

## 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: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023**

<b>Project reference</b>	DARNV016
<b>Project title</b>	Promoting equitable gender norms to strengthen conservation governance and impact
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	Kenya
<b>Lead partner</b>	Fauna & Flora International (FFI)
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Care Kenya, Sera Wildlife Conservancy, Pate Marine Community Conservancy, Northern Rangelands Trust, Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association, University College London via Dr Emily Woodhouse
<b>Project leader</b>	Helen Anthem
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)</b>	31 October 2023 HYR1
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	

**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).**

**Overall project updates:**

- On 13th June 2023 one project staff member from FFI (Ann Komen, project coordinator) attended the Darwin Initiative workshop in Nairobi organised for Project Leads by DEFRA, and shared//learned from project implementation experiences with other grantees.
- The first project inception meeting with representation from all partners involved in Year 1 activities (CARE, Sera, NRT, FFI, KWCA and UCL) was held on 6<sup>th</sup> July. Numerous other online meetings have taken place between partners, and face to face meetings were held with Sera and KWCA during August when the project leader visited Kenya.
- The project start date was amended from 01 April to 01 July 2023, as approved in Change Request CR23-021. Project implementation has been delayed, with the SAA training in Sera taking place in September rather than July as planned, due to ongoing challenges as per section 2 below, particularly with regards to identifying appropriate facilitators (consultants) for the SAA process.

**Progress against activities**

**Activity 1.1:** A working draft gender analysis is in place for Sera, informed by reports of previous analyses carried out in Sera and other conservancies in the landscape and discussions with Sera staff and the Samburu consultant. This analysis was used to adapt and ‘contextualise’ the SAA training (Activities 1.3 and 1.4). The working draft is currently being updated following the training (Activity 1.4) and will both continue to inform and be informed by community dialogues and actions going forwards. Whilst the gender and power analysis will be a continuous process, the

draft will be finalised following an upcoming visit and additional discussions between the project team and champions, planned for November (see Activity 1.7). The gender and power analysis for Pate is scheduled for Year 2 Q1.

**Activity 1.2:** All board members were invited to the first training, and the conservancy manager decided which key staff to invite. For the second training, the conservancy manager collaborated with board members on who to invite from amongst the conservancy membership. Criteria for the selection of participants was agreed by the project team and included, for example: equal representation from the two group ranches that form Sera Conservancy; balance of males and females (as far as possible, recognising that the majority of board members are male); known, trusted and respected; able to articulate ideas and facilitate discussions; genuinely willing to reflect on his / her attitudes and practices. Attendance at the training was entirely voluntary.

**Activity 1.3:** A training facilitation guide was developed by the project leader in close collaboration with the consultants and with input from other team members. The included points to ensure that the training was accessible to all participants and not just those who can read and write, for example that: as far as possible all content and delivery will be in Samburu; there will be no powerpoint presentations; the training will go at the pace the participants are comfortable with and will not introduce topics that could cause tension (e.g. condoms, FGM) unless the participants raise it themselves; the use of technical terms, jargon, acronyms etc will be avoided.

**Activity 1.4:** The training for board and staff members took place 19 – 22 September and the training for conservancy members took place 25 – 29 September. This was later than planned primarily due to delays in contracting SAA consultants. Attendance at the first training was good, with 37 (10 female/27 male) attendees in the first 2 days of the training, but the numbers fluctuated due to other commitments (and despite the training dates being agreed in advance. A total of 30 (14 female/16 male) conservancy members attended the second training, and all remained for the full 5 days. The training covered issues relating to governance and leadership, gender norms, beliefs and practices, problem analysis, and SAA including facilitation skills. Reports have now been received from the SAA consultants for both trainings and are currently being revised, following review by the project leader. Updated versions are expected within the next week.

The training was very well received. One elder and illiterate male board member reported that of all the trainings and events he has attended it was the first time he felt that he and other illiterate board members could fully participate; that normally information is shared with them after it has been presented, giving them little opportunity to comment and discuss. It was also appreciated by all participants that discussions were facilitated in Samburu rather than Swahili. This is a significant achievement for the project because it will generate ownership and commitment to the process going forwards.

