

CEPF Final Completion and Impact Report

Organization's Legal Name:	Ebony Forest Ltd
Project Title:	Building Local Conservation Capacity in Mauritius
Grant Number:	CEPF-109343
Hotspot:	Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands
Strategic Direction:	3 Strengthen civil society capacity at local and regional levels through training, exchanges and regional cooperation.
Grant Amount:	\$178,643.52
Project Dates:	November 01, 2019 - June 30, 2022
Date of Report:	August 30, 2022

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS

There were no implementation partners. All training courses were delivered by Ebony Forest.

CONSERVATION IMPACTS

Planned Long-Term Impacts: 3+ years (as stated in the approved proposal)

Impact Description	Impact Summary
Establishment of an ecological training centre delivering courses in conservation monitoring and action	Ebony Forest is now a registered training institute with the Mauritius Qualifications Authority focusing on delivering courses in biodiversity and conservation.

Planned Short-Term Impacts: 1 to 3 years (as stated in the approved proposal)

Impact Description	Impact Summary
Improved capacity of at least 120 persons, including at least 5 community leaders and at least 10 development professionals in conservation practices	During the project period, we delivered twenty-seven (27) four-day courses linked to conservation and biodiversity. We had a total of 315 attendees for the 27 courses, of which 175 were different persons. Attendees included community leaders and development professionals in conservation practices, as well as private landowners and persons seeking to change career. Knowledge and the skill set of all attendees was increased.

Impact Description	Impact Summary
	<p>A total of 11 webinars were hosted by Ebony Forest to promote the importance of ecology and biodiversity in Mauritius. The webinars reached a larger audience than the courses as they were in the evenings and for a maximum of two hours. Assessments were not done following the webinars so we did not quantify if capacity was increased, but can assume that knowledge did increase. The webinars covered a wide range of sectors from terrestrial ecology (birds, reptiles, plants, insects, snails) to marine ecology, climate change and recycling.</p>
<p>A minimum of 12 accredited training courses in conservation monitoring and practice</p>	<p>A total of 18 different courses were developed and delivered since the start of the project. The 18 courses are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Basic setting up a conservation program (2) Introduction to fieldwork (3) Introduction to GIS (4) Introduction to Bird survey (5) Introduction to Eco guiding (6) Introduction to Plant survey (7) Introduction to Reptile survey (8) Introduction to Forest Restoration (9) Introduction to Plant propagation (10) Predator control as a conservation tool (11) Introduction to Statistics and R (12) Introduction to scientific writing (13) Introduction to invertebrate surveying and monitoring (14) Introduction to basic rope access training (15) Introduction to safe use of chainsaw (16) Introduction to Experimental design (17) Introduction to IUCN Red Listing (18) Introduction to wildlife technology in conservation <p>One course was accredited, but the law changed at the start of 2020. Non-paying courses no longer needed or could be accredited by the Mauritius Qualification Authority. Thus these courses shall not be accredited. Nonetheless, the same rigorous process was applied.</p>
<p>Improved capacity of Ebony Forest as a training institution, as demonstrated by registration of the Ecology Centre as a training institute with the Mauritius Qualifications Authority</p>	<p>Ebony Forest was registered as a training institute with the Mauritius Qualifications Authority enabling us to deliver courses in biodiversity and conservation. Staff capacity was also improved from the process of preparing, delivering and evaluating each course. The courses, course publicity and feedback from attendees significantly increased Ebony Forest's profile and reputation as a competent and knowledgeable training institution.</p>

Unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

The development and delivery of the courses helped to build the confidence and capacity of the staff as well as the reputation of Ebony Forest as a competent and knowledgeable training institution.

Covid caused us to change the format of seminars to webinars which had the advantage of increasing the number of people that could follow them but also involving speakers whom were not based in Mauritius. Being online and recorded meant that all webinars could subsequently be uploaded to our youtube channel and so they could be accessed in future.

