

**Project Completion Report on
Strengthening community-based organizations for elephant
conservation in Khata and Karnali forest corridors of Bardia, Nepal**

(Project period: 1st January 2019 – 31 December 2019)



Submitted to

**International Elephant Foundation
Texas, USA**

Submitted by

Ujayalo Nepal, Bardia

1st March 2020

Web: <http://ujyalonepalbardia.com>

Key Achievements:

The project has been successful to conduct trainings to rapid response teams (RRT) and community based antipoaching units (CBAPU). Twenty-five members of RRT were provided equipment and field gears to make their operations smooth. Similarly, the RRT members and CBAPU members have been supported for their mobility and get lunch packs and tea/snack while they go on patrols and rapid response duty. Due to all these interventions by the project together with other projects no human fatality and no retaliatory or illegal killing of wild elephant happened in Khata and Karnali forest corridors in last 12 months. The achievement is remarkable compared to 2018 as there were 4 human casualties and one retaliatory killing of the elephant in 2018 in the area. The project helped to save about 140 individual elephants in the wild. The project directly reached to over 20,000 people and indirectly benefitted to over 75,000. The RRT members and CBAPU members carried out over 250 patrols in the project area covering >1250km distance and handled 57 direct cases of human elephant interactions and helped vulnerable people to save their lives without fatal interactions. The project has been very successful on mobilizing local youths and build conservation stewardships in the area.

Introduction

Conserving large ranging mega herbivores like wild elephants in human dominated landscape is a global challenge. Nepal harbors about 300 wild elephants and their number is constantly increasing since a decade. At the same time, with the continuous support from conservation partners and local community some of the degraded forest corridors have been well restored and are being used intensively by wild elephants, tigers and rhinoceros. Khata and Karnali forest corridors of Bardia have become very good example to showcase the success. These corridors connect Bardia NP of Nepal and Katerniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary of India. To save the wild elephants and other species we need a continuous support and cooperation from local people. The project is focused on strengthening the community-based organizations like community based anti-poaching units (CBAPUs), community based rapid response teams (RRTs) and mobilize them to reduce retaliatory killings and incidents of human elephant conflict (HEC). Elephant conservation action plan of Nepal and the Jakarta declaration of elephant conservation 2017 has also emphasized on need to strengthen human elephant coexistence and therefore the project is in line with the national and international priorities. The report highlights some the progress made in Nepal under the grant support from International Elephant Foundation (IEF).

Project Goal and Objectives

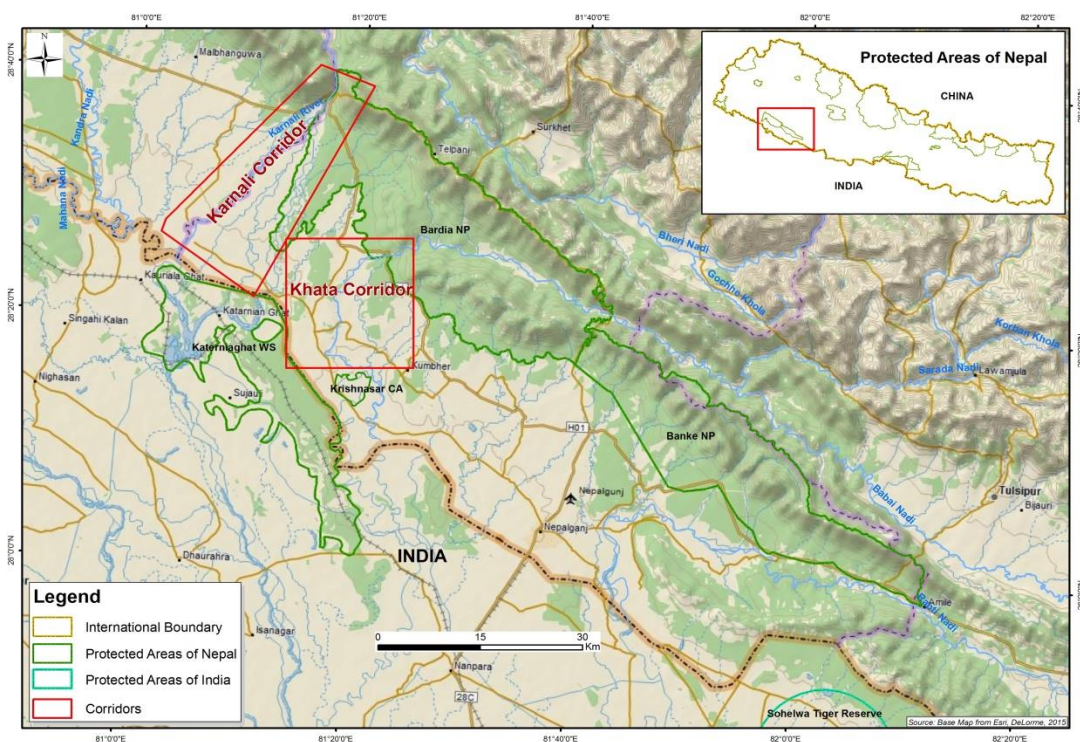
The overall goal of the project is to strengthen human-elephant co-existence
Specific objectives of the project were:

