



African Elephant Fund  
Ensuring a secure future for African Elephants and their habitats



## Project Proposal to the African Elephant Fund (AEF)

**1.1: Country:** Kenya

**1.2: Project title:** Securing the elephant population within the Greater Amboseli Ecosystem from escalating human-elephant conflict and poaching risk due to COVID-19

**1.3: Project location:** The Greater Amboseli Ecosystem (GAE) of southern Kenya, an area including the Amboseli and Chyulu Hills National Parks, and surrounding community-owned lands

**1.4: Overall project cost (USD):**

Amount Requested from African Elephant Fund (USD): **\$50,000**

Co-funding source and amount (if applicable) in USD: Big Life Foundation **\$52,315**

**1.5: Project duration:** 1-year

**1.6: Project proponent:** Big Life Foundation

**Other project partners (if any):**

Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) - *endorsement letter in Appendix*

Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (SWT)

**1.7: Name and institution of project supervisor:** Richard Bonham, Big Life Foundation

**1.8: Address of project supervisor:** PO BOX 24133, Nairobi Kenya

**1.9: Telephone number:** +254 736957294

**1.10: Email:** richard@biglife.org

**1.11: Date of submission:** 6 June 2020

**2.0: Project summary** (*overall rationale, objectives of the project, expected outputs and expected results maximum 1 page*) (*How is this project addressing COVID 19 related challenges that are hampering elephant conservation?*)

The Greater Amboseli Ecosystem (GAE) straddles the border between Kenya and Tanzania, is a mixed-use landscape composed of national parks and community-owned land, and is a central connection point in a massive transboundary landscape that runs from Mara/Serengeti to Tsavo/Mkomazi and contains some of the most important wildlife areas on the continent, including a world renowned elephant population with some of Africa's last remaining big tuskers. Wildlife, including elephants, spend up to 70% of their time on community land, and therefore outside formally protected parks. However, Big Life Foundation (Big Life) and co-founder Richard Bonham have been implementing community-based wildlife protection programs on community land within this landscape for 3 decades.

While the threat of elephant poaching within the GAE has largely been eliminated, by Big Life and our partners, human-elephant conflict (HEC) and habitat- and connectivity-loss are growing long-term threats that require continued urgent attention. As both the human and elephant populations continue to grow, Big Life has modified and expand our conservation strategy to ensure the viability of elephant populations within the ecosystem, as well as to maintain the functioning of the ecosystem as a critical connection between regional elephant populations. This holistic conservation model – which involves employment of community rangers, human-wildlife conflict mitigation, livestock compensation, education scholarships,



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healthcare, conservation land leases, community conservancies, and more – has the provision of benefits to communities from wildlife, in return for communities' support for conservation, at its core.

The latest threat from COVID-19, however, has dealt an unexpected blow to communities' livelihoods and Big Life's ability to fundraise for our wildlife protection operations. Tourism and conservation activities are a major source of income for local Maasai communities in the GAE, generating over \$13 million in the 2017/2018 financial year. This has all but dried up overnight with the closure of borders and lockdown measures. As tourism is a primary source of income to many households in communities across the GAE (directly or indirectly), this has left communities vulnerable, and struggling to feed their families. Without this income, communities will have to rely on other means of survival, be it through poaching, or agriculture, the former leading to further threatened wildlife populations, including elephants, and the latter resulting in land conversion, and thus reduced natural habitat, and increased HEC. Big Life has already seen evidence of both in the last few months.

Tourism, in the form of visitor conservation fees, is also an important source of revenue for Big Life, in addition to donations from individuals, foundations and corporations, all of whom have been negatively impacted by the global COVID-related economic downturn and associated economic uncertainty. As a direct result of decreased expected revenue, Big Life has had to significantly cut our budget (by up to 40%) to ensure *critical core operation costs* can be covered by what is able to be raised, or from our emergency reserve fund (which is already being drawn on), for the foreseeable future. Among those budget cuts, is a reduction in operational support for rangers, including fuel for mobile units (vehicle and aerial). Rangers are the first line of defence for the protection of elephants and other wildlife. If they are unable to operate, or operating at a reduced capacity, elephants are at short-term risk from increased poaching and HEC, and long-term risk from eroded tolerance of and support for elephants and related conservation.

Working in close partnership with Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), the government department responsible for wildlife management in Kenya, Big Life's experience and results have demonstrated that the use of community rangers is a highly effective strategy for protecting the biodiversity of the GAE, as well as securing natural habitats, dispersal areas and wildlife corridors. Directly reducing elephant mortality, and indirectly generating tolerance for this species and support for conservation initiatives, by reducing HEC and its associated economic cost, through community rangers, is fundamental for ensuring the long-term persistence of elephants in the GAE, and the biodiversity-rich environments that they maintain.

Big Life, therefore, intends to use this grant to support two vehicle-based mobile ranger units (whose operations have been cut) to continue anti-poaching operations, improve human-elephant conflict mitigation, habitat protection efforts and provide community support. In doing so, Big Life aims to simultaneously achieve key elephant protection objectives – maintain low elephant poaching, reduced HEC incidents and therefore fewer elephants injured or killed in retaliation, protection of habitat and elephant dispersal and movement corridors, and ensure community tolerance for elephants and their conservation – all of which are directly related to Objectives 1,2,3, and 7 of the AEAP.