PROJECT RESULTS/DELIVERABLES

Overall results of the project:

We delivered twenty- seven (27) four-day courses linked to conservation and biodiversity: We had a total of 315 attendees for the 27 courses, of which 175 were different persons. Attendees included community leaders, development professionals in conservation practices, landowners, students, teachers and people wishing to switch career. We had previously planned to run a course per month, but increased the frequency to two per month as covid restrictions prevented training centres from operating for a significant part of the project.

A total of 18 different courses were developed and delivered as part of the project:

- (1) Basic setting up a conservation program
- (2) Introduction to fieldwork
- (3) Introduction to GIS
- (4) Introduction to Bird survey
- (5) Introduction to Eco guiding
- (6) Introduction to Plant survey
- (7) Introduction to Reptile survey
- (8) Introduction to Forest Restoration
- (9) Introduction to Plant propagation
- (10) Predator control as a conservation tool
- (11) Introduction to Statistics and R
- (12) Introduction to scientific writing
- (13) Introduction to invertebrate surveying and monitoring
- (14) Introduction to basic rope access training
- (15) Introduction to safe use of chainsaw
- (16) Introduction to Experimental design
- (17) Introduction to IUCN Red Listing
- (18) Introduction to wildlife technology in conservation

A total of 11 webinars were hosted by Ebony Forest. The webinars covered a wide range of topics from terrestrial ecology (birds, reptiles, plants, insects, snails) to marine ecology, climate change and recycling. The webinars were organised to promote the importance of ecology and biodiversity in Mauritius. Originally seminars had been planned, but we changed these to webinars due to Covid.

Results for each deliverable:

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
1.0	Training Centre established	1.1	Ebony Forest Ltd registered with Mauritius Qualifications Authority as a training institute	Ebony Forest was registered as an ecological training centre with the Mauritius Qualifications Authority. A total of 18 conservation courses were developed and delivered.
1.0	Training Centre established	1.2	Training Centre equipped for delivery of course as indicated by photographs	A wide range of equipment for the delivery of courses was purchased. Equipment included a projector and screen, laptops, tablets, drones, endoscopes, microscopes, survey equipment for the different taxa, drills, invertebrate equipment and much more. The plant propagation nursery has been completed so that it will be accessible to adults and children for plant propagation courses and during school visits. A sign has been placed at the nursery highlighting that it has been developed thanks to funds from the CEPF.
2.0	Training of trainers	2.1	Five staff trained to assist and deliver the courses as indicated by signed training sheets	Nine staff, as demonstrated by training sheets, have participated in the delivery of courses (Denis Li, Christelle Ferriere, Adisha Sewdyal, Dominique Baho, Elisa Laverdant, Jean-Luc Casimir, Antoine Riviere, Laurent Ayady and Kentish Bundhoo). Training of the staff and evaluations are also provided prior to and after each course.
2.0	Training of trainers	2.2	Three Ebony Forest staff certified with a tree access climbing qualification	We had originally planned to send staff abroad (UK, Reunion, or South Africa) to acquire an internationally recognised certification. Covid and the significant time needed for staff to be

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
				abroad to do multiple assessments caused us to change our plans. The local climbing experts were also unable to provide the recognized certification we wanted. In the end, Denis Li, an experienced climber and staff at Ebony Forest, ran the course and was able to certify the participants of the Introduction to basic rope access training course.
3.0	Certification of bird ringers	3.1	Seven or more Mauritians either certified as bird ringers by SAFRING or on track to gaining certification as indicated by signed training sheets and personal ringing sheets	Ten staff (Denis Li, Christelle Ferriere, Adisha Sewdyal, Dominique Baho, Jean-Luc Casimir, Estelle de Sornay, Elisa Laverdant, Helene Bertille, Laurent Ayady and Kentish Bundhoo) are on track to gaining certification as bird ringers by SAFRING. They contributed to ringing 85 birds during the project. We did train other people but as they did not have sufficient and repeated exposure to bird ringing a multitude of species, we have not count them as they need much more experience to obtain a ringer's licence, which is a long-term process.
4.0	Training courses delivered	4.1	Course timetable and content handbook	The course timetable had to be rescheduled multiple times due to covid-restrictions and training institutions being repeatedly closed. Prior to each course, the course was advertised via social media and an established mailing list. A course handbook was compiled following the delivery of the course as this enables us to account for feedback from attendees and staff experience.

