



Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Half Year Report

(due 31st October 2018)

Project reference: 378

Project title: Developing elephant eco-guardians: fundamental for coordinated anti-poaching/trafficking initiatives in Mali.

Country(ies): Mali, West Africa

Lead organisation: The Wild Foundation

Collaborator(s): The Mali Government: Ministry of the Environment, with its Direction Nationale des Eaux et Forêts (DNEF) as the principle contact; plus other Ministries as appropriate but particularly the Ministries of Defence and Territorial Administration.

Chengeta Wildlife

Local communities

British and American embassies

The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)

Project leader: Dr Susan Canney

Report date and number (e.g. HYR1): 1 July – 30th September 2018, (HYR1)

Project website/blog/social media:

Website: <https://www.wild.org/mali-elephants/>

Blog: <https://www.wild.org/category/blog/mali-elephants-blog/>

Twitter: @MaliEleProject

Facebook in Mali: <https://www.facebook.com/gourmamali/>

WILD Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/wildfoundation/>

NB Text in red is confidential and not to be shared on the internet or media

1. Outline progress over the last 3 months (July – 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 the end September).

Output 1: The capacity and motivation for eco-guardians to lead and promote elephant conservation activities is increased through training and the formalisation of their occupations, enabling them to work in synergy with the APU.

Activities funded by the IWT Challenge Fund are detailed below.

Activity 1.1. Training workshops for community eco-guardians (five 2-day workshops in year 1; five 1-day workshops in years 2-3). Ongoing

29 ecoguards from 6 communes received 3 days each of training in GPS handling (5 in Gandamia, 5 in Korarou, 5 in Mondoro, 5 in Hombori, 4 in Gossi, 5 in Haire).

Activity 1.2. Incentive payments are made on a monthly basis to the 50 best-performing eco-guardians in return for CBNRM and elephant protection activities **Ongoing**

Given the high level of insecurity in the elephant range only truly motivated and dedicated young men are accepted as eco-guards. They are selected by the community in a public and transparent process whereby the role of an eco-guard is discussed through the process of drawing up a list of criteria of essential qualities for an eco-guard. Then individuals are proposed and selected by the community. The role of eco-guard carries local status and provides an occupation for these young men. In times of peace, which would facilitate the uptake and conduct of these CBNRM systems, experience has suggested that providing incentive payments would become unnecessary once the benefits of these systems are felt and the practices become habitual.

Activity 1.3. Monitoring of eco-guardian activities by community leaders and MEP field team. **Ongoing**

This is an ongoing part of the project's activities as the field team maintains frequent contact with its network of eco-guards.

Activity 1.4. Annual household surveys with the 50 eco-guardians that receive training and incentive payments. – To be completed

Activity 1.5. Activities related to the launch of the process of formal recognition of the eco-guardian role. - Discussion has begun.

Output 2: The anti-poaching unit (APU) conducts effective proactive and reactive operations based on eco-guardian monitoring reports.

Activity 2.1. Community reports on elephant movements and poaching activity are collected, processed and forwarded to the APU. **Ongoing**

From July to September the field team received a total of 58 reports from community eco-guards relating to elephant presence/movements, i.e. an average of 19.3 reports/month compared to the 2016/17 baseline of 15/month. They also continue to enable us to monitor the level of poaching.

Activity 2.2. APU conduct proactive missions for >15 days/month across all 8 core communes of the elephant range. **Ongoing**

The APU conducted 6 proactive patrols over 12 days. This is below the target of 15 days/month which was based on the performance of the first unit deployed in 2017. Unfortunately, the agreement is based on the rotation of 3 units composed of 30 military and 5 foresters, and the first unit was rotated out in February 2018. The new unit was not recruited until the end of March and training began in April. Unfortunately the new unit is much less experienced and needs substantial training to reach the same competence and confidence to carry out patrols. The past three months have been a time of flux and uncertainty in the elephant range with high numbers of jihadist attacks and G5 operations. This activity will be reviewed during the project leader's next mission in November 2018.

Activity 2.3. APU responds to community reports on poaching related activity (reactive missions) across all 8 core communes of the elephant range. **Ongoing**

There have been no poaching incidents during the project period.

Activity 2.4. APU mission reports created, analysed and synthesised into quarterly reports. **Ongoing**

The idea for the unit to use Cybertracker has been difficult to implement. The server used to upload/download patrol data was down for several weeks and for the duration of the training session which took place in July-Aug. This technical issue was outside of the project's control and prevented the APU from uploading any patrol data to the server. This issue has now been

resolved. However, in response to this a database has been created based on the reports from the APU chef de brigade and from the APU trainers, which include GPS coordinates of the patrol itineraries. In the absence of Cybertracker data this has enabled the production of maps summarising the patrol itineraries during the past six months. However there is a reluctance among the military elements for their position to be tracked as they cite fear of a security breach that puts them in danger.

Output 3: A census of the total elephant population is conducted by aerial surveillance and local communities counting simultaneously.

Activities 3.1 – 3.5 To be completed at the end of the dry season (April-May).

Activity 3.1. Elephant census strategic plan and methods completed and accepted by project partners and census participants.

Activity 3.2. Elephant census training provided to community eco-guardians, APU personnel and other participants (3 days for 132 participants).

Activity 3.3. Ground census completed by communities, APU and other participants during 10 consecutive days.

Activity 3.4. Aerial census completed by aerial surveillance unit during 5 consecutive days.

Activity 3.5. Census data collated and analysed and report completed and distributed to all partners and stakeholders.

Output 4: Training materials are produced and distributed to community eco-guardians and APU personnel; and project progress and lessons learned are disseminated to the wider national and international community.

Activities 4.1 – 4.4 To be completed

Activity 4.1. Field manual for community eco-guardians written and distributed.

Activity 4.2. Field manual on elephant monitoring for APU written and distributed.

Activity 4.3. Elephant census report written and distributed.

Activity 4.4. Article(s) on community-based elephant monitoring and protection written and submitted to peer-reviewed journal.

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 3 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

Insecurity (please see above Activity 2.2) – Recent months have seen an increase in jihadist attacks in the elephant range plus a great increase in G5 anti-terrorist operations. This makes the situation unpredictable,

2b. 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/No

Formal change request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No

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.

4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to IWT Challenge Fund management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

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. Additionally, if you were funded under R4 and asked to provide further information by your first half year report, please attach your response as a separate 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 send your **completed report by email** to Victoria Pinion at IWT-Fund@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: IWT001 Half Year Report.**