

A Progress (interim) report on  
**Strengthening Community Based Anti-Poaching Units (CBAPUs) for Asian Elephant  
Conservation in Corridor between Nepal and India**  
(January - June 2017)



Submitted to  
**International Elephant Foundation, USA**



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## **2. List the overall and specific conservation needs this project addressed.**

Bardia-Katerniyaghat (Khata) wildlife corridor is the important corridor between Nepal and India which connects two Protected Areas (PAs) viz. Bardia National Park (BNP), Nepal and Katerniyaghat Wildlife Sanctuary (KWS), India through a forest corridor that extends along Geruwa and Orai river systems. Corridor is defined as the strip of forests that allows safe movement of long ranging wildlife populations between two isolated habitats. Forest corridor plays an important role in the management of landscape by linking forest patches and provides accessibility to alternative habitats for long ranging animals. It also helps in maintaining genetic interchange between two isolated wildlife populations of the same species. Until 1994, the western Terai population of wild elephant was dwindling and only 2 elephants were reported in Bardia. Later, 15–20 elephants entered into Nepal from India through the corridor and recolonized in Bardia National Park (DNPWC, 2009). A study estimated some 50 elephants in the Karnali floodplain and over 30 in two herds in the Babai Valley, totaling over 80 animals for Bardia National Park (Pradhan, 2007). The population is currently increasing and field monitoring data suggest that there are about 100 individuals in Bardia National Park (BNP, 2014). About 40-45 individuals frequently move between Nepal and India protected areas from this corridor. However, the increasing number of elephant has become a menace to local community and government authorities as the number of human elephant conflict (HEC) incidents and killing of elephant in the corridor forest are in increasing trend. Although the protected areas of both countries is fully secured by mobilizing security forces and active participation of local communities in buffer zone but there is no any mechanism for the security of wildlife in the corridor forest. Due to anthropogenic affect and illegal activities, there is a high risk for large animal like elephant and other wildlife. Highly dense populated settlements are located in the corridor which plays major role for the breakage of corridor with increasing population. It fosters the increase of conflict with local people whereas local people are not aware about the proper way of chasing elephant and minimization of conflict.

Poaching has now created a serious threat for the survival of endangered species like tiger, rhinoceros and elephants, which are now limited to only few protected areas and corridors. Poaching is major threat for the survival of wildlife in and around Bardia National Park and corridor area. Besides that, the international illegal trade networks of body parts and derivatives of these wild animals has become more challenging task to combat against such type of activities. Other important challenges for the re-colonized elephant populations are habitat shrinkage and fragmentation due to illegal logging, conversion into agricultural land and encroachment. In order to address challenges on poaching for elephant and effective management of corridor, community based anti-poaching operation has been seen highly influenced outside the park involving local informants and people. In another term, community based anti-poaching embraces local community for the effective conservation of wildlife. Under the leadership of park anti poaching officer, the CBAPUs comprise potential village youths with the active involvement of local stakeholders.

The recent statistics of killing and injury shows that there is dramatic increase in elephant killing and injury in the corridor forest. This corridor is also sensitive for killing of tiger and rhino. Last year, two elephants and 6 tigers were killed by using electrocution and snares respectively. Some elephant were injured by piercing arrow and gun shot by the villagers. Mostly the village youths are involved in these activities as they do not have any job and do not have any knowledge for the

conservation importance. There is no any security mechanism from the government and community perspective, which lead to the threats of poaching. On the other hand, conflict from the isolated bull while moving from Nepal's protected area to India is increasing and local communities do not have any idea to minimize the conflict.

By considering the increasing trend of elephant killing and conflict events, we have mobilized 250 village youths by forming 5 CBAPUs in Community Based Anti-poaching Operation to protect elephant, other wildlife and its habitat in the corridor. The units also play important role for safely chasing of isolated bull while entering village for the searching of crop and storage grain. Within the one-year period the youths collected more than 10 snares used for tiger, 3 electrocution trapped for elephant and 6 home made guns used for the killing and injury of wild elephants. The initiation is in pioneer stage so we have developed this project to encourage village youths in community based anti poaching units by providing capacity development training, logistic and equipment support, sport material support and conservation awareness program. This effort will strengthen the capacity of CBAPUs and secure survival of elephants by minimizing illegal killing. It also protects elephant habitat in the internationally important biological corridor. This project will demonstrate model for conservation of elephant outside protected areas with active support of village youths and related stakeholders.

