

Darwin Initiative/D+ Project Half Year Report (due 31st October 2019)

Project reference	24-019
Project title	Developing a Community Based Ecotourism Model at Lake Natron, Tanzania.
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Tanzania, United Republic of
Lead organisation	BirdLife International
Partner(s)	Tanzania Wildlife Authority (TAWA), Engaresero Eramatare Community Development Initiative (EECDI), Tanzania Association of Tour Operators (TATO), Maasai Pastoralist Development Organization (MPDO – LARETO), Tanzania Tourist Board (TTB), Honeyguide Foundation, Monduli District council, Ngorongoro District council and Longido district council.
Project leader	Ken Mwathe
Report date and number (e.g. HYR3)	HYR3
Project website/blog/social media etc.	https://www.birdlife.org/worldwide/news/bumper-breeding-season-flamingo-factory-lake-natron

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).

Activity 1.5 Support production of the TDP and share with stakeholders

Final TDP document is already produced and has been shared with the designer to design layout ready for printing. The final TDP document is attached with this report as Annex 1. An event to publically sign and launch the TDP (Annex 1) is planned by January 2020.

Multiple gates were a big problem as tour vehicles had to stop three times before gaining access to the lake. Removing the first two gates and having one central point to collect fees, was a big win, and one of the key objectives of the project's Tourism Development Plan. The gate that remains is the final point of entry of those three original gates and is situated at Ngare Sero village. Associated with the reduction in gates was the need to share the revenue fairly. A revenue sharing procedure was drawn up last year and is being applied this year. We will report on the success of this in the next report.

Activity 2.1 Organize training on ecotourism and business management for men and women, and youth and follow up training in villages by trainees. Conduct post-training self-assessment to training participants

As part of the ongoing capacity building for ecotourism business, nine women from Engaresero and Oldonyo Lengai villages were supported through a knowledge exchange visit to Tarangire National Park, Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA), Mto wa Mbu and Arusha. Participants learnt from fellow women on how they operate their tourism businesses and also to realize new markets for their products. Tshs. 410,000 (about £150) worth of products were sold to these other businesses during the exchange visit, and these will now be sold on to tourists on their way to other destinations such as the Serengeti or the NCA. Through this trip, five new markets were secured, and this will see beads and other products made by the women of Lake Natron being sold in additional key tourism areas outside Lake Natron. The success of the visit means an increase in monthly income for these women.

Activity 2.2: Devise, distribute and analyse survey form for tour operators to report against quality of tour guiding.

The survey with tour operators to report against quality of tour guiding will be concluded by February 2020. However, discussions were held with some tour operators and the Tanzania Association of Tour Operators (TATO) who informally reported significant improvement in the quality of tour guiding service provided by the EECDI. More formal findings will be published in the next report.

Activity 2.3: Construct booth and use it for sale of beads and other merchandise

The project has supported the design and installation of 6 signposts (Figure 1) that have been put in strategic places to attract tourists and customers to visit the booths. This adds value to the constructed booths and increased support for the women. Beads from all 200 women involved in the project are sold at the booths. About 40-50 women use the booths every day. Those women who do not attend, make their beadwork at home and bring their beads to the booths for sale, but are not themselves present daily.



Figure 1; Booth signpost (L), tourists visiting the booth after reading the signpost at Engaresero

Activity 2.4: Set up Revolving Fund, training community back to back with 2.1 operationalise and monitor its implementation

Community Revolving Fund activity was sub granted to Engaresero Eramatare Community Development Initiative (EECDI). Special bank (group account) was opened at NMB Mto wa mbu. Name of the account: ENGARESERO ERAMATARE CDI, Account number: 43810002535. The account has 3 signatories, namely BirdLife International (Emmanuel Mgimwa), Lebanguti Lekitony (M) and Omega Lemra (F) from EECDI. The Loan Coordinator, who is also the EECDI coordinator, manages the chequebooks. The project management team decided to roll out the revolving fund at Ngare Sero (Engaresero) village initially, to test the system. The activity will be rolled out to other villages early next year, 2020.

