

Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus

Half Year Report

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum of 2-3 pages** in length.

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: 31st October 2024

Please note all projects that were active before 1 October 2024 are required to complete a Half Year Report.

Submit to: BCF-Reports@niras.com including your project ref in the subject line.

Project reference	DIR27S2\1040
Project title	African Wild Dogs and African people - Conservation through Coexistence
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Kenya
Lead Organisation	Mpala Research Centre
Partner(s)	Laikipia County Government, Northern Rangeland Trust, Samburu County Government, Isiolo County Government, Kenya Wildlife Service, Community Conservancies, Ewaso lions, Action For Cheetahs, Community Outreach Arts
Project leader	Dedan Ngatia
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	30 th Oct 2024, HYR3
Project website/blog/social media	Website: www.mpala.org/ Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/MpalaResearchCentre Twitter: @MpalaWildDogs Instagram: Mpala_WildDogs

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed project implementation timetable (if your project started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end of September).

This is the 3rd (final) year of our project implementation. We continue implementing activities and borrowing lessons from previous years. Project progress between April and end of September 2024 include:

Output 1: Zero human deaths from rabies in the project area by 2024

- No rabies deaths, to either humans or domestic dog, were recorded during this reporting period.
- After the most recent mass domestic dog vaccinations, ending in December 2023, some areas were identified to have received low vaccination coverage. In response, and for these specific areas, we run some addition door to door vaccinations resulting to a total number of 795 dogs vaccinated. This represented a 147% rise in vaccination coverage, compared to numbers vaccinated in 2022 (322 dogs in 2022 to 795 in 2023/24) Vaccinated domestic dogs' data is captured using the WVS (Worldwide Veterinary Service) application by Mission Rabies.
- Our outreach team continued to educate the local communities on matters related to rabies eradication through our social media platforms and through one-on-one engagements. In this reporting period, we

reached out to 7,363 residents (2960 men, 2575 women and 1828 youths) through one-on-one engagements and approximately 8,100 people through our social media platforms.

- We run two plays, in two different schools, on rabies control and management, in collaboration with the Community Outreach Theatre Play team.
- Our community officers continued to collect data related to domestic dogs' disease surveillance and domestic dog-bite incidents. Such surveillance allows early detection of suspected rabies cases, if any, thereby enabling prevention of disease spread.
- During this reporting period we held 4 meetings with the Laikipia County Government's veterinary department team to plan the 2024 annual mass rabies vaccination campaign. We intend to kickstart the campaign in mid-November
- We distributed 400 leaflets on rabies control measures, including dog handling and dog bite management. These leaflets had been prepared previously for use in the project.
- We continued to hold our monthly meetings and weekly meetings aimed at streamlining project implementation, identifying gaps, monitoring progress and needs for improvement.
- In partnership with local partners, Global Rabies Alliance and Rabies Free Kenya, we celebrated World Rabies Day (held on 28th September every year) in the project area, reaching out to 1430 residents and vaccinating 159 domestic dogs on the very day. See link: <https://rabiesalliance.org/world-rabies-day/event/world-rabies-day-marking-laikipia-county-kenya>

Output 2: Two-thirds reduction of wild dog deaths caused directly or indirectly by people.

- There have been no reports of wild dog deaths during this reporting period.
- Data collection on wildlife health was conducted throughout this reporting period. One suspected case of rabid dog was reported at the project buffer zone. The project team and Laikipia County government responded swiftly by vaccinating all the domestic dogs around the area. There were further reported cases after this.
- We successfully held a workshop on human-carnivore conflict mitigation. The workshop brought together all project partners and stakeholders on board, and a local action plan was developed and currently under review. See the workshop report attached.
- In close partnership with Kenya wildlife service and local community, the project team managed to deploy 4 collars to ensure real time monitoring of the collared packs, and to help mitigate conflicts within the project area.

Output 3: declining incidences of livestock depredation by all large carnivores, despite rising population of African wild dogs

- The local households monthly survey on livestock depredation were conducted throughout this reporting period. All cases were captured using SMART app.
- No livestock attacks by wild dogs were recorded in the reporting period. However, 15 sheep and goats were killed by other large carnivores within the project area. This shows a decline, from 34 sheep and goats killed in last reporting period to 15.
- We continued our outreach activities in communities through meetings and Community Officer engagements. A total number of 10286 livestock keepers (3653 men, 3647 women and 2986 youths) were trained on large carnivore coexistence information and good livestock husbandry practices.
- The Community Outreach Theatre Play team performed 2 plays, in two schools, on coexistence between people, livestock and wild dogs.
- The project team and partner staff continued to utilize the depredation workshop report to extract coexistence methodology messages to be passed to people within local communities.

Output 4: Improve public attitudes to coexisting with African wild dogs.