### **3.0: Which priority objectives, strategies and activities of the project (there may be more than one) are related to the African Elephant Action Plan (AEAP)?**

In recognition of elephants' potential to provide ecological, socio-cultural and economic benefits, it is critical to ensure the long-term viability of the elephant population within the GAE, as well as to maintain the functioning of the ecosystem as a critical connection between the regional elephant populations of southern Kenya and northern Tanzania. Therefore, Big Life's overall goal is to provide coordinated and effective protection for the GAE elephant population from growing threats of poaching and human-elephant conflict (HEC), while simultaneously providing support for the communities that bear the costs of living alongside these animals.

With support from the AEF, to increase Big Life's operations of two vehicle-based mobile ranger units, Big Life hopes to achieve the following objectives:



**Objective 1:** Maintain low elephant poaching and high ivory recovery rates, thus removing ivory from the illegal wildlife trade

**Objective 2:** Reduce the number of elephant crop raids, and area of crops destroyed, to minimise financial losses to community members from elephants

**Objective 3:** Reduce the number of elephants injured and killed in retaliation for HEC

**Objective 4:** Protect critical natural elephant habitat from illegal human activities

**Objective 5:** Secure key dispersal areas and movement corridors necessary to support a viable elephant population in the long-term

**Objective 6:** Maintain and improve local community tolerance for elephants to encourage support for conservation initiatives on community land

The above project objectives directly relate to the AEAP objectives, strategies and activities as outlined below, but also align with the Kenya National Strategy: *The Conservation and Management Strategy for the Elephant in Kenya 2012-2021*, and will be in support of KWS' efforts to protect elephants in the GAE.

**Objective 1:** Reduce illegal killing of elephants and illegal trade in elephant products

**Strategy 1.1:** Strengthen the capacity of law enforcement authorities/agencies to combat poaching and illegal trade in ivory and other elephant products

**Activity 1.1.3:** Equip wildlife authority staff on the frontline of enforcement with appropriate tools to carry out their mission as safely and effectively as possible.

**Objective 2:** Maintain elephant habitats and restore connectivity

**Strategy 2.4:** Ensure adequate maintenance of current elephant habitat within and between elephant range States

**Activity: 2.4.1:** Provide adequate resources for effective management of existing protected areas and dispersal areas

**Objective 3:** Reduce Human Elephant Conflict (HEC)

**Strategy 3.1:** Apply adaptive management approaches in addressing HEC mitigation, focusing on capacity building of managers and local communities

**Activity 3.1.3:** Train and equip wildlife officers and local communities to ensure that appropriate HEC management approaches are implemented

**Objective 7:** Improve local communities' cooperation and collaboration on African elephant conservation

**Strategy 7.1:** Devise/improve and implement sustainable incentive schemes to benefit local communities

**Activity 7.1.1:** Identify and assess needs for the full participation of local people to conserve the African elephant

#### **4.0: Project Rationale – why is this project necessary? What threats face this elephant population (2 pages maximum)**

The GAE, nearly 2.5 million acres, stretches across both sides of the Kenya-Tanzania border and is comprised of community-owned land and two national parks (Amboseli National Park and Chyulu Hills National Park). The GAE further connects to the Kilimanjaro and Tsavo-West National Parks (an additional 2.6 million acres) to the south and south-east, respectively. *See map in Appendix*

Formally protected areas, managed by KWS, cover less than 15% of the GAE, and seasonal fluctuations in natural resource distribution means that elephants spend a large proportion of time on Maasai community-owned land (approx. 2 million acres), outside of these protected areas. Much of this "unprotected" land continues to function as wildlife corridors and provides critical resources for a nationally important elephant population of approximately 2,000 individuals, and growing. The GAE is also the geographical link that connects the regional elephant populations of Tsavo (12,843 individuals),



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Amboseli (1,645), Chyulu Hills (135), and West-Kilimanjaro (149). Local community support for elephant conservation is thus critical for the long-term survival of the GAE elephant population.

While the dominant ethnic group are Maasai, who traditionally lived as pastoralists, a livelihood largely compatible with the maintenance of functional connectivity of habitats for elephants, the region has seen rapid development over the last decade, with expanding infrastructure and local trade hubs. These changes, in combination with high local human population growth and an influx of outside migrants, has led to accelerated land conversion incompatible with conservation, and as a result led to an exponential increase in threats to the region's elephant population.

Conservation interventions, by Big Life and partners, however, have largely controlled the threat of elephant poaching within the *core* GAE, with only 3 elephants confirmed poached since 2016, and as a result the elephant population has been increasing. Furthermore, while the majority of ivory is recovered from all elephant mortality within the GAE (88% in 2018 and 100% in 2019), hundreds of kilograms of ivory from elsewhere in Kenya are seized annually in arrests by Big Life, with KWS (1,004kg in 2018 and >732kg in 2019), and removed from the illegal wildlife trade, as it moves through the ecosystem to major transit hubs in Mombasa and across the border in Tanzania. However, these conservation gains are at risk of being undone in the near future as poaching threatens to increase, as the economic impact to local communities within the GAE, as a result of the COVID-19 related collapse of eco-tourism, a primary source of income for communities in the region, means that the benefit of poaching or ivory trading might soon outweigh the risk, and so it is critical to maintain vigilance.