Call for loan applications was announced in March 2019. A total of 53 applications were received and reviewed by the established Loan Review Committee (LRC) on 23rd – 24th April 2019 at NgareSero village. The LRC is comprised of Village Executive Officer (VEO) for NgareSero village, Community Development Officer (CDO) for NgareSero ward, BirdLife International and Maasai Pastoralist Development Organization (MPDO – LARETO) and EECDI. Loan application review process was guided and informed by the approved guidelines and policy document for community revolving fund at NgareSero village.

Key summary;

- Total amount requested from the 53 applications received - Tshs.
- Total amount of non-refundable fees collected - Tshs. .
- Number of applications which were shortlisted for funding – 23.
- Number of applications which were approved¹ for funding – 20.

¹ The loans committee followed the agreed revolving fund guidelines in making decisions. Applications turned down are those which were not in line with these guidelines and policies. The committee also prioritised the best business ideas with a high chance of success because of limited budget. The committee will also work with those whose proposals were rejected to improve their ideas for possible funding in future.

- Number of groups² whose applications were approved – 7 groups (with membership of about 50; 75% are women).
- Number of individuals whose applications were approved – 13 (6 women).
- A total amount of Tshs. were approved for loan disbursement.
- The fund was divided into two and loans disbursed in two phases to two different groups of applicants.
- First phase loan beneficiaries received a total of Tshs. loan on May 2019.
- Second phase loan beneficiaries received a total amount of Tshs. paid in September 2019.
- Monitoring of the supported businesses was conducted in August/September 2019. The businesses supported included grocery business, Maasai traditional attire business, beads business, barbeque centre, retail shops, poultry and sale of grains.
- Beneficiaries reported significant improvements in their businesses, mainly because of training received and the financial boost. A total of 32% of the loaned amount from the first instalment has been repaid. This means the beneficiaries are ahead of the loan repayment schedule by 50%. Beneficiaries reported profits of between 10 and 15 per cent.
- Loan beneficiaries are required to take and plant at least five tree seedlings as part of contract. Beneficiaries are asked to plant the seedlings within their homesteads and public offices and places (e.g police station, village office, primary school). The planting actively contributes to the lake catchment protection since all homesteads and public spaces are on elevations above the lake.
- It is expected that a total of 400 individuals (70% women) will benefit from the revolving fund by March 2020.

Activity 3.2: Prepare land and plant key wetland areas with at least 7,500 indigenous tree seedlings.

A total of 1,700 indigenous trees were planted in May 2019. Of those, 1,200 seedlings were planted at Engaresero and 500 seedlings at Pinyinyi villages. A total of 290 people ((175) female/girls) participated in planting. The total number of trees planted during the project are therefore 7,500, which was the exact target.

The EYR2 reviewer queried the means of verifying increased awareness of the importance of trees in the catchment by measuring the number of newly cut trees. The logframe and M&E plan have since been revised (see annual report 2) and this indicator updated. The number of stumps present in a selected number of catchment plots were counted to create a baseline. The count will be repeated at the end of project to survey how many (if any) new stumps are present. The target is that there will be less than 2 new stumps for every ten trees present (the current rate is 4 stumps for every ten).

Activity 3.3: Tree seedling after care and monitoring.

Tree seedlings after care and monitoring is ongoing with support from respective village (committees) governments at Lake Natron.

Monitoring of the planted tree seedlings has been going on, with active participation of village (committees) governments. As of August 2019, 80% of the trees planted since first tree planting phase were found to be surviving. This is mainly because of the strategic approaches in monitoring and management of the planted trees. It should however be noted that this has not been easy to achieve as the climate at Natron is very hot and dry for most part of the year.

Activity 3.4: Set up and carry out water quality monitoring.

