

Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects

Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus

Half Year Report

31st October 2024

Project reference	29-008
Project title	Community-led conservation and fisheries development in North coast, Kenya
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Kenya
Lead Organisation	Fauna & Flora International (Fauna & Flora)
Partner(s)	Northern Rangeland Trust (NRT) Pate Island Marine Community Conservancy (PMCC) Kiunga Community Wildlife Association (KICOWA) Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS); Kenya Fisheries Service (KeFS) The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Kenya
Project leader	Serah Munguti
Report date and number	HYR3 (April 2024 – September 2024)
Project website/blog/social media	https://www.fauna-flora.org/projects/securing-marine-resources-and-sustaining-fisheries-livelihoods-in-northern-kenya/

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed project implementation timetable

The 3rd Project Implementation Committee (PIC) meeting was convened on 23rd May in Lamu during which progress with implementation and Y3 activities were discussed. All the priorities for the first half of Y3 have been completed and the project's contributions to fisheries co-management activities communicated to Kenya Fisheries Service (KeFS) in the monthly reporting. The consolidated reports are shared with all institutions involved in the reporting thereby enhancing the project's visibility and has provided a basis for creating synergies among the institutions. In addition, NRT Coast Region Annual Report for 2023 highlighted project's activities and has been useful in sharing information with other stakeholders about ongoing work. Output-specific progress is as provided below.

Outputs 1. A1.1/1.2 Monitoring in all the nine LMMAs has been consistent, supported by the six trained fish catch data collectors (2F, 4M) and reef rangers, the associated database is up to date and the monthly reports generated are informing ongoing marine resource management. A biannual ranger-based survey coupled with a scientific scuba survey supported by partners in the seascape was conducted between 24th April and 28th May involving 39 participants (7F, 32M), amidst a mass coral bleaching experienced in the region during the first half of 2024. Notably, the affected corals have almost recovered fully in most of the project sites as seen in a post-bleaching survey conducted in September. This indicates a degree of resilience of the coral reef ecosystems within Pate-Kiunga seascape. **A1.3/1.4** Additional rangers (4) recruited in May has increased capacity to support conservation in Kiunga. The drafted rangers Code of Conduct was approved by NRT in July and awaits endorsement by Pate and Kiunga community Conservancies Board. Community-led patrols by the rangers and BMU patrol subcommittees and joint patrols with mandated government agencies have been sustained deterring illegal activities within and around the LMMAs. However, additional support is needed from mandated government agencies to heighten night patrols. Digitalisation of all monitoring efforts (A1.1,1.2,1.3) to enable real-time access to monitoring data is underway with an initial training for rangers on Earth ranger conducted in June (19-21). Phones purchased in Y1 are supporting the transition, and the programme could benefit from additional resourcing to establish the necessary infrastructure and train all the community monitors and rangers on the effective use of the digital tools.

A1.5 Discussions with communities on the expansion of existing LMMAs were held in Q2 (10th July, 26th August, 16th September) culminating in a participatory mapping exercise that involved the octopus women fishers among other actors. The results were inconclusive with only two out of the five sites (Shimo La Tewa and Mike In) reflecting the agreed expansion. This was attributed to access limitations posed by high tides and heavy waves therefore a repeat mapping exercise has been scheduled for Q3. Construction of a rangers' outpost and enhanced patrols remain key priorities for Shimo la Tewa LMMA. **A1.6 & 1.7** Three

key steps in the development of Kiunga Marine National Reserve (KMNR) management plan, were completed with additional funding from the Bloomberg Ocean Initiative i.e., community consultation on the draft plan held in 6 villages within and outside the reserve (6th & 7th September), Core Planning Team meeting to consolidate inputs (10th & 11th September), and a stakeholders' plan validation workshop (12th September). This will be followed up by endorsement (KWS Director), gazettelement and launch.