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
4.0	Training courses delivered	4.2	Each course delivered to more than 10 persons as indicated by signed attendance sheets, photographs, feedback forms and monthly training report	We delivered twenty- seven (27) four-day courses linked to conservation and biodiversity. We had a total of 315 attendees for the 27 courses, of which 175 were different. We always had at least a minimum of 10 attendees, with most courses having more than 15 attendees, except for the first course where we had only 9 attendees and the rope access course where we restricted it to 7 participants for health and safety reasons. As the reputation of Ebony Forest increased, we found that we were over-subscribed for the courses and had to select attendees based on whom the courses would be most beneficial for.
5.0	Annual workshop	5.1	One-day workshop per annum for 15-20 persons with partners and stakeholders to address specific, action oriented conservation and/or education issues as indicated by signed attendance sheet, photographs, and summary report	Ebony Forest organised and hosted four workshops. November 5th 2020: The objective of this forest restoration workshop was to evaluate the size of the restored forests in Mauritius, and to agree on a standardised data collection protocol. October 8th 2021: The objectives of this rare plant propagation workshop were to create a list of rare plants to propagate for conservation and to create a database on the most appropriate propagation methods and media. Once the database of recommended propagation approaches is agreed by all stakeholders, it will be converted into a PDF and shared.

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
				<p>March 17th 2022: This online workshop on predator control was organised to discuss what predator control is used on islands, how to make it more efficient and how to open communication between similar projects. The workshop was done in half a day with relevant participating organisations asked to do a presentation on the methods used for predator control on their sites.</p> <p>June 24th 2022: The objective of this online workshop on forest restoration was to share approaches and lessons learned in the Mascarene Islands and Hawaii. We adopted online workshops and extended participation to those outside of Mauritius as we struggled to get sufficient people to physically attend.</p>
6.0	Conservation seminars	6.1	A minimum of 3 seminars (2 hours to ½ day) annually with stakeholders and the public for at least 20 persons as indicated by signed attendance sheet, photographs and blogs	<p>A total of 11 webinars were hosted by Ebony Forest. The webinars covered a wide range of sectors from terrestrial ecology (birds, reptiles, plants, insects, snails) to marine ecology, climate change and recycling. The webinars were organised to promote the importance of ecology and biodiversity in Mauritius. All webinars were attended at least 30 persons.</p> <p>18 June 2021: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle 08 July 2021: Women in Science 15 July 2021: Discover Our Birds 23 September 2021: Endemic snails of Mauritius</p>

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
				<p>07 October 2021: Climate Change 11 November 2021: Reptiles of Mauritius 10 March 2022: Discover our insect part 1 24 March 2022: Extinction through the eyes of the Dodo, the lost world of Mauritius 28 April 2022: Discover our insect part 2 09 May 2022: Discover our insect part 3 19 May 2022: Rodrigues island from extinction to a conservation flagship</p> <p>We switched from physical seminars to webinars due to covid restrictions preventing and then limiting group gatherings. We limited the webinars to 2 hours based on feedback from an online survey as people struggled to concentrate for longer or find the time. All webinars were recorded.</p>
7.0	Local volunteer programme	7.1	More than 200 participants per annum in a volunteer programme for local and international persons in the following activities: weeding, planting, nursery work, bird conservation, fauna surveys, education and awareness	We had more than 60 volunteers who participated in the following activities: weeding, planting, nursery work, bird conservation, fauna surveys, education and awareness. 134 volunteers helped with forest restoration activities. Due to covid, we did not get the anticipated number of volunteers.
8.0	Communication and advertising of courses and volunteer opportunities	8.1	Training courses, workshops, seminars and volunteer opportunities advertised through website, blogs, newspaper, and posters	Training courses, workshops and seminars were advertised from January 2020 until June 2022 by paid sponsorship on Facebook and Instagram. Conservation organisations e.g. Mauritian Wildlife Foundation, Ecosystem Restoration Alliance, Ferney Vallee, Vallee