A more significant long-term threat to this population is that of human-elephant conflict (HEC), in which 36 elephants have been killed in the GAE since 2016 (and at least some of the 20 additional deaths from unknown causes would have been a result of the same). HEC takes a number of forms, all of which represent a significant economic cost to families and rural communities, and results in the erosion of community tolerance of elephants and support for conservation initiatives. The latter being necessary to secure key dispersal areas and movement corridors that can ultimately support a viable elephant population in the future.

One costly manifestation of HEC is the destruction of boreholes, water tanks, granaries and other property by elephants. The least frequent but most severe form of HEC is human injury or death; elephants in the GAE killed 11 people in 2018 and 2019 and at least 3 others were injured by elephants over the same period, often resulting in retaliatory injury and killing of elephants. However, the most common and widely felt form of HEC is destruction of farmer's crops. At its peak, in 2015, Big Life rangers recorded 887 incidents of elephants raiding crops in the GAE, and 716 such incidents in 2016. Using rough estimates of the crop-area destroyed (and recognizing that not all raids are reported) the total value of crop losses to elephants was just over \$2 million in 2015 and just over \$1 million in 2016.

Rangers mitigating HEC can either prevent the incident completely, before damage is cause, or by intervening during a raid to at least reduce the economic costs of the resultant damages. This is positive for community livelihoods, and also reduces the chance of the retaliatory killings and negative attitudes that result from unmitigated HEC. Fortunately, through various initiatives, Big Life has been able to significantly reduce the number of crop-raiding incidents and area of crops lost to elephants (304 acres destroyed in 258 crop-raiding incidents in 2019), but this still represents a significant loss of revenue for communities that by and large live below the poverty line, which will only be further exacerbated by the loss of other income related to the COVID-tourism collapse. And arguably more destructive, the persistent conflict leads to widespread negative community attitudes towards elephants, a situation that is untenable given the importance of community land for conservation in the GAE. Mitigating HEC is, therefore, an essential step in maintaining elephant populations in this human dominated ecosystem.

Lastly, and most significant, there is an urgent need to protect and maintain large and connected landscapes for elephants. As in the rest of the continent, elephant habitats in the GAE are becoming increasingly degraded, fragmented and in some cases lost entirely, due to human-induced threats such as agricultural expansion, logging for charcoal, industry and general development. In 2019, Big Life recorded 116 habitat destruction incidents, and arrested 173 suspects for, among others: charcoal production,



logging, illegal water drilling, wood carving and wood collection. Additionally, rangers intervened in 42 protected area rules enforcement incidents involving trespassing, habitat destruction or illegal development violations within conservancies that act as a critical wildlife corridor regularly used by elephants. Such human encroachment related pressures limit the unrestricted movement of elephants within their former range, thereby limiting their access to essential food and water resources, and thus exacerbate HEC related to crop-raiding as elephant supplement their diets in farms.

And now, in the background of the above threats, in addition to the direct impact of tourism collapse, and therefore millions of dollars in income for communities and conservation across the GAE drying up overnight, Big Life has had to drastically cut our operations in response to a drop in funding due to the economic impact felt by our donors (individuals to corporations) across the world. In addition to cutting “non-essential” programs that generate benefits to communities in the name of conservation, this has meant that Big Life has had to reduce support for wildlife protection, including reducing mobile units’ coverage and grounding our aerial unit, unless responding to essential incidents.

Fortunately, Big Life, as an established and trusted community-based organization, and working closely with KWS, is in a unique position to tackle each of these major threats to elephants simultaneously, thus achieve the project objectives as outlined above, and contribute towards the achievement of the AEAP objectives, through a proven effective conservation model. Big Life will use funds from this grant to support the daily operations of two Big Life ranger mobile units within the GAE, all of whom are employed from local communities, to effectively: undertake anti-poaching patrols; maintain community information networks that results in the reporting of suspicious or illegal activity by community members; reduce HEC and its associated negative impacts on humans and elephants in hotspot areas of conflict and crop-raiding; intervene in habitat destruction and protect critical elephant dispersal areas and corridors from illegal development. Efforts to target these threats, and in doing so to maintain local communities’ support for elephant conservation, particularly related to HEC mitigation and general community support, are critical for the long-term viability of the elephant population in this priority landscape.

**5.0: Detailed Proposal** – including activities to be carried out, anticipated milestones), timelines, reporting channels and procedures, etc. (3 pages maximum).

Any plan to ensure long-term conservation of biodiversity in the GAE must address the multiple needs of improving anti-poaching and wildlife protection activities, reducing human-wildlife conflict, and maintaining critical habitats and the connectivity between them. The proposed project intends to address all the above through the support for two community ranger vehicle-based mobile units to fill important COVID-created gaps in anti-poaching coverage and capacity of rangers to mitigate HEC in two major hotspot areas in the GAE (Mbirikani Group Ranch and Kimana Ranch).