**Activity 1.5:** To date, 43 (19 female/24 male) potential 'early adopters' have been identified or self-selected from the training. Meetings will be held with them in November to confirm and / or boost their commitment and to develop or finalise action plans and how best to report on these.

**Activity 1.6:** This process has started and will be a focus in November. Some opportunities have already been identified, including the 2024 AGM, grazing meetings, chiefs meeting (Barazas), water points (for women), fire places and goat eating places.

**Activity 1.7:** The project leader and project coordinator will be visiting Sera in mid-November, and this will be followed in early December with a support visit by the SAA consultant and the Samburu consultant.

**Activity 1.8:** To date, meetings have focused primarily on planning the training and follow up. Almost weekly bilateral meetings have been held between the project leader with both the project coordinator and KWCA's Gender Officer, and regular meetings have been held with the conservancy manager and with the consultants. It has been challenging to get all project partners online at the same time, but this will become easier as the process becomes clearer (i.e. action

plans are developed) and more data becomes available. Securing the input of CARE staff has been challenging, but a dedicated staff member has now been identified (see section 2, below).

**Activity 1.9:** Planned for Year 3, Q1

**Activity 2.1:** This has started but will be primarily from Year 1 Q3 onwards due to the delay in receiving final training reports from the SAA consultants.

**Activity 2.2:** Planned for Year 3 Q1

**Activity 2.3:** Planned for Year 3 Q1

**Activity 2.4:** The first blog is being planned to coincide with International Women's Day on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

**Activity 3.1:** This will be ongoing from Year 1 Q3, when all data from the training has been captured and documented.

**Activity 3.2:** First workshop planned for Year 1 Q4

**Activity 3.3:** Planned for Year 3 Q1

**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.**

CARE was not able to provide Samburu (or Samburu speaking) SAA facilitators, despite this being a known requirement when planning the project. After much deliberation it was agreed that we should contract SAA consultants directly. The consultants contracted to facilitate the SAA process (one lead consultant, and a second consultant to support the training only) are the team that CARE was intending to sub-contract the process to. By contracting them directly, funds were available to contract an additional Samburu consultant. She is a skilled gender and community facilitator but has not been trained to facilitate SAA, so she is working closely with the SAA consultants to ensure that the process is appropriate and adapted to the cultural context. This way forward was discussed with the BCF Senior Administrator in early August.

In the event, contracting the consultants directly has been beneficial not only for financial savings but because it has enabled direct and more rapid communication between Fauna & Flora staff and the consultants. Communicating with CARE has been challenging; evidently the CARE Kenya programme is suffering from staff departures and shortages meaning that responses to our communications have often been delayed. Now that a staff member has been identified and contracted to support this project we are confident that these delays will be resolved. The structure of the consultancy with CARE and the SAA consultants has changed but the total budget for consultants has not. CARE is still being contracted to provide technical support and oversight for the SAA process and to participate in Project Steering Group meetings.

It has been beneficial to the project to be more easily able to communicate with the SAA consultants directly and rapidly. Whilst they are experienced in delivering SAA it has been challenging to ensure that they adequately adapt the process to this project. Not only is it a new cultural context for them, but their experience relates mostly to facilitating SAA within CARE's health projects. The project leader in particular has spent considerable time ensuring that the training and subsequent reporting is appropriate. In this respect the support and knowledge of the Samburu consultant has been invaluable.

Despite these challenges, and the resulting delays in implementation, the impact on the project is limited. In fact, the project is stronger because project staff now have more direction over the consultants and the involvement of the Samburu consultant means that the process has been well received by participants (as reported above).

**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/No
Formal Change Request submitted:	Yes/No
Received confirmation of change acceptance	Yes/No
Change request reference if known: CR23-021 CR23-021 related to the change of the project start and end dates. A second change request was submitted and approved in October 2023, relating to a change in CARE staff lead. No reference is available for this second request.	

