

## 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>	IWT111
<b>Project title</b>	Reducing IWT through Strengthening Livelihoods and Law Enforcement: Ruaha-Rungwa, Tanzania
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	Tanzania
<b>Lead partner</b>	Southern Tanzania Elephant Program
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Rungwa-Kizigo-Muhesi Game Reserves, MBOMIPA WMA
<b>Project leader</b>	<i>Trevor Jones</i>
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)</b>	<i>HYR2</i>
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	<a href="http://www.stzelephants.or.tz">www.stzelephants.or.tz</a>

**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).**

Although we are not looking for specific reporting against your indicators, please use this opportunity to consider the appropriateness of your M&E systems (are your indicators still relevant, can you report against any Standard Indicators, do your assumptions still hold true?). The guidance can be found on the resources page of the relevant fund website.

**1.1 Conducting orientation and sensitization meetings with partners and at village and sub-village level for the establishment of VSLAs, beekeeping and poultry health interventions**

Follow-up meetings (>30) were conducted with village leaders, group members and protected area partners in villages around MBOMIPA WMA, Rungwa, Kizigo and Muhesi Game Reserves.

**1.2 Establish and train 20 Village Savings and Loan Associations (25 members per VSLA) with 500 members in 10 villages**

28 VSLAs (652 members; 41% women and 56% youth) are currently operational in eight villages. 20 VSLAs were formed within the project period (450 members; 38% women and 67% youth), i.e. since Year 1. Two VSLAs (30 members; 33% women and 47% youth) out of these 20 were formed during the reporting period (Apr-Sep 2023).

**1.3 Establish poultry health intervention trial with 100 participants in 5 villages**

In Year 1, we facilitated specialist training for seven local elephant monitors (LEMs) on vaccine management and distributed a first round of the Newcastle disease vaccine to participating households. In the reporting period, LEMs distributed and administered the second (45 vials) and third rounds (45 vials) of the Newcastle disease vaccine to >3,000 chickens in 121 households (all VSLA members; women manage poultry in 55% of households).

**1.4 Provide 200 beehives and beekeeping training to 100 beekeepers in 5 villages**

We procured and distributed 460 hives in Year 1. In the reporting period, we facilitated beekeeping training for 213 farmers (59% women) in 5 villages.

1.5 Ongoing-capacity-building and monitoring of livelihood interventions by community-based team

We worked closely with our community-based team of 14 LEMs around RKM GR and provided follow-up training and coaching to enable them to monitor and coordinate livelihood activities with farmer's groups in their village and conduct community outreach. LEMs successfully and independently managed 5 VSLA share-outs during the reporting period.

2.1 Provide vehicle for increasing human-wildlife conflict response capacity to RKM GR, together with training on effective use of vehicle for HWC response

A vehicle was handed over to Muhesi Game Reserve in Year 1. We continued to monitor the use of the vehicle in HWC response and support Muhesi GR with maintenance and fuel for the vehicle.

2.2 Enable HWC response by MBOMIPA VGS and RKM GR Rangers through fuel provision

1,700 litres of fuel were provided to MBOMIPA WMA for HWC and protection activities. VGS responded to 56 elephant incidents during the reporting period, helping to move elephants away from farms and villages and back into the WMA. 6,000 litres of fuel were provided for protection and HWC response to Rungwa, Kizigo and Muhesi Game Reserves (including via matched funding).

2.3 Train 32 RKM Rangers and 16 MBOMIPA VGS in safety around elephants and more effective elephant deterrent techniques.

27 RKM rangers (11% women) and 2 LEMs (all men) were trained on elephant behaviour and safety around elephants by experts from Kichaka Expeditions Environmental Program. 48 TAWA officers (rangers and their leaders, 19% women) and 10 LEMs (10% women) were trained on elephant rescue protocols by experts from Kilimanjaro Animal C.R.E.W. Since this training, TAWA rangers have conducted multiple rescues of elephant calves trapped in village wells. With experts from Honeyguide Foundation and Randilen WMA, 17 MBOMIPA WMA VGS (24% women) and 2 drivers were trained on the effective use of HEC toolkits for deterring elephants from farms. Since the training, VGS response teams have responded to 56 elephant incidents in villages around the WMA.

2.4 Local Elephant Monitors (LEMs) conduct one-on-one training for 3000 community members at home and at farms on elephant behaviour and safety around elephants

From April to September 2023, LEMs conducted one-to-one training with 1,235 community members (264 through home-based film screenings and 971 through one-on-one discussions).

2.5 Conduct wide-scale education and outreach programs (Tembo Cup Football Tournament)

Three Tembo Cups were conducted during July-September 2023 in villages around Muhesi and Kizigo Game Reserves and MBOMIPA WMA. 33,369 people attended matches, 17,547 attended student trainings, 25,841 people received pitch-side training, and 10,109 attended film nights. The MBOMIPA Cup was implemented in close collaboration with the NGO Lion Landscapes. At cinema nights we screened our newly developed 35-minute Swahili language film on human-elephant coexistence (matched funding).

### **Output 3**

3.1 Train 6 MBOMIPA VGS (2 women) in Instant Detect deployment, operation, monitoring and response

We were unable to conduct this activity because neither Instant Detect 2.0 nor an alternative technology (TrailGuard) were available. See Question 2 for details.

3.2 Deploy and monitor Instant Detect 2.0 system and set up Control Room for Phase 1 of field trial (operationalization).