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
				<p>d'Osterlog, Casela, etc were emailed to enquire if they would like any staff to attend the courses. Previous attendees were added to a mailing list and were informed of all new activities via email. In addition to contact via email, conservation organisations were also called to follow up if they had not previously replied. We also featured in the newspapers and on radio promoting the conservation courses.</p> <p>Volunteer opportunities were previously advertised on our Facebook page and website.</p>
8.0	Communication and advertising of courses and volunteer opportunities	8.2	1 video / written blog produced from volunteers, course participants and/or trainers per course	<p>111 Facebook posts were broadcast during the span of the grant. 8 blogs were written but none posted as we are struggling with the responsiveness of the website provider. See link below to some of the Facebook post (character limited):</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/EbonyForestChamarel/posts/pfbid02bbNDmFCVwin9en3H7eGLxt7hHdJmWD5wGohFbCHkedi8oFpewdx3JjMgEmfUXjNxI</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=538252304494050</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/EbonyForestChamarel/posts/pfbid02Q3G2QCju4YJqMwQ9qG6wJp2YhP3kUKstcb1LRmRDSPmkXS8TuP1QgYnyRyU4LBVQI</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/EbonyForestChamarel/posts/pfbid0hY3LtcduExQnu8nsHuoWiga</p>

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
				<p>AcWwoqDQLJFBcLg3yKMyiUVjkKUWZEVRKJskUhL6l</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/EbonyForestChamarel/posts/pfbid024GTg6vaNA1F31EtgLeeZ9nvC1HTszVPCaidaZfxCqG3fHmKJcq6KminwLFmKq5V6l</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/EbonyForestChamarel/posts/pfbid02SLAxBy1XSecZa9WF94ULLFP8RieZbBZo6pXH86Lio8PpFCj6riqSsYJn9nP9TfYEI</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/EbonyForestChamarel/posts/pfbid09iVvsjNUPHcxbdocDo923vxyFWjLH4rihcWb8zz2KgSmYC1ZKnRzveGQzqs12tu5l</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/EbonyForestChamarel/posts/pfbid0hY3LtcduExQnu8nsHuoWigaAcWwoqDQLJFBcLg3yKMyiUVjkKUWZEVRKJskUhL6l</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/EbonyForestChamarel/posts/pfbid0dCfZDRFr1TdVAj345bLJR8Pios6hKcvgGnkk6Q2rq1Tase5UT18AQaV</p>
8.0	Communication and advertising of courses and volunteer opportunities	8.3	Webpages on Ebony Forest website dedicated to training centre, trainers and volunteer recruitment	The text has been written but it has not been put online as we will be reorganising our website when we become a NGO.

Tools, products or methodologies that resulted from the project or contributed to the results:

No tools, products or methodologies resulted from this project.

PORTFOLIO INDICATORS

Portfolio Indicator Number	Portfolio Indicator Description	Expected Numerical Contribution	Expected Contribution Description	Actual Numerical Contribution	Actual Contribution Description
3.1	At least 40 community leaders and/or development professionals with improved capacities and engagement to preserve biodiversity.			15	

GLOBAL INDICATORS

Protected Areas

Protected areas that have been created and/or expanded as a result of the project. Protected areas may include private or community reserves, municipal or provincial parks, or other designations where biodiversity conservation is an official management goal.

Name of Protected Area	WDPA ID*	Latitude	Longitude	Country	Original Total Size (Hectares) **	New Protected Hectares ***	Year of Legal Declaration or Expansion
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*World Database of Protected Areas

**If this is a new protected area, 0 should appear in this column

*** This column excludes the original total size of the protected area.

Key Biodiversity Area Management

Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) under improved management—where tangible results have been achieved to support conservation—as a result of the project.