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

**Actual spend:** [REDACTED]

**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?**

**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](mailto: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**

## **Responses to feedback on application DIR29IN\1083 (in letter to Helen Anthem from Linzi Ogden, dated March 2023) submitted with HYR1**

- **the rationale for targeting these two conservancies should be clearer;**

Sera Wildlife Conservancy (Sera) and Pate Marine Community Conservancy (Pate) are targeted by the project for a number of reasons. Both conservancies are members of the umbrella organisation, Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT). Fauna & Flora (FFI) has supported NRT since before its inception in 2004. In fact, this early support was to Sera which was one of the first NRT member community conservancies. Since then, FFI has provided consistent support to NRT, both as an institution and through support to individual member conservancies, and FFI (through a nominated staff member) maintains a position on NRT's board.

FFI has provided ongoing technical and financial support to Sera, including for the establishment of the first community managed rhino conservation area in Kenya, the translocation of rhinos, ranger training and equipment, biological monitoring and management planning. In 2014, FFI secured a very small grant for a pilot project to promote women's participation in decision making in Sera conservancy. The project was very well received, improved relations between male and female staff, and catalysed action (including the election or co-option of more women onto Sera's board). Unfortunately, additional funding was not secured for this work but it did lay a good foundation for this current project, as did a collaboration in 2019 led by FFI with KWCA and UCL, which included field work in Sera to inform further exploration of the relationship between gender and conservation effectiveness.

Sera's conservancy manager is fully engaged and committed to addressing gender within the conservancy. In addition to this project, FFI and Sera are currently partnering on a US Fish and Wildlife Service project to enhance conservation of black rhino and their habitats.

FFI has worked in the Pate project area since 2013 and, alongside NRT, was instrumental in establishing co-management in Pate Island including developing co-management plans, organising marine patrols, establishing governance, and introducing and monitoring two permanent no-take zones and a temporary no-take zone for octopus. FFI is currently leading a Darwin main project (29-008) to secure ecosystem health and functioning in Locally Managed Marine Areas, in partnership with both Pate and NRT.

FFI's previous, current and anticipated future work and relationships with NRT and these two specific conservancies, made them excellent candidates and the logical target conservancies for this project. Both target conservancies are well established and have relatively stable sources of funding with ongoing projects and activities that Social Analysis and Action (SAA), the approach this project is taking to promote norms change, can be integrated into. Additionally, with one being terrestrial and the other marine there is greater scope for comparing and contrasting and for identifying and applying learning relevant to both, and a wider range of, conservation contexts.

- **the legacy in conservancies is described in the application, but you should clarify if Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association (KWCA)/Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT)/CARE International Kenya are making any commitments to post-project follow-through;**

Both KWCA and NRT are committed to this project and to post-project follow-through, although in the case of NRT it is too early to specify the details of what this will be or look like. However, KWCA is intending to adopt SAA as a key approach in its gender work, and the Gender Officer is hoping to undergo SAA facilitation training with CARE to enable them to support SAA processes within conservancies more effectively. The learning from this project will strengthen KWCA's ability to promote and support SAA within conservancies. FFI has been supporting KWCA's gender work for over 4 years now, and this relationship will continue beyond the project end.

NRT's Gender Director is engaged with the project, and during a forthcoming visit to Kenya (in November 2023) the project leader and project coordinator will be meeting with her to discuss how SAA and project learning could be applied more widely within NRT and member conservancies. We will also be meeting with the person who is responsible for developing and delivering NRT's Leadership and Management Training Programme (LAMP) to ensure complementarity between SAA and LAMP. There may be potential for this project/SAA to influence how LAMP develops and is delivered in the future (for example through the development of a module on gender norms). As noted above, NRT and FFI have a strong and longstanding relationship which this project can both strengthen and benefit from.

- **please clarify the following elements related to the project budget:**
  - o **given CARE's critical role in the project as a partner, why are no staff named in the application and budget?**

Dorothy Aseyo was named in the application (in Q33) but she was not named in the budget because CARE's share of budget is via a consultancy contract. Dorothy Aseyo has since left CARE and the provision of SAA technical oversight is now through another CARE staff member, Dorothy Akinyi. A change request for this change was submitted on 19/10/23 and approved by BCF Senior Administrator by email on 25/10/23.

