

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: 31st October 2023

Project reference	28-017
Project title	Establishing a biocultural heritage territory to protect Kenya's Kaya forests
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Kenya
Lead partner	IIED
Partner(s)	KEFRI
Project leader	Krystyna Swiderska & Chemuku Wekesa (co-leads)
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	31 st October 2023. HYR Year 3.
Project website/blog/social media	Establishing a biocultural heritage territory to protect Kenya's Kaya forests Biocultural Heritage (iied.org)

With reference to the implementation timetable, the following activities were conducted:

Output 1:

1.1: A report of the mid-term project workshop was prepared. It was published on IIED's main website and its biocultural heritage website in July 2023, and shared on social media and via IIED newsletters on biodiversity and biocultural heritage see: [Establishing a biocultural heritage territory to protect Kenya's Kaya Forests: mid-term project workshop | IIED Publications Library](#)

1.3 To develop a common vision and governance system for establishing collectively governed Biocultural Heritage Territory (BCHT) in Rabai, village and community-level meetings were held to engage different stakeholders from each of the project 10 villages in defining the goals and guiding principles for the BCHT rooted in Rabai concepts and cultural values for conservation and equity. Periodic meetings were also held with Kaya elders, village elders, community researchers and local administration to co-design the BCHT collective governance system. Landscape-level by-laws were developed through a participatory process involving the ten village-level BCHT committees in collaboration with members of their respective villages: existing customary rules for Kaya forest conservation were re-assessed in line with core Rabai values for conservation and equity, and by-laws that should apply to both Kayas and farming landscapes were identified. The landscape-level BCHT committee developed a draft set of BCHT by-laws borrowing from village-level by-laws.

More community sensitization and visioning is being done on a continual basis and has been integrated in all community meetings and activities including Farmers Field Schools (FFSs) to enhance community participation in the process. Additional village-level meetings were held to sensitize the community on the process to establish a BCHT and get their input to co-design the collective governance system. A community-level meeting will be held in Qtr. 3 to agree on the governance system and the best option for legal registration of the BCHT (1.5).

1.6: A blog on the process to establish a BCHT was published online in July, situating BCHTs in the context of GBF Target 3 and Indigenous and Traditional Territories, and highlighting the importance of designing governance systems based on IPLCs' own traditional wellbeing concepts that embed conservation values. See: [Achieving 30x30: supporting Indigenous and traditional territories and cultures | Biocultural Heritage \(iied.org\)](#)

In addition, IIED and KEFRI organised a 3-hour inter-cultural learning exchange between the Potato Park communities and Rabai community on 14 July 2023, with IIED co-funding. The Potato Park communities shared their cultural values relating to the landscape (eg. sacred mountains) and explained how their governance system works. The Rabai villagers asked questions to help address challenges with establishing a BCHT in Rabai – eg. some Christians in Rabai say that traditional culture should be dropped and are not engaging in the BCHT process. The Potato Park said many of them are Christians (Catholics), but they also practise their traditional religion – there is co-existence and duality. This is helping Rabai to address this key challenge to reviving their traditional cultural values for forest and landscape conservation. Rabai said the exchange was very useful and asked to have another exchange. The recording of the exchange was included in the blog (see 1.6 above).

As a follow-up to the mid-term workshop, the project has been encouraging community members to revive *Rome* for transmission of traditional knowledge (TK) and culture to youths. Also, a meeting was held with Director of Environment, Forestry and Natural Resources for Kilifi County to discuss the protection of Kayas including finance for youth scouts and it was agreed that the issue will be taken to up to the county executive committee and then feedback shall be provided.

Outputs 2 & 3:

2.1 A new Cultural Village – Bofu Cultural Village - has been established in Miyuni village, close to Kayas Bomu and Fimboni, which is reviving resilient traditional crops, supporting conservation of Kayas and their biodiversity through eco-tourism, and preserving Mijikenda culture. Additional traditional houses are being constructed in the village (this will be completed

by end of November). Members of the cultural village have set aside a piece of land for growing traditional vegetables for food and nutrition security and agrobiodiversity conservation. Group members have also raised a variety of indigenous tree seedlings for planting in degraded parts of Kaya forests in collaboration with Kaya elders.