We were unable to begin Phase 1 of the ID 2.0 trial or the TrailGuard alternative. We did establish a Control Room equipped with a large screen, computer, and radio equipment for use as a radio control and real-time monitoring of VGS operations using the EarthRanger platform. We are in the process of upgrading MBOMIPA WMA's radio communications from analog to digital (with matched funding) so that VGS, patrol vehicles, and aircraft can be tracked in real-time. The improved communications capacity and roll-out of the EarthRanger platform will make VGS mobilization in response to alerts aerial patrols and early warning technology more rapid and efficient.

3.3 Deploy and monitor Instant Detect 2.0 system for Phase 2 of field trial (efficacy, viability, VGS mobilisation).

We were unable to begin Phase 2 of the ID 2.0 trial or the TrailGuard alternative.

3.4 Produce Instant Detect 2.0 efficacy and viability assessment report and, if trial successful, Standard Operating Procedures for MBOMIPA WMA

Planned for Year 3, although we were unable to begin Phase 2 of the ID 2.0 trial or the TrailGuard alternative.

#### **Output 4**

4.1 Train 5 RKM GR rangers and 2 MBOMIPA VGS (2 women) to become aerial observers

8 MBOMIPA Village Game Scouts (VGS, 3 women) were trained to become aerial observers in June 2023. This training included identification of illegal activities from the air, recording waypoints using handheld GPS devices, data recording on aerial patrol datasheets, photography, and communicating with pilots and ground teams during aerial patrols. Training for five aerial observers from RKM GRs will be completed in the next four months.

4.2 Conduct 60 hours of aerial surveillance per year in coordination with rapid response ranger and VGS ground teams

During the reporting period, 145 hours of aerial surveillance were conducted in MBOMIPA WMA, Lunda-Nkwambi GCA, and RKM GRs. Illegal activities detected from aerial surveillance included unauthorised grazing and logging. VGS and ranger response teams acted on information from aerial patrols, which resulted in the removal of cattle from the protected areas, multiple suspects involved in logging and charcoal production being apprehended, and the dismantling of 7 poacher's camps.

4.3 Enable 23 days of strategic patrols by 4 Village Game Scout (VGS) teams every month in MBOMIPA WMA

VGS in MBOMIPA WMA carried out 457 days of foot patrols, covering a total distance of 6,847 km during the reporting period. They also conducted 59 days of vehicle patrols covering 1,238 km. VGS apprehended 17 suspects, of whom 29% were bushmeat-related, 18% were in possession of illegal firearms, 12% were related to livestock incursions into the WMA, and 29% were related to logging and charcoal production. In a joint operation with TAWA rangers, VGS apprehended a suspect possessing 7 pieces of elephant ivory and 4 elephant tusks; thereby preventing the entry of these tusks into the illegal ivory trade.

4.4 Train 8 MBOMIPA VGS (3 women) in basic tactical anti-poaching skills with PAMS Foundation.

8 MBOMIPA WMA VGS (3 women) participated in a comprehensive one-month tactical anti-poaching training facilitated by PAMS Foundation. 7 VGS (2 women) passed the training. Training topics included Tanzanian wildlife and natural resource laws and regulations, human rights, conflict resolution techniques for human-wildlife conflicts, mastering patrol methodologies with a particular emphasis on ambush strategies, camouflage techniques, first aid skills, effective search procedures and radio communication.

**4.5 Generate ground and aerial patrol maps and trend analysis reports for protected area managers**

During the reporting period, the STEP Protection team produced 24 maps and delivered six monthly ground patrol reports to MBOMIPA WMA management. Aerial patrol maps were also produced for every aerial mission and delivered to protected area managers.

**4.6 Conduct refresher training for 39 VGS and 14 RKM GR rangers in human rights, pre arrest and post-arrest procedures**

In anticipation of the upcoming changes in leadership at the WNMA management and board levels, STEP is preparing to offer refresher training for VGS. This training will coincide with the scheduled new contract signings in November and December 2023. The refresher programs will focus on essential topics, such as human rights, the code of conduct, and pre-and post-arrest procedures. These programs will ensure compliance with Tanzanian laws and regulations and they will also enhance the participants' existing employment agreements.

**4.7 Support MBOMIPA WMA VGS to provide witness testimony in court cases**

In the reporting period, VGS filed 8 court cases related to the unlawful wildlife trade and the illegal possession of firearms. VGS provided witness testimony in a case related to the arrest of an elephant poacher (which we reported on in Year 1). This case was recently concluded with the Iringa District Magistrate Court declaring the defendant guilty on three charges, which included illegal entry into a protected area, possession of government trophies (specifically, an elephant skull and two tusks), and possession of weapons in a protected area (specifically, three muzzleloaders and 35 bullets).

**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 key problem encountered was continued delays in the availability of the Instant Detect 2.0 satellite-linked ground surveillance system (described in detail in the Year 1 report) and the inability to procure an alternative technology we identified (TrailGuard, we received no response from the supplier despite multiple contact attempts). As a result, we were unable to begin trialling early warning technology - a key component of Output 3. We have begun to research other options for early warning technology (e.g., acoustic sensors, modified camera traps), and hope to secure an alternative real-time option or develop an alternative approach with conventional camera traps. STEP will submit a change request with our proposed way forward to BCF in the next 10 working days.

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

Discussed with NIRAS: No

Formal Change Request submitted: No (we will submit a change request in the next 10 working days)

Received confirmation of change acceptance NA

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: £ [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: £ 0

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?

None.

**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**