KBA Name	KBA Code	Size of KBA	Number of Hectares with Improved Management
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Production Landscapes

Production landscapes with strengthened management of biodiversity as a result of the project.

A production landscape is defined as a site outside a protected area where commercial agriculture, forestry or natural product exploitation occurs.

Name of Production Landscape	Latitude	Longitude	Hectares Strengthened	Intervention
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Benefits to Individuals

- **Structured Training:**

Number of Men Trained	Number of Women Trained	Topics of Training
90	85	(1) Basic setting up a conservation program (2) Introduction to fieldwork (3) Introduction to GIS (4) Introduction to Bird survey (5) Introduction to Eco guiding (6) Introduction to Plant survey (7) Introduction to Reptile survey (8) Introduction to Forest Restoration (9) Introduction to Plant propagation (10) Predator control as a conservation tool (11) Introduction to Statistics and R (12) Introduction to scientific writing (13) Introduction to invertebrate surveying and monitoring (14) Introduction to basic rope access training (15) Introduction to safe use of chainsaw (16) Introduction to Experimental design (17) Introduction to IUCN Red Listing (18) Introduction to wildlife technology in conservation

- **Cash Benefits:**

Number of Men – Cash Benefits	Number of Women – Cash Benefits	Description of Benefits
1	0	There could be more persons, but one man got a job at Ebony Forest as a result of participating in multiple training sessions and gaining capacity. We do not know if the increased capacity of participants has helped them attain new employment or increased salaries.

Benefits to Communities

View the characteristics column below with the following corresponding codes:	View the benefits column below with the following corresponding codes:
1- Small Landowners	a. Increased Access to Clean Water
2- Subsistence Economy	b. Increased Food Security
3- Indigenous/ Ethnic Peoples	c. Increased Access to Energy
4- Pastoralists / Nomadic Peoples	d. Increased Access to Public Services
5- Recent Migrants	e. Increased Resilience to Climate Change
6- Urban Communities	f. Improved Land Tenure
7- Other	g. Improved Use of Traditional Knowledge
	h. Improved Decision-Making
	i. Improved Access to Ecosystem Services

Community Name	Community Characteristics							Type of Benefit									Country	Number of Males Benefitting	Number of Females Benefitting
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i			

Characteristics of "Other" Communities:

Policies, Laws and Regulations

View the topics column below with the following corresponding codes:			
A- Agriculture	E- Energy	I- Planning/Zoning	M- Tourism
B- Climate	F- Fisheries	J- Pollution	N- Transportation
C- Ecosystem Management	G- Forestry	K- Protected Areas	O- Wildlife Trade
D- Education	H- Mining and Quarrying	L- Species Protection	P- Other

No.	Name of Law	Scope	Topics															
			A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P

“Other” Topics Addressed by the Policy, Law or Regulation:

No.	Country/ Countries	Date Enacted/ Amended	Expected impact	Action Performed to Achieve the Enactment/ Amendment
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Companies Adopting Biodiversity-friendly Practices

A company is defined as a for-profit business entity. A biodiversity-friendly practice is one that conserves or uses natural resources in a sustainable manner.

Name of Company	Description of Biodiversity-Friendly Practice	Country/Countries where Practice was Adopted
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Networks and Partnerships

Networks/partnerships should have some lasting benefit beyond immediate project implementation. Informal networks/partnerships are acceptable.

Name of Network/Partnership	Year Established	Country/ Countries	Established by Project?	Purpose
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Sustainable Financing

Sustainable financing mechanisms generate funding for the long-term (generally five or more years). These include, but are not limited to, conservation trust funds, debt-for-nature swaps, payment for ecosystem services (PES) schemes, and other revenue, fee or tax schemes that generate long-term funding for conservation.

Name of Mechanism	Purpose	Date Established	Description	Country/Countries	Project Intervention	Delivery of Funds?
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Globally Threatened Species

Globally threatened species (CR, EN, VU) on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, benefitting from the project.