- Strengthen community based anti-poaching units (CBAPUs) to minimize illegal and revenge killing of elephant.
- Strengthen Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) to minimize HEC

Project Location and Implementation Modality

The project was implemented at Khata and Karnali forest corridors of Bardia (Map 1). The corridors are important because these corridors link Bardia National Park with Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary of India. The elephants, rhinoceros and tigers regularly use these forest corridors. While there are over 100,000 local people living along the forest corridors and elephant and human interactions are also intense.

Main implementer of the project is Ujayalo Nepal (Bright Nepal in english), a not for profit and autonomous grassroots level conservation organizations of Bardia. The project is being implemented in partnership with Bardia National Park, National trust for Nature Conservation and local communities. Main funding for the project is from International Elephant Foundation (IEF).



Map 1. Map of Nepal on inset and enlarged map showing Khata and Karnali forest corridors together with Bardia National Park located in Western Terai Landscape.

Activities and Progress

Activity 1.1 Orientation training to Rapid Response Teams (RRT)

To minimize the possible human, crop and property damages by wild elephants, village level RRTs have been formed across the forest corridors and buffer zone in Bardia National Park (BNP). In order to mobilize RRT youths in efficient approach and to cover the elephants affected area RRT youths were divided into different cluster as per the objectives of our projects which is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Participants details for the Orientation Training

SN	Cluster Name	Active members of cluster	Designation	Sex	Remarks
1	Patabhar- Gola	Gautam Chaudhary	Coordinator	M	
		Bal Bahadur Chaudhary	Member	M	
		Purnima Tharu	Member	F	
2	Manau- Pasupatinagar	Khom lal Chaudhary	Coordinator	M	
		Ram Sharan Lamichhane	Member	M	
3	Suryapatuwa	Manoj Yogi	Coordinator	M	
		Nabina Tharu	Member	F	
		Sunita Chaudhary	Member	F	
		Manisha B.K	Member	F	
		Bhim Bahadur Chaudhary	Member	M	
		Asha Chaudhary	Member	F	
4	Thakurdwara	Narayan Chaudhary	Coordinator	M	
		Anas Ram Chaudhary	Member	M	
		Narendra Adhikari	Member	M	
		Parbati Chaudhary	Member	F	
		Man Bahadur Darlami	Member	M	
		Meena Tharu	Member	F	
		Hari Prasad Chaudhary	Member	M	
		Ram Kumar Chaudhary	Member	M	
5	Shreeram Nagar- Babai	Shakti Thapa	Coordinator	M	
		Maniram Chaudhary	Member	M	
		Lalita Chhettri	Member	F	
		Kiran Tharu	Member	M	
		Kanchan Tharu	Member	M	
		Sarita Tharu	Member	F	

With the aim of minimizing human elephant conflicts and for effective monitoring of elephant's movements and collect all the cases of HEC in the project area a total 25 members of RRT from 5 clusters (in Khata and Karnali forest corridors) were provided orientation training on 12th April 2019 of which over 33% were female participants. The RRT members were trained on elephant behavior, handling crowd and HEC cases, safety measures, use of GPS and reporting format of HEC cases for relief and compensations. The RRT members were trained by technical officer from Bardia National Park, Ujyalo Nepal and National Trust for Nature Conservation.



