

## 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: 31<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com) including your project ref in the subject line.

<b>Project reference</b>	<b>DARCC049</b>
<b>Project title</b>	<b>LEAD Ranger: Embedding Training Capacity within Ranger Teams</b>
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	Kenya, Zimbabwe, Botswana South Africa, Mozambique, Sierra Leone
<b>Lead Organisation</b>	Thin Green Line Foundation
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Ranger Campus and Akashinga (formerly International Anti-Poaching Foundation)
<b>Project leader</b>	<i>Tim Schneider</i>
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)</b>	<i>30<sup>th</sup> October 2024 HYR1</i>
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	<a href="https://leadranger.org/">https://leadranger.org/</a> <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/company/lead-ranger/?originalSubdomain=ke">https://www.linkedin.com/company/lead-ranger/?originalSubdomain=ke</a> <a href="https://www.instagram.com/lead_conservation/">https://www.instagram.com/lead_conservation/</a>

**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).**

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.

**Progress to Date**

Since April 2024, our project has progressed well against the activities and outputs proposed within our log-frame and application.

Our training team has been busy in the field since 1<sup>st</sup> April and have, to date, delivered training within five of our six target countries (Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa, South Sudan, and Zimbabwe).

Our training team have delivered eleven training outputs, ranging from Basic Field Ranger Instructor (formerly named Coach Ranger Life Saver), Advanced Field Ranger Instructor and additional mentorship courses.

From these courses we have delivered training to a total of 56 rangers, with 53 of these participants graduating from their respective courses. Through our assessment-based graduation system, these rangers have demonstrated increased capacity to perform the skills at their respective levels (Basic, Intermediate, Advanced).

We are confident that our progress to date puts our team in a comfortable position to meet the expectations outlined in our log frame:

1. **Output 1:** Rangers demonstrate improved capability to deliver critical care and emergency field-response first aid by March 2025. (Indicators 1.1 and 1.2 inclusive)
2. **Output 2:** Rangers demonstrate improved field safety and patrolling skills by March 2025.
3. **Output 3:** Rangers demonstrate increased capability and confidence in their ability to deliver training to their peers and lead team operations in the field by March 2025.
4. **Output 4:** Eight organisations demonstrate improved capacity to deliver ranger training internally by March 2025.

All training courses to date have been delivered within the operational bases of our participating organisations, making it easier for their staff to attend and reducing associated travel costs for their participants.

The majority of assumptions outlined within our application remain true, namely that a minimum of 12 rangers will participate in each training course. In addition, the request for additional mentorship (outlined in question 2) highlights a desire from participating organisations to deliver internal training, using their LEAD certified graduates, and we are utilising adaptive management to ensure we provide our beneficiaries with all the support they need to succeed in the future.

### **M&E Systems**

Our new Monitoring and Evaluation Framework is now in full use after roll-out in early 2024. Pre and Post-course evaluation surveys have been conducted with individual participants of each training course. Our Impact Manager is actively compiling this information for analysis, which will enable us to evaluate whether rangers' confidence has been impacted through the project (as per indicators 2.3 and 2.4). In order to effectively report on Output 3 (Eight organisations demonstrate improved capacity to deliver ranger training internally by March 2024) and our overarching Outcome we will maintain contact with beneficiary organisations and conduct an end of project survey with each.

### **Standard Indicators**

We intend to report on the following Standard Indicators:

- **DI-A01:** *Number of people in eligible countries who have completed structured and relevant training.* To date we can report a total of 45 people. A gender and country disaggregation will be reported in the final report.
- **DI-A04:** *Number of people reporting that they are applying new capabilities (skills and knowledge) 6 (or more) months after training.* Results are not yet reportable.
- **DI-A05:** *Number of trainers trained under the project reporting to have delivered further training.* Results are not yet reportable.
- **DI-D04:** *Number of people with enhanced wellbeing (f) Number of people with improved social relations.* Results are not yet reportable.

**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.**

To date there have been no notable problems within the project.

An unexpected development within our operations is that the organisations that we are working with have requested greater levels of support from our training team post-training delivery. As a result, we have introduced extended periods of mentorship into our service offering, as of July 2024. This will ensure individuals and organisations who require additional support to succeed and begin implementing their new skills will be supported on their leadership journey. We will soon review our logframe and decide whether this new structure will require a change-request. It is yet unclear the effect these extended courses will have on our delivery output.

**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)?**

Yes  No

**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?**

We are continually grateful for the support provided to the LEAD Ranger program by BCF, however we would like to raise awareness to the complicated process required to receive our final payment for project DARCC030. While we greatly understand the requirement for due diligence, the time taken to receive our final payment was significant and the process was not straightforward. As an experienced international NGO we did manage through this period, however we would be concerned that less experienced or smaller organisations may struggle with the final payment process, particularly the requirement for specific auditing and a signed statement from the auditor. We would recommend reminders be included in the final reporting paperwork and that a template be provided for the auditing agency.

**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.

NA

## Checklist for submission

<b>For New Projects (i.e. starting after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024)</b>	
Have you <b>responded to any additional feedback</b> (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.	N/A
If not already submitted, have you attached your <b>risk register</b> ?	
<b>For Existing Projects (i.e. started before 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024)</b>	
Have you responded to <b>feedback from your latest Annual Report Review</b> ? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	N/A
<b>For All Projects</b>	
Include your <b>project reference</b> in the subject line of submission email.	
Submit to <a href="mailto:BCFs-Report@niras.com">BCFs-Report@niras.com</a> .	Yes
Have you <b>clearly highlighted any confidential information</b> within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	N/A
Have you reported against the most <b>up to date information for your project</b> ?	Yes
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	Yes