

## Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus Half Year Report

**Note: If there is any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website, please ensure you clearly highlight this.**

**Submission Deadline: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023**

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| <b>Project reference</b>                 | <a href="#">DARCC030</a>  |
| <b>Project title</b>                     | LEAD Ranger: Capacity Building for Nature's Protectors  |
| <b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>       | Kenya, Zambia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, South Sudan, Indonesia, Mozambique, South Africa   |
| <b>Lead partner</b>                      | Thin Green Line Foundation  |
| <b>Partner(s)</b>                        | Ranger Campus, International-Anti-Poaching Foundation   |
| <b>Project leader</b>                    | <i>Tim Schneider</i>  |
| <b>Report date and number</b>            | <i>HYR1</i>   |
| <b>Project website/blog/social media</b> | <a href="https://leadranger.org/">https://leadranger.org/</a><br><a href="https://www.linkedin.com/company/lead-ranger/?originalSubdomain=ke">https://www.linkedin.com/company/lead-ranger/?originalSubdomain=ke</a><br><a href="https://www.instagram.com/lead_conservation/">https://www.instagram.com/lead_conservation/</a> |

**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 since start up to end September).**

Although we are not looking for specific reporting against your indicators, please use this opportunity to consider the appropriateness of your M&E systems (are your indicators still relevant, can you report against any Standard Indicators, do your assumptions still hold true?). The guidance can be found on the resources page of the relevant fund website.

### **Progress to Date**

Since April 2023, LEAD Ranger has progressed well against the activities and outputs proposed within our log frame and application.

We have successfully delivered seven, of a proposed eight, Coach Ranger Life Saver (CRLS) courses, resulting in the participation of 101 rangers to date. Of these participants, 93 rangers have been certified as Coach Ranger Life Savers, contributing to the following expected outputs:

- 1. Output 1:** Rangers demonstrate improved capability to deliver critical care and emergency field-response first-aid by March 2024. (Indicators 1.1 and 1.2 inclusive)
- 2. Output 2:** Rangers demonstrate increased capacity and confidence in their ability to deliver training to their peers and lead team operations in the field. Indicators 2.1 and 2.2 inclusive, indicators 2.3 and 2.4 require further assessment)

Post-course evaluation surveys have been conducted with individual participants at the end of each training course. Our Impact Manager is actively compiling this information for analysis, which will enable us to evaluate whether rangers' confidence has been impacted through the project (as per indicators 2.3 and 2.4). In order to effectively report on Output 3 (Eight organisations demonstrate improved capacity to deliver ranger training internally by March 2024) and out overarching Outcome we will maintain contact with beneficiary organisations and conduct an end of project survey with each.

In addition to CRLS, our training team has also delivered one Field Ranger Instructor course – this is a natural progression for all organisations participating in LEAD Ranger and can only be commenced when around 90% of a workforce are competent in CRLS.

### **Project Indicators**

Through the undertaking of our activities between April and September it has become apparent that we may be unable to report on some of the proposed indicators for the overarching outcome (Delivery of CRLS courses increases access to training for 2000 rangers, reduces rates of ranger casualties, improves response to wildlife crime, and increases access to emergency care for 50,000 people by March 2024). This is primarily due to the capacity of all beneficiary organisations to gather the required data and appropriately comment on the proposed indicators. This is primarily related so some of the small-scale conservation organisations with whom we operate and their ability to gather community-level impact data. Over the next quarter our staff will examine available data and assess our ability to report on these indicators. Following this we may submit a change-request form to update our log-frame and propose, instead, to gather anecdotal evidence of long-term impact.

**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.**

### **Countries of Operation**

The proposed countries of operation for this project include Cameroon, Congo (DRC), Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Of these countries we have yet to deliver training in Cameroon and Rwanda, this is predominantly due to beneficiary organisations' operational availability and limited schedules. We are actively working with identified organisations to identify suitable times in which to deliver training to their rangers by the end of this project period and, as per our project application, we will offer to deliver training in-country or at our Kenya-based training facility to ensure the most effective training for each individual organisation.

In addition to the proposed countries of operation, we have also delivered CRLS training to rangers in Malawi, South Sudan and Indonesia; this is our first training delivery outside of Africa. Whilst these countries were outside the scope of our original application, delivery of training here has not been to the detriment of our project budget or activities. As noted within our application feedback, most of the LEAD Ranger budget was tied to staff salaries. This budget proposed a full year of employment for our training team and was not expectant on training delivery (e.g., our staff are not paid on commission). This not only provides our staff with financial stability but also ensures we can deploy our training team at short notice and rearrange training calendar to suit the needs of beneficiary organisations. The proposed training of eight organisations/ 96 rangers was based on a conservative estimate of 2 deployments per quarter; to date we are averaging 5 deployments (including 3 non-CRLS courses) with some courses being delivered consecutively.

### **Training Delivery**

To enable consecutive training courses to take place, our training team has activated our network of previous graduates who have assisted LEAD staff to deliver training in their respective regions. This has enabled rangers from Kenya and Zimbabwe to further expand their experiences and provides participants with a real-time representation of the professional development opportunities available to them following their participation in and graduation from a LEAD Ranger training course. This development has positively impacted our project delivery and enabled expedited activity delivery and the completion of project activities, and some outputs, ahead of schedule.

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| <b>3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?</b> |    |
| Discussed with NIRAS:   | No |
| Formal Change Request submitted:  | No |
| Received confirmation of change acceptance  | No |
| Change request reference if known:  |    |

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| <b>4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023)</b>  |  |
| Actual spend: £ [REDACTED]   |  |
| <b>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)?</b>   |  |
| Yes <input type="checkbox"/>   | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Estimated underspend: £ |
| <b>4c. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully.</b> Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.<br><b>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.</b> |  |
| <b>5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?</b>  |  |
| No other issues to raise at this time. Thank you.  |  |

**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](mailto: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**