

# PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

Project ID:	10192
Project Name:	Ecosystem conservation and community livelihood enhancement in North Western Zambia
Countr(ies):	Zambia
Implementing Agency:	UNEP

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**I. OVERVIEW .....3**

**A. Description .....3**

**B. Ratings and Disbursements .....3**

**C. Key Dates .....3**

**II. PROGRESS STATUS AND ISSUES .....4**

**A. Progress: Information on progress and outcomes of project implementation activities .....4**

**B. Challenges: Information on challenges of project implementation activities .....5**

**C. Stakeholder Engagement .....5**

**D. Gender Equality .....7**

**E. Knowledge Management .....7**

**III: MINOR AMENDMENTS .....8**

**IV: GEOGRAPHIC COORDINATES OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES .....9**

**V. ANNEX .....14**

## I. Overview

### A. Description

Project name

Ecosystem conservation and community livelihood enhancement in North Western Zambia

Country

Zambia

GEF ID

10192

Implementing Agency

UNEP

Executing Entity

The Nature Conservancy

Trust Fund

GET

Project Type

FSP

PIR Submission

9/15/2025

Fiscal Year , PIR Number

FY 2025 , 3rd PIR

Objective

To strengthen community-based sustainable management of forest landscapes, and provide improved livelihood opportunities for targeted forest-dependent rural communities in Zambia's North West Province.

### B. Ratings and Disbursements

Implementation Progress

Satisfactory

Development Objective

Satisfactory

Overall risk

Low Risk

Project Financing

5,845,750.00

Cumulative Disbursement

4,115,374.00

### C. Key Dates

CEO Endorsement/Approval

6/1/2021

Agency Approval

8/19/2021

Implementation Start

8/20/2021

First Disbursement

9/14/2021

Expected MTR 8/31/2024	Actual MTR
Expected Completion 8/31/2027	Actual Completion

## II. PROGRESS STATUS AND ISSUES

### A. Progress: Information on progress and outcomes of project implementation activities

The project continues to promise good outcomes. The project has demonstrated satisfactory implementation progress, with an average of 77 % completion of planned outputs across its components into the Year 4 period. This is particularly evidenced by the recognition of 14 Community Forest Management Agreements (CFMAs), with 13 new signed agreements, bringing the total to 14 Community Forest Management Groups (CFMGs) with signed agreements (including 1 that was signed prior to the Project). All 14 CFMGs have enhanced forest protection efforts, including improved monitoring and reporting systems, adequate documentation for case management, and collaboration with the Forestry Department (FD) and the Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW). The project has successfully rolled out the Gender Action Plan through a gender toolkit, leading to the identification of community gender champions who are supporting the implementation of gender activities in the communities. Additionally, the project has successfully finalized the Integrated Land Use Plans (ILUPs) of which 2 out of 3 have been adopted by the Government Local Authorities in 2 districts for incorporation into the District Integrated Development Plans (DIDPs). The project further reached of a milestone, with all CFMGs having signed CFM agreements, with Kamikolo being the latest addition. Development of a knowledge management system is underway to ensure Community Forest Management (CFM) learning is enhanced across the project sites and the Zambian landscape, of which to date a project newsletter has been developed, participatory survey completed and curriculum improvement recommendation provided to tertiary institutes. The project has made significant progress in diversifying the nature based enterprises by supporting the establishment of an ecotourism enterprise. Capacity building of farmers in climate-smart agriculture and establishing market off-take has been a key focus area, resulting in farmers generating profits from the sale of forest produce under the project's sustainable farming practices, to date the project has supported farmer linkage to markets through a sugar bean out grower scheme which yielded 27.5 metric tons of beans, which were purchased by the off-taker at ZMW22 per kilogram, generating revenues of ZMW605,000 for the farmers. Furthermore, the project initiated the livestock climate smart farming, of which 3 climate smart livestock demo plots have been established, 1 in each Project Area. Due to the initial slow offtake of the agricultural component, a bit more time is needed to established adoption of the climate smart practices being introduced. The overall project performance towards achieving outcomes is deemed satisfactory, with significant progress made across all project outcomes. Key results include 247,000 hectares of dryland forests now covered by 14 recognized CFMAs with viable forest management systems in place, surpassing the initial baseline of 78,374 hectares at the project's start. Additionally, nature-based enterprises have taken off, with one site already generating income from sustainable production to the tune of over USD 23,000. The CFMGs are set to begin investing in community enterprises to ensure equitable benefit sharing. The project established linkages to off-take markets, resulting in 588 farmers (314 male and 274 female) generating a significant profit of ZMW605,000 (USD26,400) from 27 metrics tonnes of sugar beans. The project risk rating remains low, consistent with the risk assessment conducted during project development. No new risks were identified since the last Project Implementation Report (PIR), which is a positive outcome. Project implementation has been smooth and has

