

Darwin Initiative Main/Post/D+ Project Half Year Report (due 31 October 2016)

Project Ref No	22-3287
Project Title:	Local economic development through “pro-poor” gorilla tourism in Uganda
Country(ies)/Territory(ies)	Uganda
Lead Organisation	IIED
Partner(s)	Responsible Tourism Partnership, Institute for Tropical Forest Conservation, International Gorilla Conservation Programme, Explore Worldwide, Exodus Travels, Great Lakes Safaris, Wild Places, Kewtu Africa, Responsible Travel
Project Leader	Dilys Roe
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	October 2016; HYR1
Project website/ Twitter/ Blog/ Instagram etc	http://www.iied.org/local-economic-development-through-gorilla-tourism
Funder (DFID/Defra)	DFID

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).

The first few months of the project were occupied with start up activities including sub-contracting of project partners and initial promotional activities. A [project website](#) was developed and a [project flyer](#) produced.

In May 2016 Dilys Roe (IIED), Julia Baker (IIED consultant) and Peter Nizette (RTP) held preliminary meetings in Uganda with tour operator partners and with Uganda Tourism Board to brief them on the project plans. Meetings were also held with Medard Twinamatsiko (ITFC) to start planning the research component and to design the survey form for collecting tourist perspectives on local products and services that they were currently buying and would be potentially interested to buy. A meeting was also held with senior staff from the Bwindi and Mgahinga Conservation Trust who have expressed considerable interest in the project and who are potentially interested in funding complementary activities.

In June 2016 ITFC reviewed existing studies, and built context for the project. In July 2016 conducted consultative meetings with key stakeholders such as Uganda Wildlife Authority, local leaders and visited all the lodges in the main tourism zones around Bwindi Forest and briefed stakeholders on the project, distributed project flyers and also provided each lodge with copies of the tourist survey to distribute to their guests. ITFC also developed an inventory of existing local-level tourism enterprises and initiatives in each of the tourism zones.

In July 2016, RTP conducted telephone and email consultations with UK and international tour operators in order to explore their perspectives on the types of local products and services that their clients would be interested to purchase and their quality expectations.

In August 2016 all the project partners met in Bwindi for a scoping visit. This involved:

- 1) A project planning workshop – held at the Uganda Wildlife Authority office in Buhoma – in order to review project activities including M and E plans; hear a report back from

RTP on tour operator perspectives; review the local enterprise inventory developed by ITFC; and discuss with IGCP their progress to date in developing the Gorilla Friendly ecolabel.

- 2) Visits to each of the tourism zones around Bwindi (Buhoma to the north west of the park, Ruhija to the east and Nkuringo, Rubuguri and Rushaga to the south). These visits included: drive/walks around the tourism centres in order to identify existing and emerging enterprises and update the inventory where necessary; focus group discussions with key stakeholders in each tourism zone (the three southern zones were combined in one meeting in Rubuguri); one-to-one interviews with individual entrepreneurs and/or coordinators of collaborative tourism enterprises which have the potential to benefit from the project. The project team evaluated the findings from the scoping visit and generated an updated list of tourism enterprises, training needs and outputs.

The results of the scoping visit are currently being compiled into a report which will set out our initial assessment of the demand for, and potential supply of, local tourism products and services that can complement gorilla tourism around Bwindi Forest.

In September 2016, IIED and ITFC have worked on the research framework and the survey instrument for the baselines surveys.

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 discussions between project partners in the run up to the scoping visit, and during the scoping visit itself we have concluded that our initial plan of conducting a large scale household survey around Bwindi Forest and selecting households to involve in the training being offered by the project based on the results of the survey would be too risky a strategy for delivering impact given the time and resources available. Hence we concluded that we would better to focus the project resources on existing economically poor and marginalised tourism entrepreneurs who we have more confidence will be able to benefit from the training provided by the project, given their obvious existing interest in, and capacity for involvement in tourism. This will not affect the budget or timetable of the project but will ensure that our interventions have a higher chance of success.

Another positive development is the interest shown in the project by the Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Trust. We are currently still discussing areas of mutual interest but there is the potential for BMCT to provide additional funding that could be used to extend the geographic scope of the project and/or to invest further in tourism product development. RTP will be working with the BMCT to develop the parallel project scope over the next few months.

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:	No – we will discuss if either issue results in a significant change to the agreed project proposal or budget
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Formal change request submitted:	No
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Received confirmation of change acceptance	No
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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?

Not at this stage

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.

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 send your **completed report by email** to Eilidh Young at 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: 22-035 Darwin Half Year Report**