

FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

I. BASIC DATA

Organization Name: World Wildlife Fund (on behalf of Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group)

Project Title: Support for the Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group

Project Dates (as stated in the grant agreement): July 1, 2004 – October 31, 2004

Date of Report (month/year): December 30, 2004

II. OPENING REMARKS

Provide any opening remarks that may assist in the review of this report.

Support from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund enabled the Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group (ABCG) to achieve its desired purpose and outputs in determining the effectiveness of communication and networking in influencing conservation outcomes based on selected case studies and using this information to revise ABCG's communications and networking strategy for effective knowledge management and sharing of lessons learned on selected high-priority conservation issues in Africa.

III. ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECT PURPOSE

Project Purpose: Enter project purpose from the Logical Framework worksheet of the approved project proposal.

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Purpose-level:	
<i>Indicator 1: Audiences for ABCG communications expanded in all regions of Africa, targeting the most relevant groups</i>	Indicator 1: Audiences for ABCG communications expanded to include more than 100 partners from government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and universities from all regions in Africa
<i>Indicator 2: Use of priority communication methods refined or initiated by ABCG to improve its communications.</i>	Indicator 2: Use of priority communications methods have been refined by ABCG (e.g. improved website, expanded list serve, redesign of meeting materials, etc).

Describe the success of the project in terms of achieving its intended impact objective and performance indicators.

The project was successful as it enabled ABCG to expand its African audience and improve its design and methods of communications. Lessons will be shared with ABCG member organizations to encourage them to improve their planning and implementation of communications methods, activities and products.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

No, there were no unexpected impacts.

IV. PROJECT OUTPUTS

Project Outputs: Enter the project outputs from the Logical Framework for the project

Planned vs. Actual Performance

Indicator	Actual at Completion
Output 1: ABCG Assessment of the use and impact of communication methods/materials on four case studies of selected high-priority conservation issues	Output 1: ABCG Assessment of the use and impact of communication methods/materials on four case studies of selected high-priority conservation issues
<i>Indicator 1.1</i> Assessment undertaken of the effectiveness of communication in four case studies of communication by ABCG/ABCG partners, covering reaction, learning, behavior, results, and ultimate value, by June 04	<i>Indicator 1.1</i> Assessment undertaken of the effectiveness of communication in four case studies of communication by ABCG/ABCG partners, covering reaction, learning, behavior, results, and ultimate value
<i>Indicator 1.2</i> Analysis completed and report circulated, by July 04	<i>Indicator 1.2</i> Analysis completed and report circulated
Output 2: Revised ABCG Communication Strategy based on Assessment	Output 2: Revised ABCG Communication Strategy based on Assessment
<i>Indicator 2.1</i> Priority types of messages, target audiences and means of communication identified	<i>Indicator 2.1</i> Priority types of messages, target audiences and means of communication identified
<i>Indicator 2.2</i> Revised Communications Strategy completed by September 04, that plans to at least double the number of relevant practitioners and policy makers reached in Africa	<i>Indicator 2.2</i> Revised Communications Strategy completed that doubles the number of relevant practitioners and policy makers reached in Africa
Output 3: Initial implementation of Communication Strategy	Output 3: Initial implementation of Communication Strategy
<i>Indicator 3.1</i> ABCG at least doubles its target audience in Africa	<i>Indicator 3.1</i> ABCG doubled its target audience in Africa
<i>Indicator 3.2</i> ABCG improves existing communication and/or adopts new methods, for at least two communication methodologies	<i>Indicator 3.2</i> ABCG improved existing communication and adopted two new communication methodologies

Describe the success of the project in terms of delivering the intended outputs.

The project was successful as it enabled ABCG to revise its communications strategy and identify priority types of messages, target audiences, and methods based on analysis of four case studies on the effectiveness of communications methods/materials.

Case studies included:

1. Biodiversity Support Program (BSP) Armed Conflict and the Environment Project;
2. ABCG HIV/AIDS and Conservation Linkages Project;
3. ABCG General Communications Activities; and
4. ABCG Product Cost Analysis.