Big Life’s wildlife protection model, developed over 3 decades and complemented by our other community-based programs designed to generate community benefits, is built upon a large network of over 300 community rangers, all employed from the local area, which is essential for community trust and buy-in. These rangers are based out of 40+ permanent outposts and mobile units (foot, vehicle and aerial) in Kenya and Tanzania, across 1.6 million acres in the GAE. These units patrol daily and are responsible for anti-poaching and anti-trafficking, habitat destruction mitigation, protected area rules enforcement, and community support, among other activities. Their work is further supported by a large network of community ‘informers’, and act as additional eyes and ears on the ground providing information on illegal activity or conflict incidents, thus making Big Life’s reach exponentially larger. Big Life uses performance based financial incentives to further encourage community members to report illegal activity (information must be verified to be true), and bonuses for rangers involved in significant arrests and recoveries. The latter is done to encourage continually improving ranger performance, and also to recognize and compensate rangers that are exposed to danger in their daily activities and arrests.

Generally, mobile units’ responsibilities vary depending on the situation (e.g. anti-poaching, HWC mitigation, habitat destruction intervention, community support, etc), which often fluctuates with the seasons, but their primary role is to provide support to units in permanent outposts within a designated area, and act as a *rapid response unit* when called upon. Specifically, the two mobile units as part of this





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project (M1 & M2) spend the majority of their time on HEC response and mitigation. When not responding to calls from the community for HEC support, or other information-led follow up, rangers continue anti-poaching patrols, ambushes and intelligence collection, provide backup when there is heightened threat in an area, or covering areas when other mobile units are pulled out of their range.

M1 operates within a 300,000-acre communally-owned group ranch, Mbirikani, that borders Chyulu Hills National Park. While the area is primarily used for livestock grazing, there are expanding pockets of agriculture and therefore increasing HEC, and is regularly used by elephants moving in and out of the Chyulu Hills and beyond. Additionally, communities on the eastern side of Chyulu Hills National Park are not Maasai, so don't have the cultural taboo about eating wildlife, they are a farming culture whose crops are regularly raided by elephants, and do not benefit from conservation, therefore, they pose a significant poaching threat to all wildlife, including elephants. These communities do move over the hills with specific poaching intentions and thus need to be intercepted.

M2, on the other hand, operates within and outside a collection of community conservancies made of individual landowners on the now subdivided group ranch, Kimana (over 57,000 acres). The conservancies, collectively known as ALOCA (Amboseli Land Owners Conservancies Association), provide important habitat and a wet-season dispersal area for elephants in particular, as much of the area outside the conservancies have been converted to farmland. ALOCA also acts as a critical link for elephants to move between Amboseli National Park and Kimana Sanctuary, and beyond. This corridor is even recognised as part of the Kenya Vision 2030 Flagship Project: *"Securing Wildlife Migratory Routes and Corridors"* for its importance to wildlife, including elephants. Big Life works with many of the conservancy landowners as part of a conservation land lease program, but not all conservancy members are part of this lease agreement (by their choosing), and as a result the corridor is still threatened by incompatible land uses that violate the strict no development conservancy rules, and therefore requires constant monitoring and enforcement by Big Life rangers.

Specific project activities, milestones, outputs, monitoring and timelines outlined in the tables below.

## 5.1.1: Planning

Statement of the objectives	Activities	Timeframe	Anticipated milestones	Indicators	Channels or process Consultation with stakeholders/ partners
1. Maintain low elephant poaching and high ivory recovery rates	1.1 Mobile anti-poaching ranger patrols	Daily for entire 12-month project period	- Zero elephants poached in Big Life's operation area in the GAE - 100% of ivory recovered from elephant mortalities	- # of confirmed elephant poaching deaths - # of tusks recovered from elephant mortalities - # of elephant poaching related arrests	Big Life informs KWS of <u>all</u> incidents, following agreed protocols depending on the incident type and urgency, and requests for backup as needed
	1.2 Maintain community information networks	Daily for entire 12-month project period	- hundreds of kilograms of ivory recovered in arrests of ivory dealers - Higher number of info. led- poaching arrests vs non-info. led- arrests	- # of ivory trade related arrests - # of kg of ivory recovered from arrests - # of illegal activity incidents reported by community members	Community members report suspicious or illegal activity directly to Big Life via different channels (via hotline to our radio room, or directly to rangers) and Big Life responds accordingly