Photos: Some snaps of RRT orientation training

Activity 1.2 Provide field equipment and uniform to RRT members

The 25 RRT members who got orientation training were provided with different equipment and field gears. The five RRT teams at cluster level got 5 set of GPS, 5 Set of Cameras, 5 set of stationery materials for their use. While all the 25 participants were provided 25 set of Jacket and track shoot, 25 set of field boots, 25 field hats, 25 set of high focused torch lights, 25 field bags and 25 set of rain coat. All these equipment and field gears were handed over to the RRT members by Chief Warden of Bardia National Park through Ujyalo Nepal on 12th April 2019. The field gears and equipment are being used by the RRT members during the elephant patrols and during the human elephant conflict mitigation time. The members were found with high morale with this support. The RRT members have been doing job in the field to minimize HEC and working in the frontline to save the life of people and properties. The Community based RRT members are the volunteers from local communities and do not get payment for the job they perform.



Photos: Chief Warden of Bardia NP distributing field equipment and field gears to the RRT members.

Activity 1.3 Orientation to Community Based Anti-Poaching Unit members

Over 1,200 youth volunteers have been mobilized as community based antipoaching unit (CBAPU) members in around Bardia National Park with the aim of minimizing poaching and illegal activities in and around the parks, buffer zone and forest corridors. The CBAPU are registered in the Park and have steering committees to mobilize the youths. The CBAPU members work closely with park officials and carry out regular joint patrols, wildlife monitoring, surveillance of the forest patches and surroundings and help officials on wildlife enforcements.

We selected 30 members of CBAPU (Table 2) from Khata and Karnali forest corridors and conducted a day long rigorous orientation training. The participants were oriented on methods of data collection both on human wildlife conflict and illegal activities, methods of making effective patrols, surveillance, reporting system and roles of youths on conservation of biodiversity. We made the training more participatory. The participants were allowed to share their experiences, motivations and problem they are facing while working in the field. To make program effective and provide some technical ideas to keep safe from elephants, a presentation by Jack Kinross, Member of Wild Tiger was presented for the CBAPU member motivation. In presentation, he provided some examples of Big cats and connect these ideas with the problems of elephants, was quite interesting. Other trainers were Park officials and Mr. Ramesh Thapa from Ujyalo Nepal.



Photo: Snap of orientation training to CBAP

Table 2. List of participants taking part in the CBAPU Orientation Training
Date: 5 May 2019 @ Thakurdwara, BNP

SN	Name	Address
1	Ms.Susila Mahatara	CBAPU Thakurdwara
2	Ms.Sitarani Chaudhary	CBAPU Thakurdwara
3	Ms. Manju Mahatara	CBAPU Thakurdwara
4	Mr. Biswa Nath Yogi	CBAPU Shreeramnagar
5	Mr.Narayan Chaudhary	RRT Thakurdwara
6	Ms.Nirma Chaudhary	CBAPU Thakurdwara
7	Mr.Bir Bahadur Chaudhary	RRT Suryapatuwa
8	Ms.Asa Chaudhary	CBAPU Suryapatuwa
9	Ms.Samiksha BK	CBAPU Suryapatuwa
10	Ms.Lalita Budha	CBAPU Shivapur
11	Mr.Raj Kumar Thapa	CBAPU Suryapatuwa
12	Ms.Bhumika Thapa	CBAPU Thakurdwara
13	Mr.Shakti Thapa	RRT Shreeramnagar
14	Mr.Dewarilal Dahit	CBAPU Bindra
15	Mr.Befaiya Tharu	CBAPU Bindra
16	Mr.Gautam Chaudhary	RRT Patabhar
17	Mr.Bharat Lal Chaudhary	CBAPU Patabhar
18	Mr.Deep Utlahawa	CBAPU Patabhar
19	Mr.Kiran Tharu	CBAPU Thakurdwara
20	Ms.Pratiksha Tharu	CBAPU Thakurdwara
21	Mr.Asa Ram Tharu	CBAPU Thakurdwara
22	Mr.Manoj Kumar Tharu	CBAPU Suryapatuwa
23	Mr.Hari Prasad Chaudhary	CBAPU Thakurdwara
24	Mr.Chakra Bahadur Baduwal	CBAPU Sivapur
25	Mr.Yug Bahadur Chaudhary	CBAPU Manau
26	Mr.Khusiram Tharu	CBAPU Manau
27	M.Nirajan Chhetri	CBAPU Thakurdwara
28	Mr.Deepak Chaudhary	CBAPU Patabhar
29	Mr.Khomlal Tharu	RRT Manau
30	Mr. Hemanta Acharya	CBAPU Network
31	Mr.Ana Nath Baral	Chief Warden , Bardia National Park
32	Mr.Ashok Bhandari	Asst.Warden, Bardia National Park
33	Mr.Nabraj Neupane	Treasure Ujyalo Nepal
34	Mr.Ramesh Kumar Thapa	Chairperson Ujyalo Nepal
35	Dr.Rabin Kadariya	NTNC/BCP
36	Mr.Umesh Poudel	NTNC/BCP
37	Mr.Jack Kirnos	Wild Tiger
38	Mr.Ganesh Bahadur Thapa	Ujyalo Nepal
39	Mr.Janardan Sharma	Ujyalo Nepal



