



Darwin Initiative/Darwin Plus Projects Half Year Report (due 31st October 2020)

Project reference	25-004
Project title	LIFE
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Kenya, Sri Lanka
Lead organisation	International Institute for Environment and Development
Partner(s)	AB Consultants (Kenya), and Institute for Policy Studies (Sri Lanka)
Project leader	Paul Steele
Report date and number (e.g. HYR3)	HYR3
Project website/blog/social media	https://www.iied.org/livelihoods-insurance-elephants-life-kenya-sri-lanka https://www.iied.org/covering-elephant-tracks-can-insurance-compensate-farmers-for-wildlife-damage http://www.dailymirror.lk/article/Inception-Workshop-How-critical-is-the-human-elephant-conflict--161120.html

1. 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).

Unfortunately, we haven't been able to make much progress in the last six months. Both our projects in Kenya and Sri Lanka have been extensively delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic as our project partners and the private insurance companies selected have not been able to travel to rural areas to sell their insurance products to households affected by human-elephant conflict. Indeed, in both countries travel from the capital city to rural areas was legally prohibited.

In the case of Kenya, the project was fortunate in catalysing a national reform of the government wildlife compensation scheme to hand it over to private insurance industry. However, this policy decision was part of a national Task Force appointed by the Minister of Tourism and Wildlife and the work of this task force was significantly delayed by COVID-19. The task force report recommending private management of the wildlife compensation scheme was recently handed over to the Minister so hopefully the pilots can now go ahead assuming COVID-19 does not worsen in Kenya.

In Sri Lanka for several months' movement was restricted in rural areas. COVID-19 and its economic implications caused a downturn in many insurance companies in Sri Lanka so some of the companies who had originally indicated interested in the LIFE project dropped out. However, we were fortunate that one company SANASA remained engaged, but a lengthy negotiation process was necessary to persuade them that the LIFE project approach would provide sustainable financing for the insurance premiums even after the LIFE project budget is over.

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months (for Covid-19 specific delays/problems, please use 2b). Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

In Sri Lanka, the project was delayed by a parliamentary election on 5th August 2020 which limited engagement by key stakeholders in the project's activities. Following the election, a Junior Minister responsible for Human-Elephant conflict was appointed for the first time in Sri Lanka, which will ensure greater political attention to this issue. The Darwin team in Sri Lanka is planning to meet this Junior Minister to brief him at the appropriate time when we receive some results from the pilots.

All other issues relate to COVID (see section 2b below).

2b. Please outline any specific issues which your project has encountered as a result of Covid-19. Where you have adapted your project activities in response to the pandemic, please briefly outline how you have done so here. Explain what residual impact there may be on your project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

As already indicated, our project is working in relatively remote rural areas in Kenya and Sri Lanka to pilot private household for human elephant conflict. Given travel restriction to these rural areas, the project was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This was in line with ethics concerns about not exposing our in-country partners (AB Consultants and the Institute for Policy Studies) or their rural counterparts to any unnecessary risks.

In Kenya this was exacerbated by delays to a Ministerial appointed task force that the project had supported to provide a national policy framework that that was also delayed by COVID as face to face meetings of the taskforce were restricted. In Sri Lanka there were delays due to the 5th August 2020 election and uncertainly in the private insurance market due to market turbulence following COVID.

So far in Kenya indications are that the COVID-19 situation is now stabilising and travel to the field should be possible by the end of 2020. In Kenya there have been 55,192 COVID cases and 996 deaths as of 31 October 2020. Easing of COVID-19 restrictions in Kenya and the lifting of travel restrictions should allow the pilot to take place starting in early 2021 for review by the end of 2021. In Sri Lanka, the level of COVID-19 cases has been relatively low with total cases only 10,663 and deaths only 31, so the pilots are hoped to begin by the end of 2020. Again, this will allow a review of progress in Sri Lanka by the end of 2021.

Once the country reviews of both pilots are available by the last quarter of 2021, the IIED team will be able to undertake the overall synthesis of the project results in early 2022. This will ensure we achieve our project outcomes of assessing private insurance to tackle human wildlife conflict by the new proposed end date of the of the Darwin project in March 2022.

Given the unforeseen nature of the COVID-19 pandemic there have been no options possible to mitigate this time change. We have been constantly monitoring the COVID-19 situation with regular monthly calls with our in-country partners in Kenya (AB Consultants) and Sri Lanka (Institute of Policy Studies). However, given the medical and legal constraints, travel was restricted and our partners health and safety were paramount, so we had to hold off on field activities.

For all these reasons we requested a one-year extension to our Darwin LIFE project to 31st March 2022 which will allow the Darwin project activities to be effectively completed.

2c. 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

Formal change request submitted:	Yes
Received confirmation of change acceptance	Yes

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: £81,397

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. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.

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.

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: 25-001 Darwin Half Year Report**