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2. Reduce the number of elephant crop-raiding incidents and total crop damage	2.1 Support HEC ranger teams	Daily for entire 12-month project period	- Fewer than 258 (in 2019) damage causing crop-raiding incidents - Fewer than 304 acres (in 2019) damaged by elephants	- # of recorded ranger responses (pre- during- & post-raid) to crop-raiding incidents - # of acres of crop damaged	Community members report elephants in community areas/farms to Big Life (via hotline or directly to rangers), the nearest Big Life unit is directed to respond and intervene
	2.2 Maintain community information networks	Daily for entire project period	- Community reporting crop-raiding incidents to Big Life	- # of crop-raiding incidents reported by community members	
3. Reduce the number of elephants injured and killed in retaliation for HEC	3.1 Mobilize HEC ranger teams to respond to HEC incidents	Daily for entire project period	- Fewer than 8 (in 2019) elephants injured by humans in HEC incidents - Zero elephants killed by community members in HEC incidents	- # of elephant injuries (and treatments) caused by humans - # of elephant deaths as a result of HEC	Community members report HEC incident to Big Life, rangers directed to respond / intervene. At the same time KWS teams are notified for support, following agreed comms protocols, and partners SWT assist in elephant treatments
	3.2 Maintain community information networks	Daily for entire project period	- Community reporting HEC incidents to Big Life	- # of HEC incidents reported by community members	
4. Protect critical natural elephant habitat from illegal human activities	4.1 Ranger patrols intervening in habitat destruction (HD) incidents	Daily for entire project period	- Fewer than 116 HD incidents (in 2019) - Higher HD arrest incidents than non-arrest HD incidents	- # of illegal HD incidents found vs reported - # of HD incidents stopped - # of HD arrests	Rangers generally come across HD incidents while on patrol, but in some cases community members report incidents to Big Life, rangers are then directed to respond and intervene
	4.2 Maintain community information networks	Daily for entire project period	- Community members reporting HD incidents	- # of habitat destruction incidents reported by community members	
5. Secure key dispersal areas and movement corridors	5.1 Ranger patrols in corridors to enforce conservancy rules	Daily for entire project period	- Fewer than 42 (in 2019) conservancy violations - 100% of violations stopped	- # of conservancy violation incidents - # of illegal activities stopped	Rangers often come across conservancy violation incidents while on patrol, but in some cases community members report violations to Big Life, Big Life rangers are then directed to respond and intervene
	5.2 Maintain community information networks	Daily for entire project period	- Community members reporting conservancy violations	- # of conservancy violation incidents reported by community members	
6. Maintain and improve community tolerance & support for elephant conservation	6.1 It is anticipated that Activity 2.1 & 3.1 will contribute to achievement of Obj. 6	Daily for entire project period	- Minimum 72% of survey respondents have positive attitudes toward elephants	- # of people responding positively toward elephants in social survey	Big Life to undertake social survey of community members in HEC hotspots



**5.1.2: Procurement** (goods, services, equipment, travel, workshop, accommodation etc)  
(Please explain what goods and services you will be procuring and for what purpose)

Big Life proposes to equip and support two mobile vehicle-based ranger units. The only procurement needed are for goods required for rangers to patrol and operate remotely. These include: rugged uniforms and boots, which are replaced annually (and were not going to be replaced due to budget cuts); monthly food rations and water supplies; thunderflashes (harmless pyrotechnics) that are used to deter elephants from farms and thus assist in mitigating HWC; cell phone credit to relay confidential intel instead of broadcasting via the 'public' radio network; boot polish; possible replacement of equipment due to the harsh nature of rangers work - activity monitoring equipment includes: binoculars, GPS, digital camera, smartphone and digital radio that allows the rangers to communicate with Big Life headquarters and provides a tracking system to monitor the ranger activities; batteries to operate some equipment (GPS, digital camera and torches); and vehicle fuel and spare parts for vehicle maintenance.

**5.1.3: Implementation: activity plan, timeline**

Activities	Outputs	Delivery Date
Activity 1.1. <i>Mobile anti-poaching ranger patrols</i>	1. 12 months core operations supported for 2 mobile units 2. Two ranger patrol vehicles fuelled for 12 months 3. Daily anti-poaching patrols conducted looking for illegal activity or in response to community reports 4. Rangers units patrol a minimum average of 2,000 km per month ( <i>for all project activities combined</i> ) 5. Daily poaching incident reporting 6. Monthly Wildlife Protection Program reports 7. Zero elephant poaching	1,2,4&6 - Monthly 3&5 - Daily 6&7 - End of project period
Activity 1.2. <i>Maintain community information networks</i>	1. Communities reporting poaching-related activity 2. 100% of poaching-related community information reports followed up on by Big Life	1&2 - Daily
Activity 2.1. <i>Support HEC ranger teams (to reduce crop-raiding)</i>	1. 12 months core operations supported for 2 mobile units 2. Two ranger patrol vehicles fuelled for 12 months 3. Daily crop protection patrols conducted 4. Daily crop-raiding incident reporting 5. Monthly HEC Program reports 6. Reduced crop-raiding incidents and area damaged	1,2&5 - Monthly 3&4 - Daily 6 - End of project period
Activity 2.2. <i>Maintain community information networks</i>	1. Community reporting of crop-raiding incidents 2. 100% of crop raid-related community information reports followed up on by Big Life	1&2 - Daily
Activity 3.1. <i>Mobilize HEC ranger teams to respond to HEC incidents (to reduce HEC injury &amp; mortality)</i>	1. 12 months core operations supported for 2 mobile units 2. Two ranger patrol vehicles fuelled for 12 months 3. Daily HEC mitigation patrols conducted, specifically in response to community HEC reports 4. Daily HEC incident reporting 5. Monthly HEC Program reports 6. HEC retaliatory incidents reduced	1,2&5 - Monthly 3&4 - Daily 6 - End of project period
Activity 3.2. <i>Maintain community information networks</i>	1. Community reporting of HEC incidents 2. 100% of HEC-related community information reports followed up on by Big Life	1&2 - Daily
Activity 4.1. <i>Ranger patrols intervening in habitat destruction incidents</i>	1. 12 months core operations supported for 2 mobile units 2. Two ranger patrol vehicles fuelled for 12 months 3. Daily habitat destruction intervention patrols conducted looking for illegal activity or community report follow-up 4. Daily habitat destruction incident reporting	1,2&5 - Monthly 3&4 - Daily 6 - End of project period