Photos: Group photo of CBAPU orientation training at Bardia NP

Activity 1.4 Elephant patrols to minimize illegal killing of wild elephants

The CBAPU members in the project areas have divided the project area into 5 clusters and in all clusters the members of CBAPU are carrying out regular patrols and elephant monitoring. *Major achievement of the project is that there is no retaliatory killing or poaching of wild elephant and none of the community members died due to elephant attacks in the project area in last 12 months. This is possible due to proactive move of RRTs and CBAPU members.*

Cluster division

In order to monitor the movements of elephants around the Buffer Zone of Bardia National Park and forest corridors major elephants the project area has been divided in to 5 clusters (Map 2). Monitoring of elephant herds, their movement and alerting local communities and informing park authorities in time to minimize human elephant conflicts and retaliatory killings the CBAPU members are working day and night voluntarily. The project provides them costs for the mobility and lunch packs during their duty. Details of five clusters is as followings:

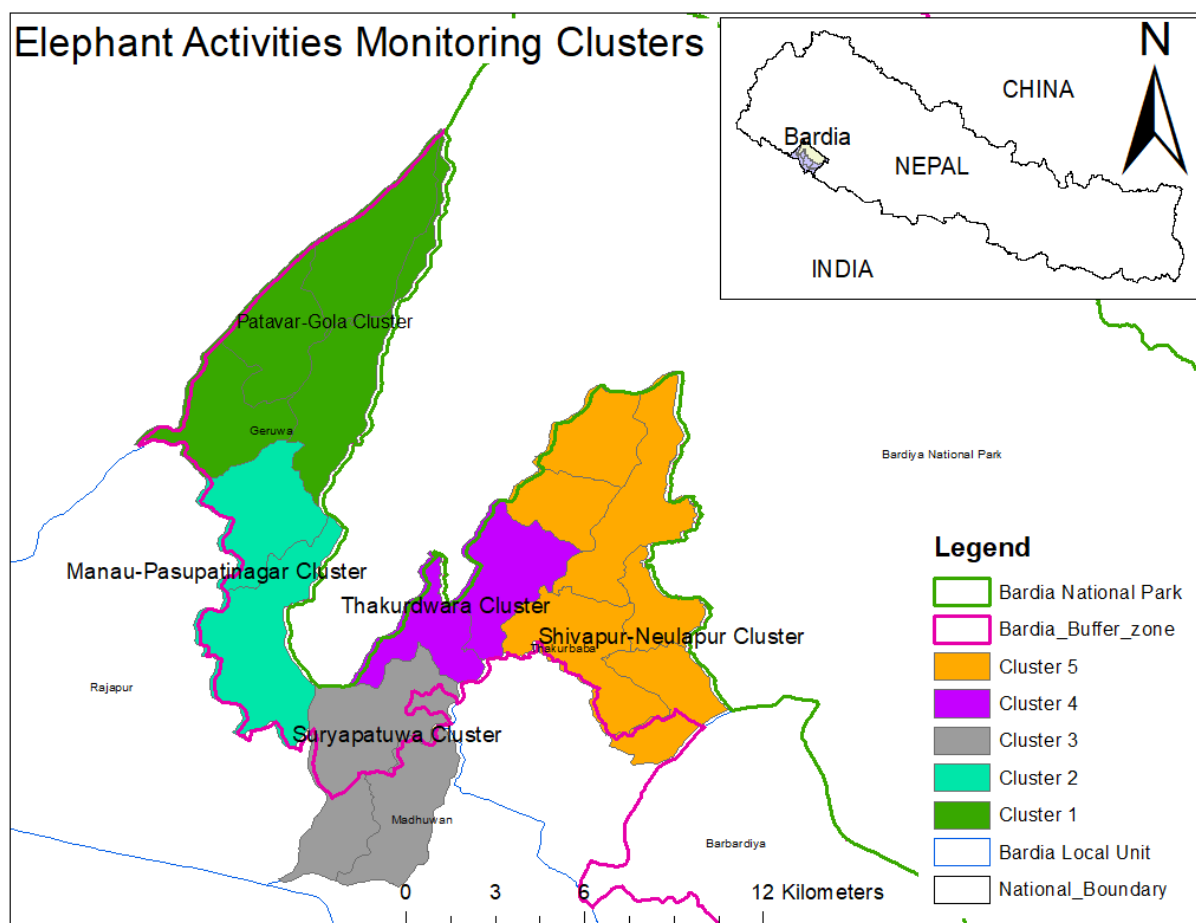
Cluster 1: Patabhar _Gola: Eastern side of Bardia National Park has comparatively most cases of elephants happened every year.