2.2 and 2.3: Most of the training for biocultural microenterprises was completed in Year 2, but additional training was conducted in Year 3. All the microenterprises have started production, except for the one on fuel efficient stoves, and the briquette, broom and coconut groups are generating revenue (eg. the coconut group has generated KES 36,400). The coconut oil and broom-making groups were affected by insufficient raw materials due to drought leading to death and drying of palm trees, but there have been good rains in the past few months which means there is now a good supply. The jikos stoves group is not yet operational due to the delay in finding suitable soils, but the issue is being resolved (see challenges section). The bee keeping group is ready to harvest honey which has a ready market in Rabai and Mombasa.

a) Virgin coconut oil-producing group

- The project has facilitated the group to source raw materials. Coconut graters, containers and other basic equipment have also been procured for the group to support their operations.
- Training has been conducted to group members on use of electric grater by technicians from the service providers.
- Follow-up meetings have been held with the KEFRI team and community researchers to brainstorm on challenges (mainly access to raw materials and market linkages) and monitor implementation progress. Branding of coconut oil is underway based on the agreed logo to market biocultural products from the BCHT.

b) Broom-making group

- The project has facilitated the group to source raw materials for broom production.
- The group coordinator travelled to Nairobi to undertake a market survey for the broom making enterprise.
- The group has identified a common collection centre where they undertake bulk storage of brooms awaiting buyers. Village-level collection centres have been established and are being overseen by village-level broom committees.

c) Briquette-making group (**output 3**)

- Briquette-making machines have been procured and three have been installed at strategic locations proposed by community members (ACK Mothers Union, Mgala Polytechnic, Mwamtsunga Polytechnic). A fourth one is due to be installed in Mleji/Miyuni (based on community request, as the earlier identified venue was not suitable due to inadequate security).
- Community members have been trained on how to use the briquette-making machines.
- Production of briquettes has been initiated by three groups (ACK Mothers Union, Mgala Polytechnic, Mwamtsunga Polytechnic), for domestic consumption and local market – there is good local demand.

d) Beekeeping group

- Beehives have been procured and issued to 50 farmers in ten villages; and are about 70% colonized by wild bees.
- A pair of honey harvesting gear has been procured and will be stored centrally within the community and issued to farmers on a need basis.
- Monitoring of beehives installed in farmers' fields was done jointly by community researchers, village elders and KEFRI facilitators.
- A number of farmers are ready to harvest honey - first harvesting is scheduled for mid-October. Training has been provided for harvesting honey.

e) Production of energy-saving Jikos/Stoves (**output 3**)

- Further training on production of energy-saving Jikos was undertaken for community members.
 - Soil suitability testing was conducted with soil samples from different sites in Rabai, and none has been found to be viable. A meeting was held with representatives of Jikos-making group on 27th September 2023 to provide feedback and deliberate on a way forward.

- Group representatives suggested that they have a peer learning visit to a group in Jomvu (between Rabai and Mombasa) undertaking a similar initiative - the Jomvu Kuu Self-Help Group which has been making Jikos stoves for 20 years. A peer learning visit was conducted on 2nd October 2023 but the Jomvu group did not provide information on the source of their raw materials or the ratio of mixing soil for moulding the Jikos. They offered to sell raw materials at 300 KES per 20kg but the Rabai Jikos group declined as it is too costly. The Jomvu Kuu group demonstrated to the Rabai group how to fire stoves in the traditional way in a fire fueled by dry grass, coconut waste (husks) and coconut leaves. Chonyi was proposed as alternative source of soil, but it is a bit far to transport soil. A farmer in Rabai who successfully produces Jikos using his own soil has been identified and trials are being undertaken to guide the process.

