



**BIODIVERSITY
CHALLENGE FUNDS**



**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.

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| Project reference | DARCC027 |
| Project title | Enhancing technical skills and capacity for orangutan conservation in Sumatra |
| Country/territory | Indonesia |
| Lead Organisation | Sumatran Orangutan Society (SOS) |
| Partner(s) | Yayasan Orangutan Sumatera Lestari-Orangutan Information Centre (YOSL-OIC), Tangguh Hutan Khatulistiwa (TaHuKah) |
| Project leader | Helen Buckland |
| Report date and number | 31 st October 2024, HYR2 |
| Project website/blog/social media | https://www.orangutans-sos.org/ https://orangutancentre.org/ https://www.tahukah.org/en |

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).

Q1 and Q2 (April-September) of the project's second year has seen the completion of 3 trainings, continued ad-hoc support to TaHuKah and OIC by SOS, and significant progress on the creation of 5 resources.

- Under **output 1**, ongoing technical assistance, and regular check-ins were provided to partners.

Activity 1.4: Provision of technical assistance for OIC and TaHuKah to develop new operations and HR manuals and

Activity 1.5: Monthly check-ins with managerial teams at OIC and TaHuKah to identify issues in applying HR and Operations manual.

The frequency, intensity and type of assistance requested and provided has been different for each partner.

OIC: For OIC, technical assistance and online training has been made up largely of training for OIC's newly hired HR member of staff, working to embed practices and systems. Check-ins have focused on recommendations made by the consultant (Rahma) when assessing OIC's capacity in year 1.

TaHuKah: Technical assistance and check-ins for TaHuKah have been more regular, with check-ins occurring between Rahma and Saphira (TaHuKah's Operational Director), or Rahma and Erwin (TaHuKah Director). In the last 6 months, Rahma has focused on supporting TaHuKah specifically with the needs of their leadership team. In the next 6 months, Rahma will continue to support TaHuKah with this, designing and delivering leadership training to the management team, and will also continue to support TaHuKah with building their internal systems.

- Under **Output 2**, 3 training workshops have taken place in the first half of year 2, as well as ongoing regular remote check-ins between trainers and trainees on taught skills. Ad hoc support has been provided to TaHuKah and OIC teams by SOS, alongside resource development to support partner capacity.

Activity 2.3: The second of 2 intensive training workshops in anthropological, ethnographic and participant-observation methods, forest-edge community outreach and engagement, and how to address community conflicts.

The workshop took place over **4 days** of meetings and exercises. **5 participants** from the TaHuKah team were involved in the workshop, which took place in the organisation's Salak office. The TaHuKah team is split between 2 locations, as they work in two landscapes. TaHuKah management decided that the training was most needed in the Salak office, whereas all staff in the Batang Toru office have already completed training and use the taught skills more regularly in their work, and so already have a higher capacity in this area. The workshop objectives were (1) to develop in staff an understanding of how to deploy ethnographic skills in institutional documents (reports, policy papers); (2) to develop staff skills in mapping stakeholders and how to use this skill for stakeholder engagement; and (3) to develop TaHuKah staff's skills in integrating ethnographic knowledge and materials (rituals, land tenure, kinship) for conservation interventions. The trainer submitted a report on his assessment of the staff's progress through the training and made some specific recommendations to continue building capacity in this area. These

included that a standardised form should be developed to support staff with social data collection, and that more capacity building is needed around analysing social dynamics in villages and contextualizing this within the larger regional socio-economic process.

Activity 2.4: resource development is progressing, with the following updates:

- a. **Community engagement toolkit:** Both the Senior Environmental Anthropologist (Darmanto Simaepa) and Anthropology consultant (Lubabun Ni'am) held a series of discussions with the TaHuKah team to compile learnings from recent activities. The toolkit has been drafted, but before publication SOS is seeking inputs from partners and colleagues. The published toolkit will be available as a PDF to all staff and some hard copies will be produced for the TaHuKah offices.
- b. **Social and environmental safeguarding policies:** We have worked closely with our partners to develop their safeguarding policies, ensuring they are tailored to the specific contexts in which they work. OIC currently has a safeguarding policy, which has undergone a review and is suitable for its purpose already. TaHuKah is a very young organisation and as such does not have context specific organisational policies in place. To date, they have had in place a safeguarding policy very similar to SOS'. Rahma is working closely with the TaHuKah team to improve the policy to ensure it is specifically tailored to TaHuKah's needs and reflects their experiences in the field.
- c. **Community survey pocketbooks:** The pocketbooks will be formulated from information in the community engagement toolkit, to deliver instructions, simple reminders, and accessible assistance to TaHuKah staff for use in the field. These will be printed as small pocketbooks that the staff can take on fieldwork with them.

Activity 2.5: The third of 3 intensive trainings in social community-level forestry schemes.

The workshop took place over **4 days**, with **8** members of the TaHuKah team and **5** members of the Sibagindar Community Forest management team participating. The training reinforced the understanding of Social Forestry built in the first training sessions of this series and outlined the process after approval of a permit (including establishing business groups-KUPS, conducting inventories and making technical action plans) through presentations, open floor discussions, case studies, and technical training.

Activity 2.7: The second of 2 training sessions in village planning and development policy tools, and how to successfully integrate nature conservation and Natural Resource Management (NRM) into these.