Cluster 2: Manau-Pasupatinagar: Eastern side of Bardia National Park

Cluster3: Surayapatuwa Cluster: Southern side of Bardia National Park

Cluster 4: Thakurdwara Cluster: Southern side of Bardia National Park

Cluster 5: Shreeram Nagar- Babai: Southern side of Bardia National Park

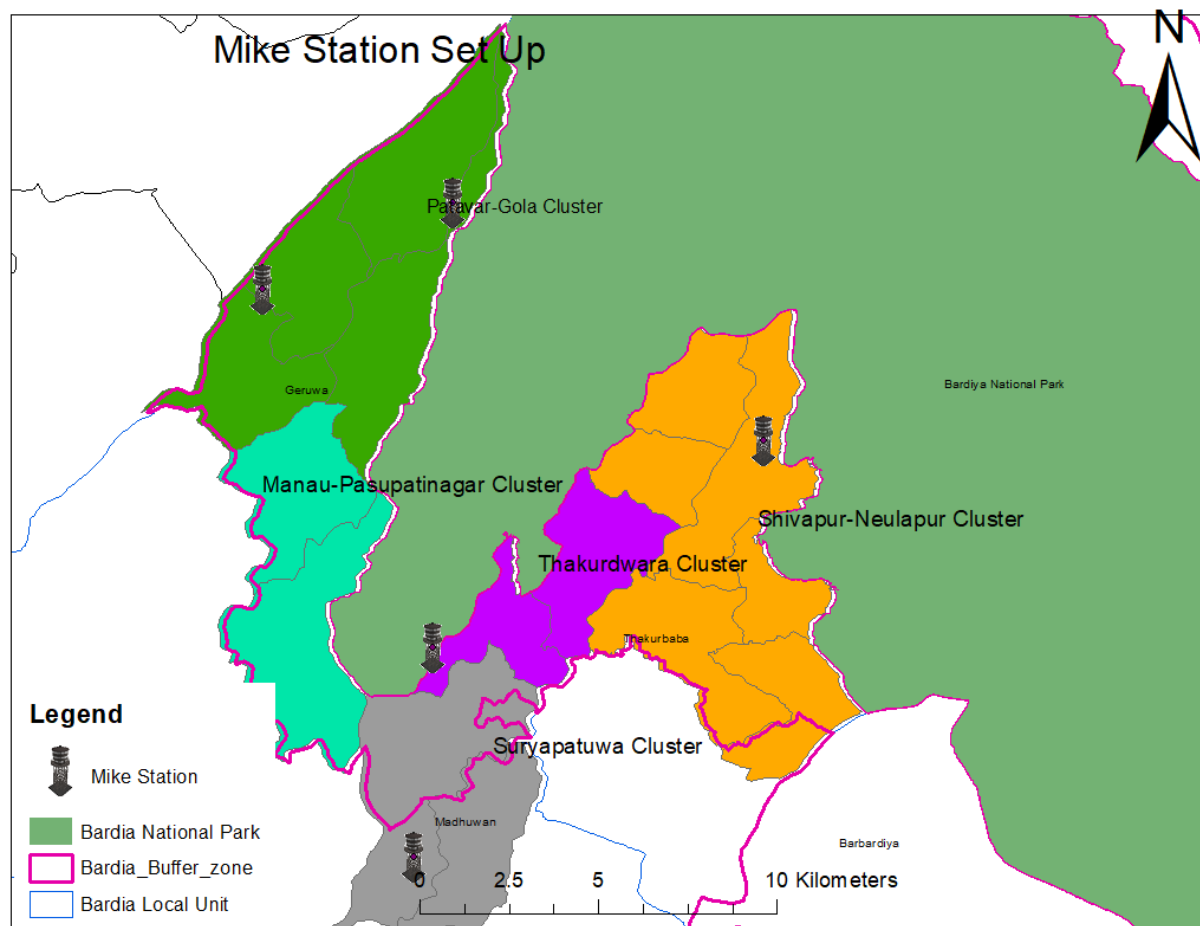


Map 2. Elephant monitoring and patrol clusters

Sound system set up by RRT and CBAPU members to alert communities

Sound system is a technique that has been used in elephant effected area to provide message to the community members if the elephant is approaching towards human settlement. Mike system has been established by the RRT and CBAPU members to make people alert and to avoid possible human attacks by the wild elephants.