Water quality monitoring is ongoing. One set of data were collected during the reporting period, in August 2019. The results are summarized in table 1 below.

Table 1: Results of water data collected in August 2019.

No.	Variable	Ngaresero reading	Pinyinyi readings
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² Group applications come from a registered group of people with a common business interest. For example, they might be dealing with beads, retail business or poultry. An example is the Kitapua Ndomonok Group: a group of women who operate the Ngare Sero cultural boma and engage themselves in cultural tourism, selling of beads and cattle.

1	pH	10.17	10.15
2	Water Turbidity (NTU)	34.20	60.04
3	Electrical conductivity	9030.00	26100.00
4	Dissolved Oxygen (mg/l)	5.07	4.18

Generally, water from Ngare Sero river has better quality parameters than that from Pinyinyi river. There is a small scale irrigation project at Pinyinyi village, which results in soil from the farms being washed into the river. This results into higher suspended materials and therefore higher turbidity and electrical conductivity possibly from fertilizers that are used to improve crop productivity. This also leads to lower dissolved oxygen.

The water from Ngare Sero river flows through the village and straight into the Lake with limited human interference and therefore lower turbidity, electrical conductivity and higher dissolved oxygen.

Activity 4.1: Produce advocacy/awareness poster and booklet.

Awareness raising poster showing the values of, and threats to, Lake Natron has been designed (Annex 2). Printing of these will be done concurrent with printing of TDP.

(This material is distinct from that in Output 5, where awareness material focuses on sharing the community-based ecotourism model to ensure it can be replicated locally, nationally, regionally and internationally)

Activity 4.2: Carry out awareness amongst government agencies on values and threats through public forums, film and radio.

BirdLife International participated in Mwenge 2019 celebrations at Ngaresero village. The theme for 2019 Mwenge celebration was “Water is a right for all, let’s conserve catchments and remember to participate in local government elections”. A total of 155 t-shirts were printed by the project. The t-shirts were printed with awareness messages on catchment conservation and restoration. The t-shirts had the Darwin Initiative logo, BirdLife International logo, Mwenge logo and coat of arms logo. The t-shirts were distributed to district government officials, ward government officials, village government officials and community members within Ngorongoro District council.



Local community members don the T-shirts inscribed with the Coat of Arms of the Government of Tanzania and BirdLife and Darwin logos © Emmanuel Mгимwa

In his remarks, Ngorongoro district commissioner, Mr. Idd Kimanta thanked BirdLife and other stakeholders for their support in conservation of Lake Natron. He also emphasized the importance of Lake Natron to lesser flamingo breeding globally. In doing so, the project was able to raise awareness of the Lake Natron values to the attending national government officials and local communities. Key messages which were delivered were;

- The value and threats of Lake Natron site – by District Commissioner
- Conservation challenges at Lake Natron – by Councillor Ibrahim Sakay
- The role of ecotourism business to local communities and sustainable conservation of Natron ecosystem – by Councillor Ibrahim Sakay

Table 2 below shows estimated number of people reached during the Mwenge celebration in June 2019.

Table 2; Estimated number of people who were reached

No.	Category	Number
1	Local community member	1,200
2	District government officials	65
3	Regional government officials	30
4	National government officials	22
	TOTAL NUMBER REACHED	1,317

More than 4 million people in Tanzania and in East Africa are estimated to have been reached by project media coverages in September 2019. This was during project field visit and monitoring by Regional Director of BirdLife in Africa, Mr. Ademola Ajagbe and project coordinator and during the 2nd Annual General Meeting of Nature Tanzania in September 2019. The coverage was done by ITV Television Media, TBC Media and Azam Media³.

We would like to take this opportunity to respond to the year one reviewer's query around the use of the "Crimson Wing" film. The project is using the film as a tool to raise awareness of the value of Lake Natron as the most important global site for the breeding of the lesser flamingo.