Output 2. A2.1-2.4 A review of the Fish to Market (FTM) program was conducted between 8th and 12th July with fishers onboarded in Y2 from 7 BMUs. The participants highlighted significant support from the private sector partner (Kumbatia Seafood) in the form of incentives (cooler boxes, bait, fishing gear, fuel), the availability of a ready market with premium prices for their fish, the recognition gained both locally and internationally, and training on fish handling and sustainable fishing. Additional support is needed in ensuring a constant supply of ice, hiring more fishing boats to assist with logistics, advance payments to cushion fishers during their fishing trips, providing continuous BMU mentorship, and enforcing by-laws to effectively manage the fisheries. The 5th Participatory Market Systems Mapping meeting was held in August in Faza (23 participants; 7 F, 16 M). The discussions between the buyer (Kumbatia Seafood), local dealers and fishers included catch limits for various fish (7), expected demand and supply for the season as well as prices for different species in relation to the market demand. Endangered species such as parrotfish and catches less than 500g will not be purchased. Additional cooler boxes to fishers under FTM are needed for surplus catch left by Kumbatia to reduce post-harvest losses and have bargaining power over local dealers. Further 223 participants (8F, 215M) from six BMUs took part in the pre-season (*mid-high season from October*) refresher training held in August and focused on fish handling, sea safety and financial literacy, before the onset of the. Despite the reporting period being a low season for fishing characterised by rough seas, the fishers from 3 BMUs (Kiwayu, Kiunga and Faza) sold 7.895 tons of their catches to Kumbatia Seafood Company earning an income of KES. 964,267 (£ 5,700).

A2.6 The project has been successfully linked to the Darwin innovation project (DARNV016) that supported a Social Analysis and Action (SAA) Training in Pate in June (25th -29th), involving ToTs, Pate Conservancy board members and members from Pate, Shanga Rubu, and Shanga Ishakani BMUs. Those trained will act as SAA champions, who will support ongoing dialogues within their communities to reflect on and challenge harmful gender norms. This initiative aims to encourage equitable gender norms among specific community groups, ultimately leading to more effective biodiversity conservation outcomes. Follow-up visits by SAA facilitators are planned for Q3 and 4, to assist community champions in enhancing their dialogue facilitation skills and to document the impact of these efforts. This will build on the gender analysis conducted in Y1 and lessons from implementation in Y2 &3 to inform our work towards being gender transformative. **A2.7** Review of the performance and impact of the Microfinance programme was conducted between in September (19th-25th) involving 207 women from 13 BMUs/villages in Pate-Kiunga seascape participated. Data analysis is ongoing to inform implementation in Q3&4. **A2.8** Issuance of post-harvest loss reduction equipment procured for 3 BMUs in Pate Conservancy is scheduled for Q3 preceded by discussions on terms of use and role of the conservancy board and BMUs in ensuring beneficiaries are accountable. In addition, a gear exchange learning visit was conducted in August (23rd-25th) under Bloomberg funding to stimulate fishers buy-in into the program. 19 (6F, 13M) participants from Pate conservancy were hosted by counterparts in Kiunga conservancy 26 (2F, 24). Barriers to the gear exchange program and potential solutions were discussed based on experience from the intervention in Kiunga. Most of the perceived barriers (awareness on impact of destructive gears, reliable market, alternative livelihoods, provision of boats and gears and training on use) can be addressed through partnerships in an integrated program if full enforcement by the government is provided.