Were any outputs unrealized? If so, how has this affected the overall impact of the project?

The outputs were realized and the new communications strategy is already being implemented.

V. SAFEGUARD POLICY ASSESSMENTS

Provide a summary of the implementation of any required action toward the environmental and social safeguard policies within the project.

The project purpose was for U.S.-based conservation NGOs and African partners to implement activities based on lessons learned on selected high- priority conservation

issues identified by ABCG. The project had no adverse environmental impacts, and should have a strongly positive impact by promoting the use of best practices and effective biodiversity conservation approaches. The project did not have any negative health and safety aspects. It is expected to make positive contributions to human health as ABCG has revised its communications strategy to enable it to better share information, for example on ways for natural resources to provide sustainable livelihoods for African households affected by HIV/AIDS. As ABCG shares information on how conservation institutions can implement coping strategies on HIV/AIDS or address other emerging issues such as conflict, it should result in more conservation actions that improve health and benefit local communities in terms of sustainable livelihoods and poverty alleviation as approaches on these aspects are implemented.

VI. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PROJECT

Describe any lessons learned during the various phases of the project. Consider lessons both for future projects, as well as for CEPF's future performance.

Lessons learned were that the planning for communications activities by projects on cutting edge conservation issues is often ad hoc and opportunistic (e.g. the BSP Armed Conflict and Environment project and the ABCG HIV/AIDS and Conservation Linkages project). The benefit of having this informal communications approach was that activities could be flexible and can be designed to build on previous activities. Also certain activities such as consultancies, the commissioning of case study reports, and workshops were needed in order to gather results and determine what messages on cutting edge issues need to be communicated. However, after these messages were identified and refined, the projects may have been able to target more audiences, been able to distribute their products more effectively, and been more cost effective if they had a formalized communications strategy.

One of the reasons for the lack of formalized communications strategies is that it often takes more time, effort, and funding to synthesize results and articulate clear messages on emerging issues than originally anticipated. Identification of key messages and lessons are often based on consultancies for case study development and regional workshops in Africa that can be costly and time consuming. Then factors such as the project's funding, the amount of time remaining for a project, and the cost of producing and distributing materials to the target audience play a role in how new lessons learned are shared with African audiences.

Conservation NGOs and donors should consider more funding to formalize communications strategies to share lessons learned on cutting edge and high priority conservation issues and linkages. It is important to ensure that adequate resources and time are provided to define cutting edge conservation problems/linkages, identify target audiences, select appropriate communications methods, and implement multi-tiered communications plans.

Project Design Process: (aspects of the project design that contributed to its success/failure)

The process of conducting and analyzing four case studies and revising ABCG's communications strategy took longer than originally envisioned as involving relevant stakeholders and circulating drafts for comments is very time-consuming. Instead of

conducting the four case studies simultaneously, they were conducted one at a time in order to learn throughout the process about how to improve the survey instrument and increase the response rate from African partners.

Project Execution: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/failure)

The extensive networks of ABCG member organizations in Africa enabled ABCG to get needed survey responses and input from African policy-makers and practitioners who are the targets of our communications methods and materials.

VII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As networking opportunities with colleagues from other countries facing similar emerging conservation challenges were found to be very effective for building the capacity of African practitioners and policy makers, CEPF might want to consider more information sharing across the different hotspots where it works in Africa. For example, conservationists from the Upper Guinean Forests of West Africa would likely benefit from colleagues in the Eastern Arc Mountains of East Africa and the Cape Floristic and Succulent Karoo Regions in Southern Africa about how they deal with high priority conservation challenges from HIV/AIDS, poverty, agriculture, human population growth and migration, mineral extraction, etc.

VIII. INFORMATION SHARING

CEPF aims to increase sharing of experiences, lessons learned and results among our grant recipients and the wider conservation and donor communities. One way we do this is by making the text of final project completion reports available on our Web site, www.cepf.net, and by marketing these reports in our newsletter and other communications. Please indicate whether you would agree to publicly sharing your final project report with others in this way.

Yes

No

If yes, please also complete the following:

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