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	5. Monthly Habitat Protection Program reports 6. Elephant habitat protected	
Activity 4.2. <i>Maintain community information networks</i>	1. Community reporting of habitat destruction incidents 2. 100% of habitat destruction-related community information reports followed up on by Big Life	1&2 - Daily
Activity 5.1. <i>Ranger patrols in corridors to enforce conservancy rules</i>	1. 12 months core operations supported for 2 mobile units 2. Two ranger patrol vehicles fuelled for 12 months 3. Daily conservancy patrols conducted looking for illegal activity or in response to community intel reports 4. Daily conservancy violation incident reporting 5. Monthly Conservancy Program reports 6. Important elephant corridor linking Amboseli and Tsavo ecosystems secured	1,2&5 - Monthly 3&4 - Daily 6 - End of project period
Activity 5.2. <i>Maintain community information networks</i>	1. Community reporting of conservancy violation incidents 2. 100% of conservancy violation-related community information reports followed up on by Big Life	1&2 - Daily
Activity 6.1. <i>Completion of Activity 2.1 &amp; 3.1 will contribute to the achievement of Obj. 6</i>	1. Response to 100% of community HEC reports 2. Positive community attitudes toward elephants 3. Social survey completed verifying community members' attitudes toward/tolerance of elephants in HEC hotspots	1 - Daily 2&3 - End of project period

### 5.1.4: Monitoring and evaluation measures of the project

*(Please explain how the monitoring and evaluation of the project will be conducted)*

Big Life is an evidence-driven conservation organization, and invests significantly in the collection of reliable data for reporting and to inform ranger deployment and adaptive management decisions. The below monitoring system is intended to provide rapidly accessible, accurate, and easy to record data that clearly supports the achievement of project objectives.

While on patrol, rangers record data on arrests, carcasses, HEC, poaching incidents, HD and more, using a smartphone based mobile data collection application, as well as immediate incident reporting directly to Big Life's HQ Radio Room via the unit's digital radio. This data feeds in near-real time to a database (Earth Ranger) and to a monitoring software platform called SMART. Rangers track their daily patrols via GPS or smartphone application, as well as automatically through their digital radio, which is also loaded into the database and SMART for M&E purposes.

Community information networks are also an important component of Big Life's wildlife and habitat protection activities, in which community members report information on illegal activity or HEC to rangers, and are responsible for the majority of Big Life's arrests. This source, community intel, is also captured for monitoring purposes. In the event a ranger unit catches anyone involved in illegal activity, the suspect is arrested (with the support of KWS where possible) and taken to a local police station. From this point a Big Life Prosecutions Officer will monitor each case, ensuring that there is little leeway for corruption in the justice system. Big Life is currently monitoring 200 cases (395 suspects), over 140 which are poaching/wildlife trade related.

Daily data reported by rangers is currently collated monthly and quarterly for general organizational reporting. Specifically, this project will adopt a results-based M&E system, where data tracking progress toward achieving Project Obj. 1-5, using indicators listed in Table 5.1.1, will be collected by rangers at the activity level, aggregated, analyzed and shared through an interim and final report at the results level. In addition to incident data collected by rangers, Big Life intends to undertake a community survey at the end of the project period to verify community attitudes toward elephants and conservation. Big Life has previously completed such surveys, monitoring attitudes and community response to HEC, which will enable us to confirm if this project was successful in maintaining or improving community tolerance and support for elephant conservation (Obj. 6).



**5.1.5: Technical and financial reporting** *(Please provide details of the responsible officer/entity who will be responsible for preparing these reports and please confirm your capacity to comply with these requirements)*

Big Life has the ability to comply with all project reporting requirements and has experience doing so for other large institutional grants from government institutions, with project budgets of up to nearly \$1 million. Big Life's Grants & Compliance Manager, Wilfred Kimeu, would be responsible for technical and financial project reporting, with support from other Big Life staff. Wilfred has been with Big Life for 2.5 years and is a certified CPA with a diploma in Project Management. He has extensive experience in grant management, accounting, and reporting, including for major donors such as: DFID, UKAID, EU, USAID, and GEF(UNDP), among others, for both Big Life and previous employers. Prior to working with Big Life, Wilfred was a Programmes Accountant for Trócaire, Kenya Office. He was responsible for overseeing grant management, compliance and risk management, partner capacity-assessment and -building, financial systems monitoring and improvement.

**6.0: Please explain long term measures to ensure sustainability of the project.**

Long-term success of elephant conservation across Africa is dependent on elephant populations accessing land outside formally protected areas (i.e. community-owned land), but these spaces can only support elephants if communities see them as beneficial, specifically as a living resource that generate economic benefits. Therefore, Big Life recognizes that sustainable conservation can only be achieved through a community-based collaborative approach. This belief is at the core of Big Life's philosophy that if conservation supports the people, then people will support conservation.