Participatory development of a BCHT logo was undertaken by members of the community from the ten villages. A meeting was convened bringing together all the village level BCHT committees to exchange ideas and consolidate their views towards the development of a common BCHT logo. A common logo was developed through a participatory approach based on input from all villages. The logo will be sent to a designer, and printed on labels which will be ready to use in about 1 month.

Output 4: Tree restoration

Monitoring of tree survival and growth performance has been undertaken in restored areas within the 4 Kaya forests and on about 400 farms. This activity was undertaken by Kenya Forest Service Forester, Truphena Nzaka in collaboration with community researchers, Kaya elders and village elders. A survival count of 60% was recorded in Kaya forests and 80% on the farms.

Output 5: Agrobiodiversity restoration

5.2 KEFRI and IIED prepared a concept note for Farmers Field Schools (FFS) for agrobiodiversity restoration, which focus on both TK and western science and integrate cultural values and the landscape - rather than just focusing on crops alone, in line with the traditional holistic worldview. The FFS were co-designed with community researchers, Kaya elders and village elders, to focus on community’s priorities and challenges, and ensure a convenient time, duration etc. with a view to promoting sustainability beyond the project. They were conducted on traditional agrobiodiverse farms for demonstration, and were facilitated by experienced traditional farmers/TK experts and Kaya elders, and an expert from KARLO (to provide western science on traditional crops). A total of five FFS were conducted from 28th August to 1st September 2023. Each FFS session took 6 hours and brought together 40 farmers from 2 neighbouring villages ie. 200 farmers in total (20 farmers from each of the 10 project villages).

5.4 Seed exchanges were held during the FFS and traditional seeds were collected to establish a community seed bank – this will be located at the National Museum of Kenya offices in Rabai. The community seed register created by a previous project (SIFOR) has been expanded to include new traditional seeds and related information generated during the FFSs.

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.

[Redacted content]

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Appropriateness of M&E systems:

We suggested the following changes to **outcome indicators** in the last annual report:
Outcome indicator 0.3 entails increasing sustainable products incomes of 3,200 forest-dependent women and youth (1,600 households) from 2022 baseline of c.\$30-40/month to: \$65/month by 2023, and \$100/month by 2024 (\$3.3/day). The 2022 survey indicated that the average household income is USD 109/month rather than \$40/month. Therefore, we suggest the adjustment of this indicator to “increased income from a baseline average of \$100/month in 2022, to \$200/month by 2023 and \$300/month by 2024”.

Outcome indicator 0.5: The baseline shows that 75% of youth participate in the annual New year festival and other cultural events. Therefore we suggest that the sub-indicator in indicator 0.5 “attendance of traditional ceremonies increases by 50%” is changed to “number of traditional ceremonies celebrated by the community”.

As mentioned in the last annual report, the following **assumptions** have changed:

0.2 & 4.1 – “rainfall patterns remain largely unchanged” - rainfall has declined rather than remaining unchanged and this has resulted in periods of limited water availability for planted tree seedlings and beekeeping – but rainfall has improved in recent months, and this remains a relevant assumption to monitor.

2.2 – “beehives thrive in forest” – beehives have been installed on farm to overcome water challenges, and ensure security and proper management.

2.2 – “access to sufficient sustainable sources of raw material” – reduced rainfall had killed some palm trees, and limited raw materials affected revenues from brooms, but recent rain has significantly improved availability of raw materials. This assumption is important to monitor and could be separated out in the log frame (it is currently combined with an assumption on training).

An outcome level assumption could be added (0.5): The BCHT process gets buy-in from 80,000 people in Rabai, including people who identify mainly as Christian. This assumption is also relevant for Output 1 on establishing a BCHT institution in Rabai.

3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with NIRAS: Yes

Formal Change Request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

Change request reference if known:

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023)

Actual spend: ■■■■■

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)?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

4c. 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 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.

5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

The annual reporting form was repetitive with a number of similar or overlapping questions, and so very time consuming to fill out – which takes away time for project implementation. It would be great to simplify the form and reduce duplication between questions and the information required to answer each (even if referring to previous answers, information still needs to be provided to address each question).

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. 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**