### **3. Summarize the goals and objectives and describe any changes in goals and objectives from the original proposal.**

The major goal of project is to strengthen capacity of community based anti-poaching units (5 units, 250 members) for conservation of Asian elephant population (45 individuals) and the natural corridor by implementing anti-poaching patrolling (regular), safely chasing of wild elephant from village (75% reduction in conflict) and awareness program (2000 people) in most sensitive corridor forest between Bardia National Park, Nepal and Katarniyaght Wildlife Sanctuary, India. It also aims to reduce killing of elephant (zero) in corridor forest i.e. out of park and protects its habitat (1500 ha) from illegal extraction of resources (decrease by 80%). It also helps conservation of other endangered species (tiger, rhino, dolphin, gharial etc.) which frequently use corridor. The specific objectives of project are:

- To strengthen the capacity of Community Based Anti-poaching Units (CBAPUs).
- To organize regular anti poaching activities and safely chasing of wild elephant from village of corridor for the survival of Asian elephant.
- To motivate village youths and other community members in community based anti-poaching operation.
- To enhance anti-poaching database management of Bardia National Park.

### **4. For each objective, describe the specific actions taken to achieve that objective.**

**i. Conservation awareness training for CBAPU members:** Community based anti-poaching campaign is an exemplary outcome of community mobilization towards conservation in recent years in and around Bardia National Park. About 2300 local youths are actively being participating through direct patrolling, information sharing, wildlife and vegetation monitoring and other involvement with the park authorities and Buffer Zone User Committees (BZUCs). We conducted one day orientation training on human elephant conflict mitigation and wildlife poaching for 7

newly reformed CBAPUs in south western part of Bardia National Park during the period. 230 new members from 7 CBAPUs were aware on elephant conservation and youth role on community based anti-poaching initiation. Major objectives of the training were to introduce CBAPU members on protected areas system of Nepal, aware local youths towards negative impacts of poaching and other illegal activities in and around protected areas (PAs), role and importance of local youths in biodiversity conservation, share knowledge, learning and experiences of CBAPU campaigns, provide opportunity to know Bardia National Park and its importance and to product conservation friendly generation for coming future. Training was facilitated by park officer and senior youths who previously involved in anti-poaching campaign. The training was focused on the importance of biodiversity conservation, anthropogenic pressure and youth role for biodiversity conservation and community level poaching control.



*Photo:* Conservation awareness training for CBAPU members

**ii. Patrol and logistic support:** 400 shirts were printed with the logo of Bardia National Park and International Elephant Foundation. The shirts were distributed to the members of CBPAPU, key community leaders and some park front line staffs. CBAPU members have regularly organized anti poaching patrolling, sweeping operation in coordination with park staffs and security personnel. The members were also involved for the safely chased of wild bull elephants which were entered in village during last winter. They are playing key role to minimize the negative violence toward elephant even if local people were killed and injured by elephants. They are not only involved to minimize illegal killing of wildlife but also playing as local conservation ambassador to minimize harmful activities to wild bull even after severe conflict. Beside foot patrolling, in poaching prone area, river patrolling was also organized with the support of park authorities. It not only provide fun to organize river rafting inside park but also helps to control illegal entrance and misdeed such as fishing, collection of sand and gravel in the elephant habitat. Park has provided transportation support and snacks with the support of International Elephant Foundation. The mobilization of CBAPUs for ground patrolling, sweeping operation, river patrolling and safely chasing of wild elephant from village become milestone for elephant conservation in Bardia National park and its surroundings including corridor between Bardia National Park, Nepal and Katarniyaghat wildlife Sanctuary, India.