Genus	Species	Common Name (English)	Status	Intervention	Population Trend at Site
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LESSONS LEARNED

When we planned each course, we would brainstorm with the whole team, regardless of anyone's existing knowledge or experience in relation to the topic. This helped ensure that we included activities and information that would be of interest and cover expected or useful skills. Even during the course, we would still sometimes adapt it in response to feedback provided by participants during the tea or lunch breaks and from the training team. For example, if some people were struggling grasping a concept we would add an additional activity or spend more time explaining the topic. After each course, we would review the summary feedback provided by the course participants, whom had completed an anonymous feedback questionnaire at the end of the course, and the feedback of each trainer and support staff. Recommendations were recorded for improvements to other courses or if the course was to be re-run, and for those courses that we re-ran we modified accordingly. This level of adaptability and responsiveness to feedback ensured that we could continually improve our course. In addition, at the start of each course participants were asked to write their course expectations, which we then addressed to explain whether they would be covered or to include if it was a common focus. At the end of the course, we went back over the expectations to see whether we had addressed their expectations.

We had originally planned to host seminars and workshops at Ebony Forest. Covid forced us online to overcome restrictions relating to public gatherings and afterwards to address the reluctance of people to come to such functions. We learned that webinars are much more effective than seminars for multiple reasons: reach a larger and wider audience, video can be shared after the event in case people could not attend, involve speakers not present in the country, and reduce the associated carbon footprint.

For some of the workshops we hosted, we requested that participating institutions or individuals bring their data so that it can be compiled and shared to meet the workshop objectives. Various institutions did not bring their data as they did not have permission to share it. With hindsight, we will request the senior managers of such institutions well in advance so that data can be shared.

In Mauritius, there are a limited number of institutions implementing terrestrial conservation and so there was a tendency that the same institutions and then individuals come to all the workshops. Often the attendees are well-aware of the different activities and projects within the country and so knowledge transfer was limited. To address this, we discovered that it was beneficial to invite overseas organizations facing similar challenges. There was an increase in knowledge transferred as countries have different approaches and expertise. Such workshops also enabled new alliances to be established.

SUSTAINABILITY/REPLICATION

The only challenge to continuing replicating the project outcomes is funding as the courses have already been developed, team trained and equipment purchased. Funding is needed only to support the staff salaries and participants' lunches and tea breaks. Hence, the purchasing of the project equipment actually has a long term impact. Thanks to the grant enabling us to deliver these courses, we have established a good reputation for our knowledge and course deliverance and so have been able to attract future funding to continue some of the courses.

The approaches used for course development and delivery will continue to be applied for any new courses and our next target is to develop sequential advanced courses as requested by participants of our Introduction courses.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS/STANDARDS

For the forest restoration course, water rather than herbicide was mixed with coloured dye to avoid any potential issues.

The upgraded nursery used the materials referred to in the submitted EIA and EMP safeguard documents. Four small exotic trees were cut and these have been replaced by planting endemic trees in a nearby site.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Total Amount of Additional Funding Actually Secured (USD)	\$124,751.00
Breakdown of Additional Funding	<p>COUNTER-PART FUNDING FROM EBONY FOREST</p> <p>Salaries and benefits USD 79,650 (previously this was wrongly calculated as it didn't account for project time but referred to total salary)</p> <p>Rental of the training centre USD 23,760 27 four-day courses and 2 workshops</p> <p>Jeep use for courses USD 1,440</p> <p>Use of jeep for setting up course and collecting lunch</p> <p>Nursery construction USD 3,648</p> <p>Items not covered</p> <p>Administrative fee USD 5,184</p> <p>Procurement, accounting, administration, course marketing, organizing lunch and tea breaks associated with 27 courses</p> <p>Funding covered by Government Wage Assistance Scheme for 6 months due to covid - USD 11,069</p>

INFORMATION SHARING AND CEPF POLICY

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned and results. For more information about this project, you may contact the organization and/or individual listed below.

Ebony Forest, info@ebonyforest.com