Figure 2: Mike Station set up to disseminate the message of elephant movement



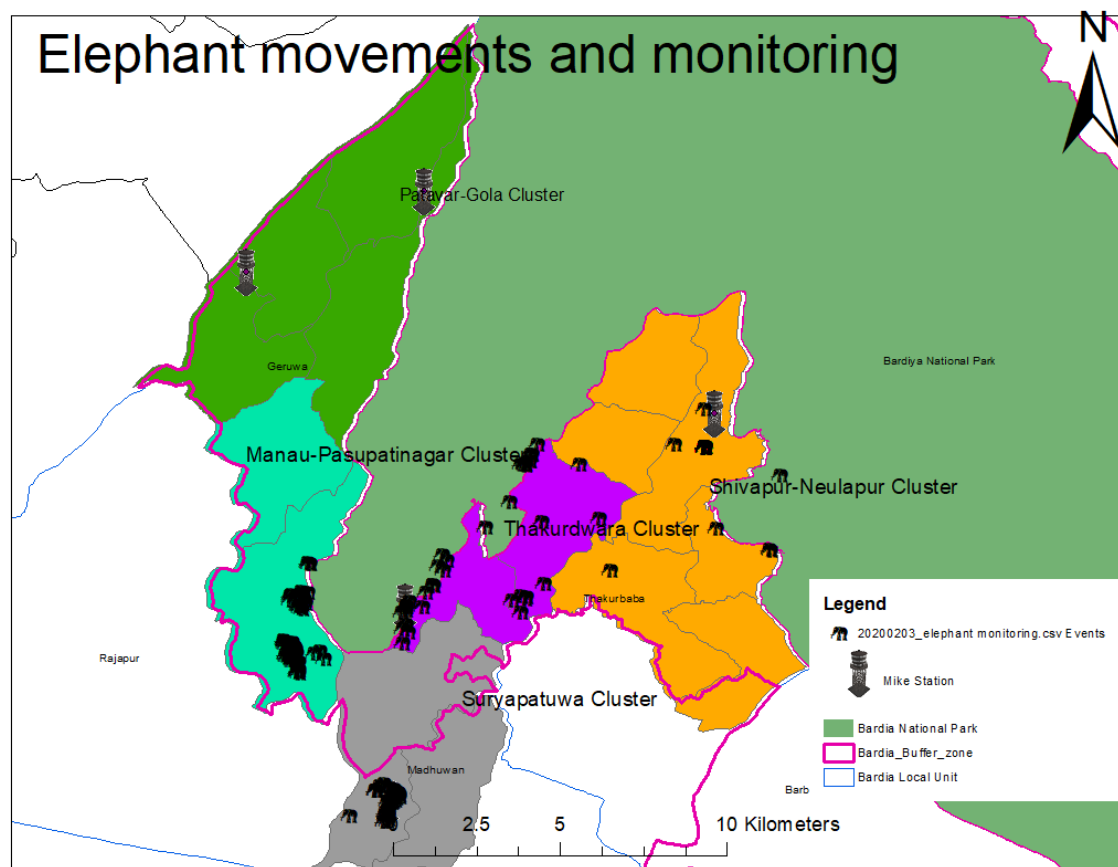
Information sharing with park

Members of RRT has strong coordination with Park Management and other conservation partners. The members are in constant contact with focal officers of the park so that joint actions against possible human elephant conflict can be made in time and human casualties can be reduced.

Tracking elephant's movements

RRT members keep the record of elephant movements in their areas and report to the Park authorities. All the HEC cases and routes of elephant movements are recorded and submitted to the park authority on the monthly basis.