*Photo:* Back side printing of shirt



*Photo:* Patrol by CBAPU members



*Photo:* river patrolling with chief warden



*Photo:* Safely chasing of elephant from village

**iii. Collection of information about illegal activities:** 5 mobile set and regular calling cards are providing to key park frontline staffs and key CBAPU members for the timely communication of information on poachers movement, misdeed behavior of local communities, movement of elephant /other wildlife and conflict situation in village. Beside, GPS and camera are provided by park for the record of each activity. Three local informants have been selected by park authorities from the villages surrounding the park area and they were mobilized to monitor the illegal activities because the local can easily identify suspicious activities like poaching, illegally logging, river poisoning etc. Whenever they get any kind of illegal activity or scheme in the area, they immediately inform possible threats or incidents to park authority and operation should be taken immediately. There are some experiences about the use of undercover informants for their help in identifying and apprehending poachers. They are in close contact with park authority and providing information. Information about of setting of electrocution is also provided to park authorities. They also inform the movement of elephant heard and solitary bull elephants so that the park and CBAPU members can timely rescue before any damage in village.



**Photo:** Mobile phone distribution to male staff



**Photo:** Mobile phone distribution to female staff



**Photo:** Crossing of elephant in national highway



**Photo:** Illegal killing of deer (poacher was under arrest)

**iv. Monthly meetings:** Community based anti-poaching campaign is an exemplary outcome of community mobilization towards conservation in recent years in and around Bardia National Park. They are actively participating through direct patrolling, information sharing, wildlife and vegetation monitoring and other involvement with the park authorities and BZUCs. Regular meetings are being organized by each CBAPU for the sharing of wildlife conservation threats to all members. They also make the plan for the coming month. Park officers and leaders of Buffer Zone User Committees are also invited for their cooperation. The project has provided stationeries and some support for the tea cost of meeting. Park and Buffer Zone User Committee were requested to allocate some fund to cover the cost of meetings and regular activities such as patrolling, community campaign organized by CBAPU. Participants from park regularly brief the role and responsibilities of CBAPU members in biodiversity conservation and minimize illegal activities in and around the park. Responsible authorities from respective institutions answered the queries raised by participants. Future plans of activities to be done by CBAPUs also discussed and finalized during the special meeting organized by CBAPU. During the period we follow up the monthly meetings of 5 CBAPUs.



**Photo:** CBAPU interactions



**Photo:** Participants from different organizations

**v. Publication of poster:** 1000 posters on elephant conservation are published which will be distributed to the participants of upcoming massive conservation awareness session. The conservation awareness session will be organized by mobilizing CBAPU members. Similarly, 300 Nepal calendar were published with the message of elephant conservation and distributed to all 73 CBAPUs, 20 Buffer Zone User Committees, local hotel, cooperatives and other local community based organization.



**Photo:** Poster on elephant conservation



जंगली हाती धेरै टाढा र सुरक्षित बस्नु

हाती जमीनमा पाईने सबैभन्दा ठूलो जीव हो । आफ्नो तथा एजियासी गरी हातीका दुई प्रजाती रहेका छन् । आफ्नो हाती आफ्नै काममा करिब लाखको संख्यामा रहेका छन् भने एजियासी हाती नेपाल लगायत एजियाका १२ देशमा करिब ३५ - ५० हजारको संख्यामा प्राकृतिक शासनायक रहेका छन् । नेपालका तराई तथा चुरे क्षेत्रमा पूर्व मेची क्षेत्र पश्चिम महाकाली सम्म नै हातीहरूले पूर्वकाल क्षेत्र विचरण गर्ने गरेको पाईन्छ । । नेपालमा करिब २०० को संख्यामा जंगली हाती रहेको अनुमान छ । हातीहरू आफ्ना पुर्खीले प्रयोग गरेको आदी अनुसरण गर्दछन् । पहिला गाऊ बस्ती पातलो थियो, जंगल अरि थियो त्यसैले जंगलबाट सजिलै ओरि शोहर गर्न सक्थे । तर एते पुरानो हाती हिंडने आदी आवासीय परित्त भएकोले हाती अन्तर्गत गाऊपरि आउनुछ र खेतबारीमा लगाएको ड केरा, उच्च र घरमा मण्डारण गरेको अन्न, भर तथा मान्सा र शिरपरि पाईने जौड, फर्स, कुबिण्डो, गुन आदी खानका लागि हाती जंगलबाट बा आउने गरेको पाईन्छ । र गाऊमा खाना पाए पाँड खानामा पकिएर गाऊसैलाई सताउने गरेका छन ।