Output 3. 3.1 to 3.3 Sensitisation on good governance in relation to gender and conservation was incorporated in the SAA training held in Pate. In July, the BMU mentorship and training reports were shared with the consultant assessing the state of governance in the BMUs to inform interventions by government under the Kenya Marine Fisheries and Socio-Economic Development (KEMFSED) project. **A3.4** A follow up training on social safeguards was conducted on 2nd and 3rd August and attended by 36 (7F, 29M) participants drawn from conflict resolution sub-committees of 11 BMUs and select conservancy board members from Pate and Kiunga. The training focused on grievance redress mechanisms and an exposition of project risks particularly on governance, equitable distribution of opportunities and benefits, and stakeholders' analysis. The BMU Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on conflicts management was discussed to enable integration with the conservancies grievance handling practices and partner's (NRT) procedures. The grievance redress mechanism tools (Grievance Form, Grievance receiving form, grievance log-in register form, Serious incident report and Meeting Record) were endorsed by the conservancies and BMUs. There was a proposal to update the BMUs SOPs to include the GRM templates. Additional funding is needed for mentoring the grievance redress committees at the BMU and conservancy level to strengthen their systems, especially on recording, analysis and reporting. **A3.5.** is scheduled for Q4. **A3.7.** The beneficiaries the Leadership and Management Programme (LAMP) training (153 youth) are undergoing mentorship programs in their respective conservancies and BMUs. Currently, most trainees

are leading and participating in various projects centered on conservation and community development, including securing leadership positions (e.g., current Ozi BMU secretary, Cabinet Secretary Fisheries in Lamu youth assembly), livelihood diversification (i.e., embarking on maize farming and supplying to a local school), and other youths have also emerged as peace ambassadors in their area.

Output 4. A4.1 The project supported and/or participated in commemoration of relevant environmental days including World Mangrove Day held in Mkokoni which involved 149 participants (73F,76M) (26 July). Both mangrove posters (94) printed by the project and skills acquired from the Community-Based Ecological Mangrove Restoration training in April (22-30) were used to raise awareness on best practices in the management of mangroves in the county-level events; World Environment Day (5 June) held in Witu, Lamu; International coastal clean-up day (21st September) held in Ashwei beach in Kiunga and Mombasa MPA with a call to stop pollution in all environments; World Oceans Day through a talk show hosted by Radio Lamu and the Mombasa Ocean Festival to raise awareness on the importance of the seagrass ecosystem and to showcase lessons from pilot restoration efforts along Kenya's South Coast; World Ranger Day celebration held in Watamu (31 July) and themed '30 by 30' which showcased role of rangers in meeting the global targets.

A4.4 Project team and PIC members participated in national and international forums to learn from and/or share experiences with other initiatives including: IUCN's Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) training in Malindi (10- 11 June) to enhance understanding of NbS as an approach to climate adaptation; Regional CBNRM learning network workshop in Diani (16-19 July); Kenya National Consultation Forum on LMMAs (28-29 August) where status of LMMAs and the expansion strategy was discussed, and the national message incorporated into the WIO LMMA declaration during the WIO LMMA Knowledge Forum in Madagascar (26-29 September) drafted; the inception meeting for review of Watamu MPA Management Plan (29-30 July) which enabled sharing learning from the Kiunga MPA plan development process; Kenya octopus harvest strategy design virtual workshops (17 &19 September) where experiences from the implementation of Octopus closures in Lamu were shared; Reef Restoration Initiatives in the WIO for lesson sharing, capacity building and networking (16-18 July, Zanzibar); Council of Elders meeting for the NRT coast region in September (2 &3) served to update donors and partners on the progress in implementation of the NRT coast programs which include project activities.

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.

Unfavourable weather conditions during the Tropical Storm Cyclone Hidaya affected the bi-annual ranger survey causing rescheduling of the activity to Q2 and has since been completed. **Mass coral bleaching** affected most of the coral reefs in the Pate-Kiunga Seascape, however these have since recovered. Resistance from neighbouring BMUs outside the Kiunga reserve that insist on being allowed to use beach seines in the reserve and to fish in the Shimo La Tewa LMMA. Continuous dialogues to secure full buy-in is a continuous process and require more time. The **exchange rate fluctuations** have had an impact on the project budget therefore, the activities have been adjusted to align with the reduced budget and joint implementation across grants pursued where feasible.

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
Received confirmation of change acceptance:	No
Change Request reference if known:	N/A

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)? No

4c. If you expect and underspend, then you should consider your project budget needs carefully.

5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures? No

6. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent annual report.

None