or less covers all that can be measured, the majority of the Darwin Standard Indicators were added during the reporting period (Change Request 2023). However, the same applies here, a considerable time lag between implementation and demonstrating success may be expected.

All of the previous M&E work done by our main partners has been shared with the EPIF team, mostly derived from manual analysis in Ethiopia and from an old version of SMART in Malawi. However, in Angola, the wildlife authorities start from scratch, and baselines will not be available for at least another year. This implies that for Angola trends in key indicators cannot be determined during the current project.