

Project Update: September 2017

Objectives: All partially achieved, the grant was used in the period of 9 months.

- Estimate wildlife damage to crops.
- Estimate wildlife damage to livestock.
- Estimate wildlife damage to humans and property.
- Measure efficiency of crops protection methods

The most important discoveries/outcomes include:

- i) Traditional methods to combat wildlife damage to crops, livestock and humans have little impact of reducing wildlife related damages. The increase in human population and changes on livelihood strategies, where currently people are livestock keepers are increasingly doing farming has increased their exposure to wildlife damages.
- ii) There is lack of clear policy guiding compensation to wildlife losses, this in turn lead state official to misuse of state powers/office for personal gain.
- iii) NGOs are more effective in preventing wildlife damage however, the knowledge used by NGOs to combat wildlife damages to crop/livestock is not efficiently transmitted to local communities, hence sustainability issues remains in question when NGOs' project ends.
- iv) State tendency to prioritise wildlife over local people and their livelihoods impels to communities to resent conservation, consequently deterring conservation efforts.

The current project is formative research, its main goal is to establish empirical evidence to support local communities and sympathetic NGO attempts to draw state's attention to put forward a clear strategic plan to combat wildlife related damages, and/or enact compensation law. The result of this project therefore will be made available to local people to be used to draw attention of the policy makers and international community, such as tourists visiting their village to highlight their suffering and sacrifice they endure to conserve wildlife. We will use this information as follows:

- At community level, the project will hold village meetings to give feedback to communities. Summary reports will be distributed to school, village offices, religious organisation and traditional establishments.
- At district level and national level, full reports and policy brief will be distributed to the district offices and at relevant ministries. The report will also be shared to journalist on mainstream media and blog owners.
- At global level results will be published on academic journal, and presented in conferences. I intended to post the summary report to conservation watch Facebook page.

Delay of the rain season: This study depends on agriculture seasons (cropping and harvesting seasons) for data collection to measure the impact of wildlife on crops raids. This delays on rain season lead to changes in cropping season, which in turn led to delays in data collection.

The next step to finish data collection to complete the year agriculture cycle, thereafter writes the final report.

After completion of this formative research, the next step is to conduct action research. The next project will focus on training local communities on the best practices to protect their crops and livestock. The project will be done in collaboration with an NGO, which is currently supporting local communities to combat wildlife damages to crops using chilli bombs. The main goal of the next project will be to pass knowledge to local people. While passing the knowledge, the project will also collect information to the effectiveness of chilli bombs for possible expansion to other wildlife prone communities.