Big Life has been implementing successful community conservation programs across the GAE (in both Kenya and Tanzania) for decades. Big Life's long-term commitment to the ecosystem, its wildlife and communities, has enabled us to actualize long-lasting change in favor of wildlife, particularly elephant, conservation. This has been done through a holistic, community-centric conservation model, in which community-rangers are at its core. Big Life's experience and results have demonstrated that the use of community rangers is a highly effective strategy for protecting the biodiversity of the GAE, as well as securing natural habitats, wildlife corridors, and areas for potential community conservancies. Support for community rangers achieves two very important goals in the pursuit of lasting biodiversity protection. In an ecosystem with few job opportunities, ranger positions are highly prized and the community views the employment as an important benefit linked to conservation, and therefore a financial incentive for biodiversity preservation. The second conservation benefit is through greater enforcement of laws and local regulations in place to protect biodiversity.

The resources necessary to do this, however, requires significant financial input. Similar to most non-profits, Big Life runs largely on external funding, and has stable enough revenue streams that it has never missed an annual fundraising target (until this year). Big Life is continuing to develop a more sustainable and predictable fund-raising base, including important partnerships with corporations and zoos. Sadly, few of these sources are truly sustainable, as we have seen with the collapse of tourism and world economies, and large-scale conservation will always require outside financial input. Big Life, however, is already involved in a carbon credit project that generates income to support wildlife protection through the protection of local habitat (carbon stores), and is working to diversify our revenue to include large interest-bearing endowments.

The only truly sustainable method of funding community rangers is if the income generated from wildlife is enough to fund the protection of this resource base. Given the non-utilisation policy of Kenya, the main income generating activity from wildlife is through eco-tourism. Improved wildlife protection by community rangers is important for the continued health of the Amboseli ecosystem, and the tourist industry that depends on it. The sustained income from tourism is thus directly dependent on the activities of the community rangers. This is particularly important in the community conservancies, where KWS have less of a presence than in the national parks. So, while tourism has ceased, it will return and with it,



income generated by visitors in the form of conservation fees which go toward supporting Big Life's wildlife protection work.

Financial sustainability is important for the future of biodiversity and elephant conservation in the GAE, but given that the ecosystem cannot survive without conservation on community-owned lands, social sustainability is also critical. As is common across Africa, communities in the GAE that share land and resources with elephants suffer the costs of living with them (e.g. crop-raiding, property damage, human injury/death), while the benefits (such as tourism revenue) are largely gained by outsiders. It is therefore important to recognize and address this imbalance, as greater benefits at a local level is more likely to translate directly into increased tolerance for elephants by those communities most affected. Therefore, community involvement is essential to the success of elephant conservation.

Recognizing this, Big Life has over 300 community-rangers, and employs nearly 500 people, 95% of which come from communities within the GAE, provides regular community support, from searching for lost livestock to emergency medical transports, to HEC response, and helps to generate millions of dollars in conservation-related benefits to local communities. In addition, Big Life is working with a partner to develop mechanisms for reliable support from the tourism sector, as well as identify community enterprises to diversify income opportunities for communities. All of this bolster critical 'good-will' necessary to maintain long-term, successful conservation activities.

**7.0: Will this project receive any other funding other than AEF?** Give all relevant details (for example, amount in USD, source of funds, any restrictions? Please specify.

There is no other funding support restricted for this project (mobile ranger units M1 and M2). However, Big Life continues to fundraise generally to meet our annual organizational budget, which includes the costs of this project within our Wildlife Protection Program. If this grant is successful, additional general funds raised would be applied toward project costs not covered by AEF funds, such as ranger salaries for the mobile units, or other non-project related program costs.

**7.1: Please provide a detailed proposed activity-based budget for this project (in USD) as per table below:** (N/B: Expenses that fall under incidental procurement\* which amounts to 20,000\$ or above, or 15% of the total budget (whichever is lower), will require that the implementing partner be subject to the UN procurement assessment.)

*\*Incidental procurement: equipment, vehicles, travel, furniture, supplies, commodities and materials.*

Budget						
Activity	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost (USD)	Total Cost (USD)	AEF budget	Co-funding (Non-AEF Budget)
<b>Activity 1: Mobile anti-poaching ranger patrols</b>						
Annual Salaries	16	Rangers	2,643	42,288	-	42,288
Food/Water Rations	192	Ranger ration months	62	11,904	11,904	-
Uniforms	16	Rangers	220	3,520	3,520	-
Equipment Repair/ Replacement (10% of total cost)	2	Mobile units	68	136	136	-
Thunderflashes	2	Mobile units	484	968	968	-
Vehicle Fuel & Maintenance	2	Mobile units	20,148	40,296	30,769	9,527
Airtime	24	Mobile Unit Months	22	528	528	-