- o **it is unclear why KWCA has no budget if it is undertaking the impact assessment at the end of year 2;**

KWCA's Gender Officer will undertake the PIA towards the end of the project alongside two FFI staff (project leader and project coordinator), carrying out interviews and FGDs and the analysis of data. Expenses associated with the PIA are in the budget (under FFI costs) but KWCA are not charging for their staff time, which is included as an in-kind indicative value (of £1963) in the project budget (Sheet: Sources of Additional Funding).

- **the potential safeguarding issues have been recognised but you should clarify what would happen in the worst case scenarios. For example, Risk 5 – what happens after the project if this is on-going?**

The likelihood of the project leading to backlash from men and increasing incidences of GBV is extremely low. Men and women engaging with the project are doing so voluntarily. Engaging with men is essential to the project, as it is men who hold most power and are most able to effect change within the communities. Projects that experience backlash when addressing gender issues do so because they have failed to engage men adequately, or don't have an adequate understanding of gender dynamics within the project context, neither of which apply to this project. The pace and depth of the SAA process will be set by the participants themselves, both men and women.

FFI's project leader has developed GBV guidance for conservancies in Kenya, on behalf of KWCA (finalised but awaiting design and publication by KWCA's comms team). Any incidences of GBV known to occur during the course of the project, including those not as a result of the project activities, will be dealt with following this guidance. The project is designed to address the underlying causes of gender inequality, of which GBV is a symptom, and is thus more likely to lead to reduced incidences of GBV. The project will equip participating board, staff and

conservancy members with the skills to facilitate discussions on potentially sensitive issues and to avoid backlash and GBV, and to deal with it in the unlikely event of it occurring after the project has ended. Conservancy board, staff and members also know that NRT and KWCA, and FFI, are a source of ongoing support if required beyond the project end.

**• the project staff percentage time allocated to project seems extremely low given the sensitivities involved;**

We are aware that significant input is required from FFI staff but the funding available only allows a certain amount of staff coverage whilst maintaining adequate funds for field activities at site. The project aims to explore how feasible it is to promote gender transformative change within a conservation context, where project resources for approaches such as SAA are likely to be limited (both in terms of funds and staff capacity), and this learning will inform the guidance. Experience from implementing this approach will help to guide and manage the balance between what is practicable (in terms of intensity and focus) and what is effective (in promoting change).

**• the innovation elements of the project could be better drawn out. The application highlights that there is another project doing the same thing, albeit operating at conservancy association level rather than in individual conservancies;**

As stated in the application, whilst many conservation organisations recognise the importance of equitable benefit sharing and of promoting women's participation and empowerment, there is less understanding of the patriarchal systems within which projects operate. When they do consider gender, most conservation interventions target the symptoms of gender inequality such as women's individual capacity and access to assets. This project is innovative and transformative because it is attempting to challenge the underlying structural causes of gender inequality, specifically discriminatory gender norms.

As an approach, SAA resonates with EM Rodgers Diffusion of Innovation Theory, with the 'champions' from amongst the board, staff and conservancy members becoming 'early adopters'. They will be supported to become influencers within their peer groups, thus diffusing changes in attitudes, values and practices amongst the conservancy. The project is promoting both personal transformation, changing 'hearts and minds', whilst promoting community wide change. This will accelerate the slow process of social norms change. Whilst projects that promote women's leadership, for example, can lead to changes in attitudes and over time lead to changes in gender norms (e.g. it becoming more widely accepted that women hold and are elected for leadership positions), the process is much slower and more likely to provoke backlash (- see response above regarding risk 5).

Since submitting this project application, KWCA has secured a second grant from the USAID / IUCN RISE grants challenge. This builds upon a previous RISE grant that FFI aided KWCA to secure and implement, and FFI's project leader continues to support KWCA in this second grant and on its gender work generally. KWCA's current RISE project is working in Amboseli and Tsavo, focusing on building women's economic empowerment and capacity building, developing and institutionalising safeguarding policies, and using SAA to promote norms change. SAA is just one of a wide range of project activities and, to date, the emphasis has been on the initial training with little ongoing support provided. FFI is placing more emphasis on depth rather than breadth, and on extracting, reflecting and documenting learning and developing guidance for wider application. FFI and KWCA continue to work closely together, with FFI's project leader and KWCA's Gender Officer meeting regularly for mutual exchange and support.