हातीबाट हुनसक्ने शीत र जन्तुनको सुरक्षा गर्नु

- विद्युतिय तारबार हाती रोक्ने मुख्य उपाय हो नियमित रेखेद्व र मरमत गर्नु ।
- हातीले घर भत्काएमा वा मण्डारण गरेको अन्न नोस्नान गरेमा सरकारबाट राहत विन सकिन्छ अतः उपभोक्ता समिति माफत निवेदन पेश गर्नु ।
- पशु विमा र कुबि विमा गर्नु, विमा गर्दा लाग्ने प्रिमियमको ७५ प्रतिशत रकम सरकारबाट अनुदान पाउन सकिन्छ ।
- गाऊमा हाती आएमा तजिकको सुरक्षा निकाय, निरुन्ज पोष्ट वा निरुन्ज कार्यालयको टोल फ्रि नंबर १६६०२५२२२२ मा फोन गर्नु यसमा फोन गर्दा पेशा लाग्दैन ।

**Photo:** Calendar text on elephant conservation

**vi. Special day celebration:** 4 special days were celebrated in the buffer zone of Bardia National Park with the participation of members of CBAPUs, school students and other community members.

**International wetland day (February 2):** It was celebrated by organizing highway clean up campaign which is the National Highway passes through the Bardia National Park. Around 40 community youths, 20 park staffs and 50 security personnel were participated in the campaign and collected more than 200 kg of trashes from the national highway which passes from the elephant habitat

**International wildlife day (March 3):** It is also Community based youth mobilization anti-campaign day of Bardia National Park which was celebrated by organizing street rally on anti-poaching activities, conservation songs, street-drama, and dance competition and conservation awareness mass campaign. More than 1500 local communities were participated in the event.

**International women day (March 8):** International women day was celebrated by women-environment sub-committee by organizing conservation awareness campaign for about 200 village women.

**Wildlife week (April 14-20):** Wildlife week were celebrated by organizing street rally, tree plantation and quiz contest program in the buffer zone of Bardia National Park. More than 300 local communities were participated in the program.



**Photo:** Joint inauguration of International Wildlife Day(CBAPU day of Bardia) by army commander and chief warden of Bardia National Park



**Photo:** local people participation on the same program

**vii. Database management:** Bardia National park has regularly updated the record of illegal activities and status of human elephant conflict in the buffer zone of Brdia National Park and corridor region.



**Photo:** House damage by elephant



**Photo:** Damage of storage grains



*Photo:* Human injury



*Photo:* livestock depredation

**5. Describe any activities that differ from the original proposed actions and explain the reason for the change.**

During the period, no change in planned activities

**6. Describe the conservation outcomes for elephants, other wildlife, habitat and human communities, and list major findings and accomplishments to date.**

- Around 2300 Village youths are being involved in conservation of elephant/other wildlife and habitat conservation who were previously avoided for conservation mainstream. Now community elder persons are affiliated with Buffer Zone User Committees/Groups/Community Forest User Groups, school children in eco club and village youths in Community Based Anti-poaching Units for the conservation of wildlife and habitats of Bardia National Park and its surroundings.
- No any poaching and retaliatory killing of elephant, rhino and tiger are recorded since January 2017.
- Members of community based anti-poaching units are also involved with park staffs and security personnel for the safely chasing of wild elephant from village and to convince local people for the avoiding of harmful activities toward wild bull.
- Members of CBAPUs had organized meeting with high officials of Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) and Forest Minister for the implementation of activities to minimize severe human elephant conflict.

**7. Approximately how many humans are impacted by your project? Approximately how many elephants are impacted by your project?**

- 230 members of CBAPUs from the corridor are directly benefited.
- 2130 local communities were benefited on wildlife conservation from different special day celebration.
- Some park staffs and security personnel who are deployed in corridor area are also benefited from the project logistic support.
- Local communities are able to save crops and their property from wild elephant due to timely chasing of elephant from village.
- Around 100 elephant of Bardia National park are directly benefited. Mostly the wild bulls which frequently visit village are also safe from the retaliatory killing or any other harm.

**8. Describe any problems discovered or occurring during this grant period**

We are facing the problem of human casualties, livestock and crop damage and sever property damage by elephant during the period.