The RRT members are using the standard elephants monitoring form and collect the information regarding the enter and exit point of elephants in respective cluster. In addition to this, RRT members has been collecting GPS tracking of elephant's activities, human activities against elephants, damaged made by elephants, means used to chase elephants away from the community area, elephant's numbers and total loss made by elephant in the community area.



Map. Map showing high elephant movement clusters in the project area based on the data collected by RRT members.

RRT structures for elephant monitoring

To keep the field monitoring activities systematic and organized, each RRT group has one coordinator and in his/her support two or more than two youths were designated as the active members of the monitoring committee. Each RRT members were kept on touch in their cluster system to share message of elephants and sharing their experience.

Table 3. Active members of different cluster in the project are.

SN	Cluster Name	Active members of cluster	Designation	Sex	Remarks
1	Patabhar- Gola	Gautam Chaudhary	Coordinator	M	
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		Kanchan Tharu	Member	M	
		Bikram Tharu	Member	M	
		Sarita Tharu	Member	F	



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The RRT and CBAPU members carried out >250 patrols in the project area covering >1250 km distance and handled 57 direct cases of human elephant interactions and helped vulnerable people to save their lives without fatal interactions. During the joint patrols with Park Staff they also helped to arrest culprits doing illegal activities

in the forest areas. The community members do not enforce the law but help Park enforcement officials to detect the illegal activities. Due to the intensive patrols and rapid response mechanism illegal activities in the project site has declined and has helped to increase community's tolerance towards wild elephants.

Activity 1.5. Annual Progress Review Workshop

Annual progress review workshop was organized at Bardia NP headquarters on 22nd December of 2019. The workshop was chaired by the Chief warden of Bardia NP and facilitated by Mr. Ramesh Thapa of Ujyalo Nepal. A total 32 representatives from local stakeholders including RRT members, Nepal Army, representatives from local government, community forest user groups, farmers groups, CBAPU members, representatives from indigenous communities and women groups. Major activities and learning of the project were shared by Mr. Ramesh Thapa and opinions, comments and feedbacks from the participants were collected. Local government, Park authorities and communities appreciated the initiations of the project and requested to continue the efforts to minimize human elephant conflicts and increase the tolerance level of local communities.



Photo: Glimpse of Annual progress review workshop

Major Learnings:

1. If integrated efforts are made to address the human elephant conflicts, human harassments, crop and property damages by elephants can be minimized and retaliatory killings of wild elephants can also be reduced.
2. Involvement of local community youths as RRT or CBAPU members and mobilizing them for conservation can help substantially to increase tolerance level of community towards wild elephants and other wildlife and helps to build longterm stewardship in conservation.
3. Continuous support, cooperation and facilitations are required to manage the HEC and strengthen human elephant co-existence.

Further Plan:

Ujayalo Nepal has helped Government of Nepal to formulate Elephant Conservation Action Plan of Nepal (2020-2030), under the grant support from US Fish & Wildlife, which is under approval process. We will be working with the

government of Nepal, local communities, regional and global partners to implement this elephant conservation action plan of Nepal and create harmony between people and elephants.

Financial Progress


Total expenses of the project was US \$40,310 out of which US \$10,000 was provided by IEF, USA and rest was borne from Bardia NP, local community and other local conservation partners. Financial progress summary is as followings:

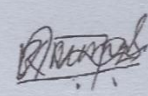
Final Financial Report

Project: Strengthening community-based organizations for elephant conservation in Nepal
Duration of the project: 1st January 2019 to December end 2019.
Location: Khata and Karnali forest Corridors of Bardia, Nepal
Implementing agency: Ujyalo Nepal, Bardia; Funding: IEF, USA

SN	Budget Item	Total costs USD	Approved budget USD		Total expenses USD	
			IEF	Local contribution	IEF	Local contribution
1	Orientation training to RRT members	500.0	300.0	200.0	300.0	200.0
2	Field gears and equipments	4,625.0	2,825.0	1,800.0	2,800.0	1,850.0
3	CBAPU Orientation Training	500.0	475.0	25.0	505.0	110.0
4	Elephant patrols	29,800.0	5,700.0	24,100.0	5,715.0	23,775.0
5	Annual progress review	500.0		500.0		600.0
6	Project management	4,350.0	700.0	3,650.0	680.0	3,775.0
	Total	40,275.0	10,000.0	30,275.0	10,000.0	30,310.0
	Balance				-	35.0


Prepared by
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Approved by
Ramesh K. Thapa
Chairperson