- We continued to engage local communities on the benefits of coexisting with wildlife. We did this during play performances, and during formal and informal community meetings.
- Through our different communication and outreach methods, including prints and social media posts, we continued to share information regarding coexistence with African wild dogs, aiming to improve public attitudes and perception towards African wild dogs and other carnivores. One newsletter was produced and shared in this reporting period. Our Social media platforms continue to expand. Currently, our twitter, fb and Instagram account have 940, 2090 and 974 followers respectfully.
- We continued to administer simplified questionnaire to community residents to assess the attitude towards living with wild dogs. 87 questionnaires were administered between April and September 2024.
- We continued to intentionally engage local hotel and tourism industry on creating a marketing edge around the wild dogs which has been adopted by several players. On several occasions we engaged with Footprint Safaris, El Karama Lodge and OI Jogi Lodge for African wild dog viewing.

Output 5: Improved national capacity for protecting wildlife populations and human health.

- The project team continued to hold monthly meeting/trainings aimed at strengthening skills and knowledge of the project team. We have also trained partner staff on different aspect of the project in this reporting period
- Over 10 local community members were trained and engaged as rabies eradication promoters during this reporting period vaccination campaign. They were also hired temporarily as vaccination assistants.
- In the reporting period, we engaged 2 County veterinarians from the Laikipia County Government during door-to-door vaccinations.
- We successfully engaged the County administration on dog bite data collection and we are now having gender segregated data on bites

Monitoring:

We continue to monitor all indicators identified to feed information on progress to advice implementation modification if needed. Our Monitoring and Evaluation Officer has led this.

Wild dog Packs- As positive feedback from our monitoring, we have recorded an additional wild dog pack within the project area in this reporting period. Also, the project recorded one denning pack with 8 puppies in the community area.

Training impacts- Number of residents reached, training subjects and methods of outreach continue to be documented to help assess project's trainings and awareness creation activity's impact

Assumptions

All the project's initial assumptions still hold true.

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.

We did not face any notable problems/unexpected challenges that could have majorly affected the project and timelines. However, we received heavy rains during the months of April and May in most parts of the project area. Assessment of the risk from floods (a common occurrence in the project area) was continually done. This advised scheduling of field activities especially once in high flood prone areas. We however we able to accomplish all the planned activities for the 1st quarter of the year.

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: *If you submitted a financial Change Request, you can find the reference in the email from NIRAS confirming the outcome*

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024)

Actual spend:

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 2025)?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

4c. If you expect and underspend, then you should 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 to your project 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?

Not applicable

6. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent annual report. If your project was subject to an Overseas Security and Justice Assistance assessment please use this space to comment on any changes to international human rights risks, and to address any additional mitigations outlined in your offer letters. Please provide the comment and then your response. If you have already provided a response, please confirm when.

Clarify the types of carnivore-friendly livestock husbandry practices adopted for output 3.3 indicator

- a. To reduce conflict from African wild dogs, it has been proved that residents should be vigilant while grazing in dense thickets, avoid grazing at early morning and evenings when the dogs are hunting, they should avoid using herd domestic dogs as they increase chances of predation and should ensure adults are the primary herders especially in areas prone to attacks.
- b. Minimal livestock predation can be achieved if adults graze a herd of 35 individuals, as a maximum herd size for one herder. If above 35 individuals, herders should ensure that there are bells on animals.
- c. Depredation by lion, leopard and hyenas mostly happens in the bomas. This is best prevented and avoided by building a predator proof bomas which is 5-7 feet strong fence and gate, lights, dogs and promotion of conservation to have health rangelands with prey. While making noise can deter predation by these carnivores, if attacks happen when grazing, the herders need to be well equipped.
- d. Community members in the landscape need to know reactionary actions to human wildlife conflict threats like poisoning. We advise them to immediately report suspected cases of poisoning to adjacent conservancies, local authority and or KWS for action to avert risks to carnivores and birds of prey.
- e. There are existing human wildlife conflict management, response actions and protocols. If a conflict happens, it should be reported to KWS, within 24 hours, GPS location collected, pictures of the incidence captured, a form filled by relevant authorities and submitted to KWS. The national short code *202*09# can be used to contact KWS to fast track the compensation process.

Report progress towards outputs and outcomes against relevant indicators in the main narrative report

This will be put into consideration when doing the next annual report.

Include the local disease management plan and the surveillance system as annexes to support output indicator 2.3 and 2.4 respectfully. In addition, specify why the surveillance system is under partial implementation.

The disease management plan was annexed, and again attached as an additional document to this report. The plan entails details on management, surveillance and response.

Checklist for submission

For New Projects (i.e. starting after 1st April 2024)	
Have you responded to any additional feedback (other than caveats) received in the letter you received to say your application was successful which requested response at HYR (including safeguarding points)? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	
If not already submitted, have you attached your risk register?	
For Existing Projects (i.e. started before 1st April 2024)	
Have you responded to feedback from your latest Annual Report Review? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	
For All Projects	
Include your project reference in the subject line of submission email.	
Submit to BCFs-Report@niras.com .	
Have you clearly highlighted any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	
Have you reported against the most up to date information for your project?	
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	