**9. Was your project successful? State short and long term goals that you are using to evaluate your accomplishments.**

Yes it is on right tract for the mobilization of village youth to protect elephant and other wildlife from poachers/misdeed of villagers. Beside, members of CBAPUs are also involved to discourage illegal extraction of forest products, sand and gravel from the wildlife habitat and corridor forest by villagers. Local youths are regularly involved in anti-poaching activities and safely chasing of elephants. Now, no any poaching and retaliatory killing of elephants are observed. Still the human casualties, crop damage and property damage are increased by elephants so its needs to be continuously support for the regular maintenance of electric fence, cultivation of alternative crops and other alternatives for the avoid of damage from elephant.

**10. Based on this Project, what is the “next step” for this project and does it have implications for future conservation actions?**

The remaining activities for the mobilization of CBAPUs and local communities will be implementing in coming period. The level of human elephant conflict are increasing day by day, we need to design appropriate alternatives to minimize damage and entrance of elephant in to village.

**11. Provide at least one human interest story. This story should enable the reader to identify with the people, a problem, day-to-day situations, achievements or a funny or strange occurrence during the course of the project. Examples: a story about when the bull elephant put his tusk through the window of the research vehicle or the lion with a snare on his leg and the many weeks it took to find the animal and remove the snare or a specific family who benefitted due to the project. If available, please include a photo of the incident described.**

The members of CBAPU regularly organized anti-poaching patrolling and sweeping operation in corridor forest in coordination with park staff and security personnel. Three traps which were set for trapping of tiger/leopard, 22 snares set for trapping for deer were collected and handed over to park authorities.

**12. In 500 words or less, summarize the progress and results achieved. This will be used for media and donor recruitment.**

Poaching of wildlife has always remained a serious problem for effective management of protected areas and other habitats in Nepal. Until 1994, only 2 elephants were often noticed in Bardia National Park (BNP). Later, 15-20 elephants were moved from Katarniyaghat Wildlife Sanctuary (KWS), India to BNP, Nepal via corridor and become residential. Now, 80-100 elephant populations are in BNP. In our record more than 45 elephants regularly use corridor for the movement in Nepal and India. Although Nepal has significant efforts for conservation of elephant in protected areas, recent evidence shows that elephants are massive risk of poaching/retaliatory killing out of protected areas. On the other hand, people are not aware about elephant conservation and proper way of chasing from settlement. Recently, two elephants were killed by electrocution

in the corridor. The core area of park is well protected by armed force but there is no any arm force in the corridor. It is important to give more focus on collaborative approach of conservation by involving local people for anti-poaching operation. It has been proven that the successful protection of endangered elephant population depends on cooperation and support of local people so Community Based Anti Poaching Units (CBAPUs) are formed by mobilizing village youths in the corridor with the aim to protect elephant population and other wildlife which frequently use corridor and overall habitat of corridor forest. The CBAPU campaign become very successful in buffer zone of Bardia National Park for the involvement of village youths in conservation of wildlife and its habitat. Around 2300 village youths are affiliated in the program. With the support of International elephant foundation, conservation training are being organized for 230 members of newly formed 7 CBAPUs. In addition logistic support are also provided for CBAPUs members and park staff while organizing anti- poaching patrolling and sweeping operation. Local communities are aware on elephant conservation by celebrating special events and distribution of posters and calendars. Due to the project intervention youths of corridor are also involved in conservation of elephant/other wildlife and habitats to minimize illegal activities, retaliatory killing of elephant and safely chasing of bull elephant from settlement. No poaching/retaliatory killing of elephant, tiger and rhino are recorded since January 2017.

### **13. List all organizations associated with this project and their roles in the project.**

The project activities are implemented in coordination with Bardia National Park. Park is involved form the project design stage to implementation of activities. The CBAPUs are mobilized under the leadership of park anti-poaching officer. Members of CBAPUs organize every activities and anti-poaching patrolling in coordination with park officers. Following organization are associated for the implementation of project activities:

- Community Based Anti-poaching Units
- Bardia National Park
- Buffer Zone Management Committee
- Buffer Zone User Committees/User Groups/Community Forest User Groups
- Women Environment Sub-committee
- Local nature guides/ eco-club/cooperatives/school teacher
- Local non-governmental organizations