# African Elephant Fund

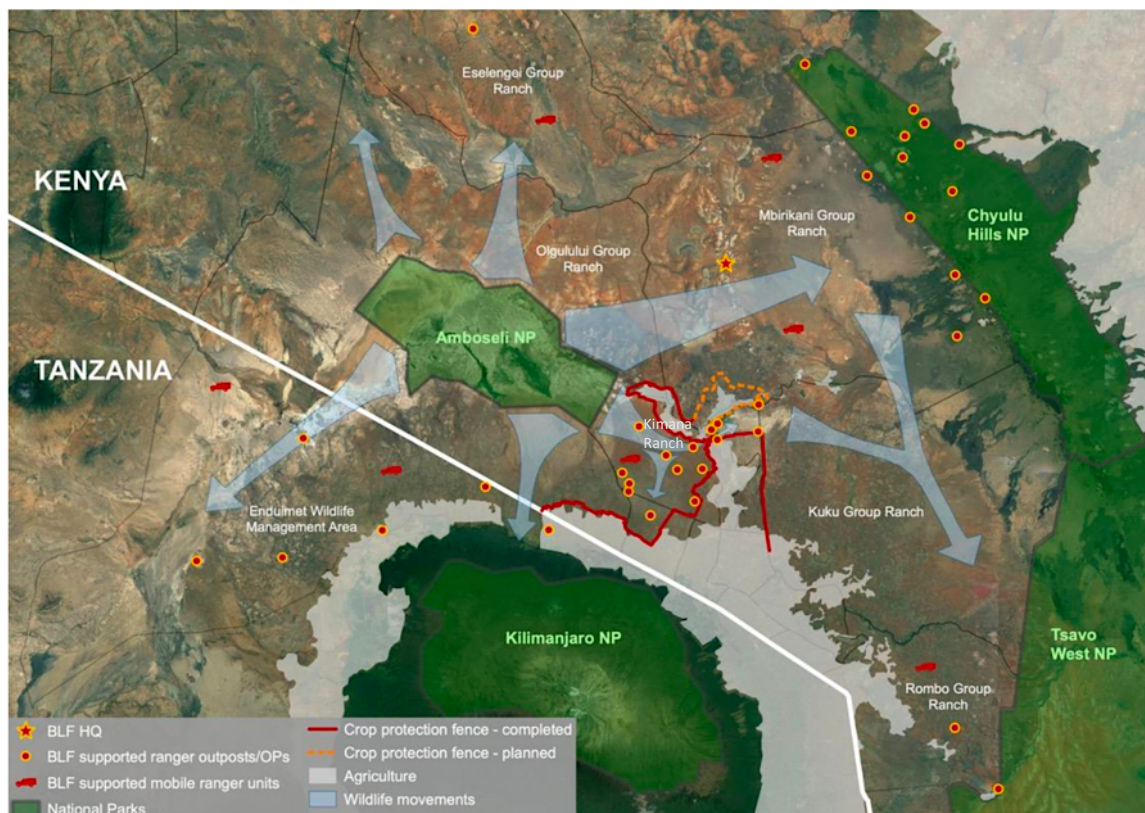
Ensuring a secure future for African Elephants and their habitats



Community & Ranger Incentives	24	Mobile Unit Months	125	3,000	2,000	500
Sub-total					49,825	52,315
Activity 2: Support HEC ranger teams						
Sub-total	Costs captured under Activity 1					
Activity 3: Mobilize HEC ranger teams to respond to HEC incidents						
Sub-total	Costs captured under Activity 1					
Activity 4: Ranger patrols intervening in habitat destruction incidents						
Sub-total	Costs captured under Activity 1					
Activity 5: Ranger patrols in corridors to enforce conservancy rules						
Sub-total	Costs captured under Activity 1					
Activity 6: Community survey of tolerance & attitudes						
Motorbike fuel	7	Days	25	175	175	-
Sub-total				175	175	-
Total Cost					50,000	52,315

## APPENDIX

### Project Area Map:







## African Elephant Fund

Ensuring a secure future for African Elephants and their habitats



### Endorsement Letter



Ref: KWS/3002.5

3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2020

The African Elephant Fund,  
United Nations Environment Programme,  
P. O. Box 30552-00100,  
**NAIROBI, KENYA**

Email: [unenvironment-africanelephantfund@un.org](mailto:unenvironment-africanelephantfund@un.org)

Dear Sir/Madam,

**REF: ENDORSEMENT LETTER FOR BIG LIFE FOUNDATION'S  
ELEPHANT PROTECTION PROJECT**

We are pleased to inform you that Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) support Big Life Foundation (BLF) in the implementation of an AEF/UNEP-funded project to combat elephant poaching and mitigate human-elephant conflict in the Amboseli Ecosystem.

KWS collaborates closely with BLF on ranger activities, anti-poaching and human-wildlife conflict mitigation in the ecosystem. We have an excellent, and long, working relationship with BLF, and they have been an important on-the-ground partner in the efforts and past successes of wildlife conservation in the Amboseli region. However, the ecosystem is at a critical juncture, where lack of tourism and funding for conservation threatens our joint success in conservation in the ecosystem.

This project will provide greatly needed resources to maintain elephant protection and assist communities during this challenging time, and the activities proposed, support for two BLF mobile units, would contribute greatly to national and continental-wide goals of elephant protection, to which we are all working.

Your support to BLF will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

  
Dickson Lesimirdana, HSC  
**For: DIRECTOR GENERAL**