



## Darwin Initiative/Darwin Plus Projects Half Year Report (due 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020)

<b>Project reference</b>	25-028
<b>Project title</b>	Community adaptability to loss occasioned by wildlife in Uganda.
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	UGANDA
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Chimpanzee Sanctuary and Wildlife Conservation Trust
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Makerere University, School of Forestry Environmental and Geographical Sciences. Uganda Wildlife Authority National Forestry Authority
<b>Project leader</b>	Dr Joshua Rukundo
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR3)</b>	October 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2020 HYR3
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	<a href="http://www.ngambaisland.org">www.ngambaisland.org</a>

**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).**

The project progress in the last 6 months has been as noted under the activities below:

**Activity 1.7: Conduct awareness campaigns and programs in target communities using the most appropriate methods and relevant awareness materials.** The “*Ekijja Omanyire*” radio drama started airing in April 2020 on a local radio station, Spice FM, with a listenership of 5 million <https://www.liveonlineradio.net/uganda/spice-fm-uganda.htm> <https://raddio.net/321899-spice-fm-uganda/> One episode is aired every Friday at 7:20PM EAT for 61 weeks.

Awareness materials, including 3 posters and a children’s book, were designed and printed, both in English and Runyoro, the local language, in May 2020. 10,000 copies have been distributed in 32 villages to 2,560 Households and at key areas of congregation. Training of village champions and leaders was done to facilitate the interpretation of the posters. Key messages were; *Do’s and Don’ts of human chimpanzee conflict*; *Human-Wildlife Conflict Coexistence*; and *The Human Wildlife Conflict Resilience Fund*.

**1.8 Maintain regular contact with local community conservation education facilitators and champions through monitoring and technical backstopping in the field.**

Meetings with VSLA group committees were held, in all the 32 villages, to consult and train members on governance of the proposed fund. These were done house to house due to COVID-19 restrictions. Structures of representation at higher levels were implemented.

In April 2020, **planting materials** for Soybean, Ginger, Irish potatoes Mushroom, onions and live fence, were distributed to 240 farmers in 10villages. Household to household monitoring of farmers, as well as support for harvesting and sales, was done by the project team with support of the village Champions.

In August 2020, School **Wildlife Clubs Sign Posts** were designed and erected at 18 schools. However due to COVID-19 pandemic, direct engagement with the School Wildlife Club members was not possible.

In July 2020, registration of **32 Village farmer groups** with the Local Government (KDLG) was successfully completed. This involved training, re-training in leadership, governance, reporting, and fund structure. Monitoring and evaluation guided the training to ensure delivery of the expected outcome. 128 leaders were trained at least two times.

### **2.5 Create market linkages for products and services that accrue from the economic activities.**

Linkages with produce buyers and traders were made. Farmers accessed ready markets for Irish potatoes and onions at the local village markets, while bulk buyers/traders for soybean were linked directly to the farmers. Ginger is not yet mature, but nonetheless, linkages have been established with buyers, e.g. Butambala Farmers Association, awaiting harvest.

### **2.6 Negotiate and sign memorandum of understanding with beneficiary producer groups.**

32 Village producer groups were registered at the Local Government. Negotiations have been held with these producer groups. MoUs are yet to be signed and have been delayed by restrictions of COVID-19.

### **2.7 Create the connections and partnerships to ensure long-term implementation and replication of the community-led compensation program.**

The project continues to partner with Kikuube and Hoima District, who have supported set up of the Resilience Fund governance structure. Already the Kikuube Community Development Officers have bought into this strategy and are proposing utilising it elsewhere for farmer groups. In-addition the project leader has promoted the designed structure to mitigate human-wildlife conflict in protected areas. Flora and Fauna International - Uganda is interested in borrowing ideas on this innovative human wildlife conflict management strategy.

### **3.3 Conduct field research, collect data and analyse results.**

The Master Students commenced collection and reporting for the project. One topic investigated is *“Assessing the Integration of Community-Based Compensation Schemes into Human-Wildlife Conflict Management in Forest-Adjacent Communities of Masindi and Kikuube Districts, Western Uganda”*. The other topic is *“Assessing the impact of cropping systems on mitigating crop raiding by wildlife”* Data collection was delayed until July, due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

**3.4 Regular monitoring and reporting of activities implementation.** Prof. Fred Babweteera, the supervising Professor from Makerere University, has monitored students after restrictions for COVID-19 were untightened with several visits to see student progress in the Field. Also, the Project Steering Committee has continued to be updated on the project and is contributing to and advising on the implementation of the project.

### **3.7 Regular meetings with top management of key ministries and departments in Government to lobby for inclusion of policy recommendations.**

The project Leader, Dr Joshua Rukundo, a member of the Top Management team, of Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities has continued attending monthly Top Management meetings Chaired by the Minister of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, and has continued using this platform to lobby for policy inclusion especially community adaptability models for wildlife conservation and community development as in the previous years. One of the positives from the meetings has been, the Ministry requesting for HWC Resilience Fund document to be shared countrywide, as there is no clear compensation mechanism that can be utilised to roll-out scheme.

**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.**

The notable challenges included;

Pressure with proposed allocation of part of Bugoma Central Forest Reserve for sugar growing. This would significantly affect the outcome of the project.

One of the project staff passed on. His responsibilities have since been passed on, but this caused a delay with implementation of some activities in the area for which he was responsible.

Farmers remain guarded about sharing information about harvests, especially with bumper harvests.

**The lessons learnt;**

Crops selected had good returns, increasing HH incomes; Famers encouraged to increase acreage cover with part of harvest and not sell all;

**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.**

- COVID-19 SOPs restricted gatherings, affecting training. Project team had to resort to door to door training and smaller groups. This increased the number of training sessions by 10-fold, increasing the cost. However, sacrifices have been made by the project team to ensure activities are not delayed and stay within budget.
- Closure of schools has affected school-based activities like outreach. These activities have been removed.
- COVID-19 SOPs require inputs for handwashing, sanitization, social distancing and wearing of face masks.
- Data collection for the research component was severely delayed by the restrictions on travel. Once restrictions were eased, the project team and students expedited data collection and the timeline for the delivery of the expected reports is expected to remain the same. Any changes shall be communicated and discussed with LTS International.
- Travel restrictions affected trade and led to decreased market of food produce in the urban markets, due to lack of transportation. This affected pricing and reduced expected profits for some produce like soybean. Farmers were encouraged to congregate their produce in groups to exploit the advantage of sale in quantity to wholesalers. This allowed for more bargaining power and better prices compared to the farm gate price offered by middlemen.
- Reduced trade and hunger in some cases, forced farmers to consume the inputs issued to them, especially during the total lockdown. This was a small proportion, about 5% and the project stepped in to avail more inputs once the lockdown was eased.

**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:	NO
Received confirmation of change acceptance	N/A

**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. **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?**

Comments received on our annual report were responded to even though no specific response was required. However, the response was not acknowledged. One of the pertinent issues raised was on a reallocation of budget costs which had been addressed but resurfaced. Communication needs to be improved.