To our knowledge FFI is the only international conservation organisation adopting a gender transformative approach. FFI introduced SAA to KWCA and, as noted above, KWCA are keen to apply SAA more widely in the future. FFI can play an instrumental role in this, supporting KWCA to more effectively implement and learn from SAA to foster adaptation and replication, including through the application of learning from this project.

- **it is unclear how the planned Theory of Change development relates to the guidance development. Is the guidance based on the Theory of Change? If so, why is this not all part of one output? Or is the Theory of Change an added academic extra?**

The guidance and the Theory of Change (ToC) are related but separate.

The guidance is intended to be practical and 'user friendly', to help conservation practitioners understand what is meant by gender transformative approaches and specifically to support them in considering and promoting more equitable gender norms within their conservation programmes. It will also explain why considering gender, and specifically gender norms, is important for more effective and equitable conservation. A simplified ToC will be presented in the guidance to demonstrate and aid this understanding.

FFI's project leader and Dr Emily Woodhouse (Dept of Anthropology, UCL) have been engaging for a number of years, including the 2019 collaboration with KWCA mentioned above. This engagement has focused on increasing understanding of the relationship between gender equity and conservation effectiveness. A working ToC, developed by Leisher et al (2017) shows how women's participation improves fisheries and forestry management. Learning from the project experience of implementing SAA, and wider reading on gender transformative approaches, will both inform the guidance and help us to develop this ToC further, moving beyond women's participation and focusing on the neglected aspect of gender norms. As stated in the application, Dr Woodhouse will support the review and analysis of project data and, with the project leader, use this to update the ToC.

It should be noted that Dr Woodhouse is currently developing an application for an ESRC research grant to explore the different pathways through which attention to gender leads to more effective conservation. The proposal includes a global assessment of current knowledge and approaches on gender equity and biodiversity conservation, case study research (potentially including this FFI led project), and mapping knowledge from the assessment and case studies to a ToC which will link improvements in different dimensions of gender equity to governance and outcomes. At this stage it is not clear whether the project ToC will be a preliminary version of, or one pathway within, the proposed ESRC project ToC.

- **It would be interesting to monitor some on-going biodiversity metrics in the context of this training to see if it is effective in this context.** (See answer to the comment below).
- **the biodiversity benefits within the life of the project are unclear;**

The PIA will explore men's and women's perceptions around whether and why improving conservancy decision making, specifically through changes in gender norms and women's effective participation, leads to improved conservation outcomes. This may inform how and what biological data the conservancies collect in the future. However, as stated in the application, direct conservation impact cannot be measured within the project timescale. In the long-term biodiversity benefits are highly anticipated because of the increasing body of evidence that women's effective participation in conservation results in improved conservation (and social) outcomes due to gendered differences in the experience, use, knowledge and value of natural resources.

- **it would be useful to know what provision there is for assessing the likelihood that change will be sustained;**

Participation in this project is voluntary and the champions who will continue the SAA process after the initial training are self-selecting. The pace and depth of the reflections on gender norms, and actions to challenge harmful norms, will be directed by the participants. This will build ownership of the whole process which will result in more sustained and long-term change. Engagement in the process, and willingness to reflect and promote change, will be monitored during monitoring visits (by FFI and KWCA staff) and support visits (by the SAA facilitators). The



attitudes of men and women, including their likelihood of maintaining this change process, will be assessed during the end of project assessment.

As noted above, these two conservancies were chosen because of existing and ongoing relationships and projects. Continued support to the change processes catalysed by this project will be integrated into future projects and funding proposals to help ensure that change is sustained.

**• consider reducing the overall number of Outcome indicators to concentrate the monitoring and evaluation on key points.**

Outcome indicators 0.4 and 0.5 relate to the development and dissemination of guidance and a theory of change and are thus relatively easy to verify. Indicators 0.1 to 0.3 use the same primary means of verification, with data gathered through the participatory assessment and associated discussions and interviews at project end and during monitoring visits. Whilst there are 5 outcome indicators there is thus efficiency in how we are tracking and verifying them.