

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 2022

Project reference	29-013
Project title	An integrated approach to protecting wildlife from poisoning in Mara-Serengeti.
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Kenya; Tanzania
Lead partner	BirdLife International
Partner(s)	Nature Kenya; Nature Tanzania
Project leader	<i>Paul Kariuki Ndang'ang'a</i>
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	<i>HYR1</i>
Project website/blog/social media	www.birdlife.org/africa/ , www.facebook.com/birdlifeafrica/ , https://twitter.com/BirdLifeAfrica

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).

Project inception and preparations

- BirdLife International met with each of the project partners to discuss project expectations, work plans, reporting and the terms and conditions. Workplans and budgets for the three-year period were refined by respective project partners, and contracts were signed.
- An article was published celebrating the award of this and other Darwin grants. [Link](#)

Output 1: Socio-economic drivers and impacts of wildlife poisoning in Mara-Serengeti are understood and inform a range of community-focused interventions

- A consultative meeting was held between BirdLife International, Nature Kenya, and Nature Tanzania to discuss how the project baseline data will be collected and how the socio - economic surveys will be achieved. Two sets of questionnaires were developed to assess community awareness of vultures, identify key drivers of wildlife poisoning and potential socio-economic solutions to mitigation HWC and wildlife poisoning. In the Mara landscape a training workshop was conducted by Nature Kenya for field staff on the application of the produced questionnaire. Desktop research on livestock losses in targeted villages within Mara landscape was conducted by Nature Kenya. The review found out that sheep and goats were more vulnerable to carnivore depredation at the boma level than cows. The review also revealed that reinforcement of livestock enclosures reduced livestock depredation by up to 90% when compared to traditional livestock enclosures. In the Serengeti landscape a joint workshop was held in Makao Conservation Area, bringing together Meatu District Officials, Makao WMA secretariat, Ward and Village Government leaders, Ward Councillors and Village Chairpersons, and representatives of traditional healers to identify challenges faced by local communities, as well as solutions that link sustainable livelihood practises and use of natural resources.
- In the Serengeti landscape, 12 inception meetings were held at village and district levels in Meatu District located in Makao Wildlife Management Area (WMA), to introduce the project to key stakeholders and partners and raising awareness about the threats to the vulture populations. The inception meetings were attended by district administration

officials, local government and political leaders, and community members. The meetings reached approximately 1,000 individuals from ten villages, who were divided into groups based on their economic engagements. Focal points of contacts for the project in Meatu District Council and Makao WMA were also established at both district and village level.

- Similar inception meetings were not necessary in the Mara landscape since Nature Kenya had already been working to conserve vultures in the landscape, and had already established a network of 29 vulture conservation volunteers in 27 different villages.

Output 2: Vulture conservation models, incorporating livelihood improvements are implemented in the focal areas in Maasai Mara, Kenya and Makao WMA, Tanzania.(directly benefitting ~1,700 people, reaching 15,000)

- In the Masai Mara landscape, two project focal areas were identified based on the previously reported levels of human wildlife conflict incidents and the number of reported wildlife poisoning incidents within the landscape. Nature Kenya will develop a strategy and criteria for rolling out installation of 20 predator proof bomas.
- International Vulture Awareness Day was celebrated by holding community outreach events in six local markets within the Mara landscape (Nkoilale, Endonyo Narasha, Oololaimutiak, Lolgorien, Ngosuani, and Naikara), reaching approximately 4500 local people. Events were organised in collaboration with 29 vulture conservation volunteers to raise awareness of non-lethal alternatives for resolving Human-Wildlife Conflicts.
- In the Serengeti landscape, the process of establishing a community revolving fund (CRF) system in Makao WMA has begun. A zero draft of the CRF policy was distributed to a section of stakeholders (Meatu District Council, Makao WMA, Ward and Village Government Leaders) to gather reviews and comments. The CRF policy was written in Swahili (Tanzania's national language) for ease of comprehension.

Output 3: The impact of poisoning incidents is mitigated by the set up, training and equipping of three Rapid Poison Response Mechanism (RRM) anti-poisoning groups in Kenya and Tanzania

- In the Serengeti landscape, 35 Village Game Scouts (VGS) based in the Makao wildlife management Area (WMA) were engaged and mutually agreed to support the rapid response mechanism on wildlife poisoning in the project focal area. The village game scouts also agreed to participate in the collection of preliminary data for the project during their routine patrols, to inform some of the project baseline data. This information will inform the establishment of transects for monitoring vulture populations.
- In the Masai Mara landscape a network of 29 vulture conservation volunteers in 27 different villages were engaged. The vulture conservation volunteers will act as the main points of contacts with the local community. Also, during a rapid response protocol training workshop attended by 207 community conservancy rangers from ten conservancies, conservancy rangers revealed a need for response equipment and vulture holding boxes, among other materials, for rapid response to wildlife poisoning.
- Nature Kenya participated in a National Wildlife Toxicology Workshop hosted by the Peregrine Fund from October 3rd to 7th, 2022. The workshop brought together conservationists, veterinarians and laboratory technicians and forensics specialists on a refresher course on responding and treatment of poisoned wildlife particularly birds.

Output 4: Results and lessons are synthesised, shared and promoted to raise NGO capacity for vulture conservation in Africa and to influence practice at national levels in Kenya and Tanzania and pan-African levels

- Kenya is in a more advanced stages towards the development of the national vulture populations recovery and conservation action plan put forward by Nature Kenya. Nature Tanzania has held a consultative meeting with North Carolina Zoo who are leading on the development of a national vulture action plan for Tanzania.

Other Achievements in the Masai Mara Landscape

- A local language educational wildlife poisoning poster has been produced aimed at informing local communities on better herding practises in Masai Mara landscape. 300 copies of the poster will be distributed in at least 16 villages within the project focal areas and cover additional 54 villages across the southern rangelands of Kenya.
- A YouTube [video](#) on the importance of vultures and a [short video](#) on the benefits of predator proof bomas were also produced.

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.

- The project in Tanzania aimed to have an impact on seven villages within the Makao WMA. However, due to the scope of the threat, an additional three villages have been identified as critical, hence 10 villages are now targeted in the Makao WMA. This will have implications for project planning and budget and may necessitate a change request.
- Language is a common barrier in the Serengeti landscape, as there are four main tribes, each with its own language (Sukuma, Taturu, Tindiga and Hadzabe). This necessitates the presence of translators in various meetings. Nature Tanzania has therefore considered using a translator, which will likely have implications for project planning and budget and may necessitate a change request within the annual overall budget.

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

Discussed with NIRAS-LTS: No

Formal Change Request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

Change request reference if known:

4a. 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: £

4b. 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.

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

As outlined earlier, we anticipate some adjustments to the budget. It is anticipated that this can be accommodated within the annual budget totals. A change request will be submitted shortly.

If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response (including the submission of your risk register), 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.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with NIRAS-LTS International 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**