



Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Half Year Report (due 31st October 2021)

| | |
|---|--|
| Project reference | IWT 058 |
| Project title | Securing Africa's ivory: Developing gold-standard stockpile management systems |
| Country(ies) | Uganda, Ethiopia, Malawi |
| Lead organisation | EPI Foundation |
| Partners(s) | EWCA Ethiopia, UWA Uganda, DNPW Malawi |
| Project leader | Ruth Musgrave |
| Report date and number (e.g. HYR1) | <i>HYR4 - April 2021-September 2021</i> |
| Project website/blog/social media | www.elephantprotectioninitiative.org @EPIAfrica https://www.facebook.com/elephantprotectioninitiative/ https://www.instagram.com/elephantprotectioninitiative/?hl=en |

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 the end September).

Progress has been made on completing the project activities, and meeting the two project outputs between the 1st April 2021– 30th September 2021. The project's activities within the third year was slowed significantly due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and approval was obtained from DEFRA for a no-cost extension until March 2022 in order to finalise the project activities and achieve the anticipated outcomes.

Activities within the first 6 months of Year 4 regarding Output 1 which is: Two complementary tools for improving storeroom security and management: 1) Guidelines for Ivory Storerooms from minimum to gold award standards, relevant to conditions typically found in EPI countries, are published. 2) A template Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Storeroom management and chain of custody (CoC) from point of seizure to decentralised and centralised storerooms

This was vastly completed in Year 1 and 2 of the project, with documentation available on the EPIF website and links from the CITES website, in English, French and Portuguese. The Gold Standards Assessment App to assist in determining which aspects of storeroom management needs reinforcing is available upon request.

After utilising the guidelines and the template SOPs for implementation in this project and a parallel US State Government funded project, we have commenced a review of the tools based on experience and feedback. We are updating the guidelines and template operating procedures, and will provide the final documentation at the end of the project, as well as update the versions on the CITES and EPIF websites.

Activities within the first 6 months of Year 4 regarding Output 1 which is: Improved Ivory storeroom management and security in three partner countries (Uganda, Malawi and Ethiopia).

Ethiopia

- EWCA SOPs storeroom management have been developed and validated during a 1-day workshop in Addis Ababa during this reporting period. They will be translated from English to Amharic in YR4 Q3, and then the documents will be formatted and printed. The training is planned for December 2021.
- EWCA's central storeroom in Addis Ababa has been fitted with CCTV and additionally shelving units to hold the ivory that is currently being collated from the small storerooms around the country.
- Chebera-Churchura National Park (CCNP) container is in the process of being fitted with shelving units. CCNP storeroom has been slowed due to spiraling costs for the work but is back on track.
- A final audit is planned for January 2022.
- We are delayed in Ethiopia. The delays commenced in Year 2 of the project with a series of setbacks caused by Covid-19, civil unrest and institutional instability, and hindered by communication issues with Ethiopia. However, we have a workplan with EWCA and are on a push to complete most activities before December 2021.

Malawi

- The Storerooms that were due to be strengthened have all been completed with a container installed in Lilongwe, and shelving units and cages, and other equipment supplied to other sites.
- An assessment has been undertaken for the storerooms which demonstrate the significant improvements to storeroom management.
- The printing and training on the SOPs have been delayed, due to a parallel grant specifically on evidence handling. But has now planned for early 2022. (See below on delays).

Uganda

- New Covid-19 regulations in Uganda due to an upsurge in infection rates, has delayed the finalisation of the work in Uganda. However, the two of the three training courses for the UWA storeroom managers on the new Operating Procedures have been undertaken. The details on the numbers trained will be provided in the final report. And the SOPs have been printed and disseminated.
- The storeroom improvements were vastly completed in Year 3, some remaining equipment has been procured and will be distributed by the end of the Year.
- The final assessment will be undertaken in January 2022, together with an audit for CITES reporting purposes.

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.

Malawi

TRACE has been awarded funds by the US State Department (INL) to work on evidence management in Malawi and Zambia. Their project started in September 2020, and is for 2 years. Within this grant, TRACE will work with DNPW on the development of procedures for the handling of evidence. This links to this project and the Standard Operating Procedures for storeroom management that have been developed and endorsed by DNPW.

TRACE commenced discussions with DNPW on how to include the evidence specific handling needs into the storeroom management SOPs from May 2021. And unfortunately, until the decision has been made on the best way forward, the SOPs cannot be printed and training cannot occur. It was finally been agreed in September that the training can occur on general storeroom management early in 2022. It is expected that the work will be completed on time.

Ethiopia

Ethiopia remains in a state of unrest and uncertainty over the past 6 months with the continued civil strife in the Tigray region, communication is limited, and the Government is re-shuffling staff, national travel remains insecure. This continues to impact the project, and EWCA employee's attention is understandable divided. However, the activities are progressing, and the EPIF is going to employ a consultant in Addis Ababa to provide on-the-ground support to finalise the remaining aspects of work. It is expected that the work will be completed within year 4.

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.

Whilst the impact of Covid-19 on project activities accomplishment is alleviating, it is still impacting how we operate.

In Uganda, the Covid-19 regulations, had been relaxed but on the 19th June 2021 they went into a 42 day long lockdown to prevent the spread of the virus, from the 2nd August, some regulations eased but workshops remained banned. The training course on SOPs planned to bring people from the sites to Kampala, with UWA we agreed to postpone the training until the regulations lifted, however the regulations for workshops did not ease. And therefore with UWA we agreed the trainer would run 3 training courses around Uganda for the relevant staff, as this could commence immediately and prevent further delays. It is expected that the work will be completed within year 4.

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: No. No cost Extension approved In Year 3.

We should be able to complete the activities as planned.

Formal change request submitted: No – No cost Extension approved In Year 3.

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. 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 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.

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 DO NOT send these in the same email.****

Please send your **completed report by email** to 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.**