

Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects

Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus Half Year Report

Project reference	IWT121
Project title	Living with wildlife: improving livelihoods in the Mole Ecological Landscape
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Ghana
Lead partner	Nature and Development Foundation
Partner(s)	Mole National Park & CK Tadam University of Technology and Applied Sciences
Project leader	<i>Mustapha Kaluwe Seidu</i>
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	<i>HYR1-30-10-2023</i>
Project website/blog/social media	https://ndfwestafrica.org/living-with-wildlife-improving-livelihoods-in-the-mole-ecological-landscape/ https://www.facebook.com/100035245363901/posts/pfbid032L1WLvFBUMibeqZ8ayNaxKCWetY7zD6jvfj74LBD1QAXj4RyVeYMx2yQmE52gUczl/?d=w&mibextid=qC1gEa

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.

Within the period under reporting (April 2023 -September 2023), all planned project activities were successfully executed as scheduled. During the first month of project implementation, there was an all-partners inception meeting to refresh all team members on their responsibilities, consequences, and guidance of implementation. This is greatly improving coordination and reducing miscommunication amongst partners. In addition, the project, and the various interventions it offers were introduced to all the beneficiary communities (the Chakali Sungmaaluu, Moagduri Wuntanluri Kuwomsaasi MWK CREMAs) and the two (2) district assemblies (Wa East and Maprugu Magdoari) to inform them of the project approval, receive their feedback on communities selected for the intervention and their commitment for successful implementation of all project activities. The outcome of the meetings is a chart which details the various project interventions by beneficiary communities. This chart is guiding the execution of project interventions in agreed corresponding communities. In the end, all 34 communities within the two CREMAs (Chakali Sungmaaluu – 23, MWK -11) are benefitting from at least an intervention of the project. These actions are necessary first steps in securing smooth implementation and attainment of the desired change which the project seeks.

Moreover, in line with project implementation timetable, the project has provided training on shea roller technique for a safe and quicker picking of shea nut to 120 women. The project also provided all the trained 120 women with 120 shea rollers, 120 willington boots and 120 head pans within the period under reporting. These 120 women beneficiaries were identified and

selected by the leadership of the CREMAs from three (3) communities within the two (2) CREMAs. More women in all the communities in the CREMAs want to benefit from the shea roller technology training as shea collection is a major income generation activity for women around the park. However, due to budget limitation, the project was only able to provide training and associated equipment for 120 women within the period under reporting. The shea roller training received major attention from, not only members of the CREMAs, but also the District Assembly with the District Chief Executive showing keen interest. During the training, more women turned up. The assumption that, 'community members will avail themselves for the trainings offered held true. The anticipation is that follow-up surveys will show evidence of empowered women with valuable knowledge and skills on the shea roller technology and that the women will apply best practices in the collection and processing of shea nuts for the sustainable management of the shea nut resources in their communities. Attached as annexes 1&2 are the narrative report on the Shea Roller Technology Training and the inception meetings organized.

The project has successfully arranged and coordinated all required logistics to train selected community members on hygienic honey production as well as rodent farming skills and techniques. The project has also provided avenue to equip the selected beneficiaries with beehives and accompanying tools and live rodents for the establishment of a profitable and sustainable livelihood enterprises. Actual training is slated for the third quarter of the first year in line with the implementation timetable.

The indicator to have 80% of functioning sustainable enterprises established as a livelihood measure by 2026 is still relevant and the assumptions that majority of honeybee hives will be colonized by honeybees and that beneficiaries will rear the animals with a commercial mindset still holds.

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.

Within the last six (6) months of project implementation, there was the need to change certain project staff due to periodic staff transfer which usually characterises government works in Ghana and overly loading of assignments and responsibility on initial project staffs of the lead implementer. The following are the staff changes that were made.

1. Lead Partner Coordinator - Glen Asomaning is changed to Margaret Appiah.
2. Lead Partner Project officer – Kingsley Twumasi is changed to Cephass Apaliya
3. Mole National Park (Sub-grantee) Project Coordinator – Addah Paul is changed to Ndego Martin.

These changes will not affect the budget of the project rather, will ensure the timely and effective implementation of project activities for the attainment of the anticipated outcome and objective of the project.

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

Formal Change Request submitted: Yes

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes

Change request reference if known: Change reference is not 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: £

Attached as annex 3 is the expenditure report for the period.

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.

We currently do not expect to have any significant, underspend in the financial year.

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

High inflation rate in Ghana is affecting the project budget. Cost of items budgeted during proposal development stage have more than doubled. This is making it difficult to provide beneficiaries with the planned quantities of items for livelihood support. Prioritizing of logistics had to be adopted to ensure that activities are run for the attainment of intended results.

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**. 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**