This workshop took place over 4 days, led by Idham Edo (TaHuKah's Village Planning Specialist). The objectives of this training were to equip participants with an understanding of the importance of village development planning to efforts to protect forest areas and biodiversity; and to understand recent legal changes to village planning documentation and process. Some of the information was repeated from the first session of this series, because there has been some staff turnover in TaHuKah, and therefore Edo decided it was necessary to repeat some of the training. Pre and post training tests revealed an average of a 56% increase in knowledge surrounding village planning procedures and legality.

Activity 2.11 and **Activity 2.12:** Regular check-ins between trainers and trainees on taught skills and ad hoc support given to TaHuKah and OIC teams (as requested) from SOS.

Support has continued to be delivered to TaHuKah on request in all areas. In the first half of the second year much of this support has focused on social ethnographic data collection and has included biweekly meetings focused on critically discussing and analysing academic papers in the area. The support provided by the SOS social forestry expert in addition to formal training is invaluable and is well-timed with TaHuKah's growing focus on mapping and implementing social forestry programmes.

Under **output 3** no training workshops have taken place in the first half on year 2, with activities **3.3** (monthly check-in with managerial level of frontline project partners to assist with uploading MEL data) and **3.4** (ad-hoc technical support whenever frontline partners have questions or require support regarding MEL framework) continuing.

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.

The programmatic work of our partner TaHuKah over the last 6 months has risen to an unpredicted and demanding level. Therefore, it has been difficult to achieve some of the scheduled activities in by the end of Q2. We have submitted a change request for these activities to be moved to later in the timetable, and this request has been approved. We have learnt that the rapid pace of the programmatic work can be disruptive to planned activities, and efforts are being made to ensure that even unpredictable schedule changes are flagged as early as possible. In addition, we had not anticipated our partner OIC requesting a workshop to review their 5-year strategy document. At the time of the first workshop to create the strategy, the new director of OIC had just been appointed and the strategy workshop was a great chance to embed his leadership. One year on however, we can recognise that the huge challenge of building a strategy for a large organisation could not be fully done when the director was fresh in his role, instead a year was needed to learn and become familiar with the organisation. We expect this workshop review to be very productive, and extremely important to the impact that our project can have on OIC's capacity. We have

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| submitted a change request to reallocate some unspent funding from Q1+2 of Y2 to this additional strategy review workshop. This change request has been approved. | |
| 3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement? | |
| Discussed with NIRAS: | Yes/ No |
| Formal Change Request submitted: | Yes/ No |
| Received confirmation of change acceptance: | Yes/ No |
| 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 <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| 5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures? | |
| <p>There is an underspend at the end of Y2 Q2 compared to what we had originally forecast for Q1 and Q2. We had forecast to spend £62,473.64 by the end of Y2 Q2, however, we have so far spent an amount of £46,925.71 up to 30.9.24. This difference is due predominantly to timing differences and we anticipate spending the full amount forecast by the end of the financial year. Therefore, we do not expect an underspend at the end of the financial year.</p> <p>Please see explanations for certain budget lines currently underspent below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff costs: there has been some turnover of SOS staff this year. Change requests have been submitted and approved for both staff changes. During the process of staff turnover, there has been some absence, meaning that the full amount forecasted to be spent for the first half of the year was not incurred. Plans are in place to balance this out in the coming months by allocating a higher proportion (%) of SOS staff time to this project in the second half of the year to compensate for time lost because of these changes. Consultants: there is an underspend due to the timing of work and invoicing by specific consultants associated with Ops and HR support and support on use of the RimbaLab platform. We anticipate this budget line will be fully spent by the end of the financial year. Travel and subsistence: The underspend on this budget line is due to two things: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The cost of flights to Indonesia has decreased compared to our budget. In addition, most of the international travel this year is now scheduled to take place in the second half of the year, to deliver workshops later in the year and collect MEL data to wrap up the project. The full amount allocated to partner travel and subsistence was not needed to deliver the workshops that have happened so far this year. A change request has been approved to reallocate these funds to deepen the impact of the strategic planning workshop we did with OIC by holding a second workshop which will offer the opportunity to review and update the strategy as appropriate. Operating costs: operating costs in the last quarter have been lower than forecast, because 2 workshops were unable to happen this quarter as planned. A change request has been approved for these workshops to happen in Q3 instead, Other costs are slightly lower than forecast due to the timing of work being undertaken on the production of the RimbaLab system. This has not affected the availability of the output for RimbaLab and we anticipate this budget line will be fully spent by the end of the financial year. | |
| 6. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent annual report. Please provide the comment and then your response. If you have already provided a response, please confirm when. | |
| As requested in the Annual Report Review of our year 1 report, most of the feedback will be addressed in our year 2 annual report. The review requested that the exit strategy document be shared with this report. The document has been included in the submission of this report. | |

Checklist for submission

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| For New Projects (i.e. starting after 1 st April 2024) |
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| 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)? | |
| If not already submitted, have you attached your risk register ? | |
| For Existing Projects (i.e. started before 1st April 2024) | |
| Have you responded to feedback from your latest Annual Report Review ? | X |
| For All Projects | |
| Include your project reference in the subject line of submission email. | X |
| Submit to BCFs-Report@niras.com . | X |
| Have you reported against the most up to date information for your project ? | X |
| Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report. | X |