The booklet was designed but printing could not be done immediately because the project contracted one printing firm to do all the publications – poster, booklet and the TDP. The delay was occasioned by the need to do the final proof-reading of the TDP which has now been completed.

All the publications will now be produced by the end of December 2019.

The poster will be used to raise awareness on the values of Lake Natron, whereas, the purpose of the booklet will be to share lessons from the community based ecosystem model for replication at national, regional and international levels.

Activity 5.2 Share project lessons with tourism industry actors, and civil society organisations through online platform and in person

Sharing of project lessons has continued in this reporting period. Table 3 below summarise meetings and workshops in which lessons learnt from this project were shared.

Table 3: Meetings in which project lessons were shared

No.	Name of meeting and date	Theme/objective of the meeting	Issues presented
1	Mara Knowledge Exchange Workshop	Knowledge exchange on conservation of Mara River Basin in Tanzania. Attended by Project Manager	The need for joint efforts to conserve the Mau forest and drop of unsustainable development projects. Mau forests are important source of freshwater for Lake Natron through the Ewaso Ng'iro River. Mara River also receives water from Mau forest in Kenya.
2	2 nd AGM of Nature Tanzania, 25 th September 2019	Annual meeting of members and partners of Nature Tanzania attended by Project Coordinator and Project Manager.	Lesson learnt from the project. The need for effective partnership and collaboration in implementation of the developed TDP.

³ According to Tanzania Communications Regulatory Author (TCRA), there are 2.7 million active subscribers of decoders for Pay TVs services in Tanzania. There are also 4.9 million active Tanzanians on social media and all pay TV stations connect their services to this group. There are many more Tanzanians who watch free to air TV. According to Geopoll, ITV is the most popular TV station in Tanzania. In view of the above, any news item on ITV will conservatively reach not less than 4 million Tanzanians. See https://www.tcra.go.tz/images/TelCom_Statistics_June_2019.xlsx.pdf and <https://www.slideshare.net/DataReportal/digital-2019-tanzania-january-2019-v01>

Moreover, a project story on a successful breeding of lesser flamingo in 2019 has been published in June 2019 on BirdLife's website. The link to the story is <https://www.birdlife.org/worldwide/news/bumper-breeding-season-flamingo-factory-lake-natron>. The story has been shared 755 times on Facebook.

Activity 5.3: Disseminate project lessons, best practice and through local radio and newspapers and through EAC committees national tourism ministries.

A news video story on project success were made and aired at ITV Media on 26th September 2019. Moreover, a news video for Nature Tanzania broadcasted by ITV Media, Azam and TBC media on the 27th September featured a component on value of Lake Natron to tourism and communities' livelihood.

PMA5 Convene PSC and Local Project Management meetings

The Honeyguide Foundation has remained a member of the project team in spite of them not leading the development of the TDP. They attended the 1st PSC meeting as well as the inception meeting (sign in sheets available on request). However, they were not in a position to attend the last steering meeting. They will attend the next meeting.

PMA6 Collect data to monitor project progress and conduct final evaluation

The project collected data to monitor project progress on August 2019 at Lake Natron site. The following tables provide for report of indicators monitored.

Table 4: Monthly income as of August 2019

No.	Indicator	Average in August	Average at project start
1	Monthly income for men	\$50 per month	\$31 per month
2	Monthly income for women	\$60 per month	\$52 per month
3	Monthly income for youth	\$70 per month	\$46 per month

Table 5: Monitoring report of various indicators as of August 2019

No.	Indicator	Report
1	2.d	About 10 tour guides have benefited with first batch loans
2	2.f	2 booths are in place now and benefitting over 200 women.
3	2.h	\$50 for men, \$60 for women and \$70 for youths per month

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.

No.

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: Yes/No

Formal change request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No

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?
No.

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. Additionally, if you were funded under R25 and asked to provide further information by your first half year report, please attach your response as a separate 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 DO NOT send these in the same email.**

Please send your **completed report by email** to 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: 25-035 Darwin Half Year Report**