not encountered any significant issues that could lead to a shift in the risk rating. The project team will continue to diligently monitor and track these risks as implementation progresses to ensure timely mitigation measures are applied if needed. The low-risk rating reflects the project's effective risk management strategies and its ability to maintain a stable course towards achieving its objectives. Despite generally satisfactory implementation performance, the project faced several challenges that required attention to ensure optimal progress. Firstly, poor rainfall impacted community farmers, prompting the need to diversify CSA technologies to include irrigation and alternative drought-resistant crops. Secondly, the high illiteracy rate in the communities impedes effective communication and understanding of key project information, leading to limited engagement. Addressing these challenges with targeted solutions will foster better implementation, ensuring the project's success in strengthening sustainable forest management and improving livelihoods for forest-dependent rural communities in Zambia's North West Province.

### **B. Challenges: Information on challenges of project implementation activities**

Non availability of local institutions in the Project Areas to implement specialized activities as specified in the Project Procurement Plan (particularly for Agriculture) Inadequate and unreliable transport by the government partners to effectively support the implementing local conservation organizations and communities with project oversight Delays due to renewal of almost all contracts (unavoidable contractual processes) Production and conveyance fees (K9 per Kilogram) for honey too high and would disadvantage CFMG's income generation from honey enterprise.

### **C. Stakeholder Engagement**

Significant progress has been made in implementing the stakeholder engagement plan, with the various stakeholders fully involved in the project activities

#### **1. Councils and Municipalities:**

Town Councils have been actively involved as key members of the District Implementation Team, playing a crucial role in the development of Integrated Land Use Plans. Ward Development Committees (WDCs) are also engaged at the Community Forest Management Group (CFMG) level, participating in all key activities. This collaboration ensures that the project activities are intergrated into local governance structures for the project's success and sustainability.

#### **2. Communities, Traditional Leadership, and Marginalized Groups:**

**Participatory Land Use Planning:** Communities and traditional leaders have been actively involved in participatory land use planning, ensuring that land rights are recognized and respected through the issuance of land rights certificates.

**CFMGs :** Communities, traditional leaders and Marginalized Groups including Women have been engaged in the annual CFMG meetings to review the CF Management Plans and ensure everyones views are heard in decisions made on forest and natural resource utilization and conservation.

**Capacity Building:** Communities have received training in business planning and business proposal writing, empowering them to identify and develop bankable enterprises at CFMG level and at commiunity and individual entrepreneurial champions within their groups. Under sustainable farming, the farmers have been supported partnership brokering and have entered into several agreements with outgrowers and offtakers.

**Validation and Awareness:** Communities have been engaged in the validation of CFMG business and investment plans. Awareness-raising activities on Community Forest Management (CFM) have been conducted, following the Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) procedures. Communities have reaffirmed their interest in CFM by writing consent letters and signing the CFM agreements.

**Community Engagement:** Regular meetings are held between the communités and the local conservation partners (Project Sub awardees). Communities in Kelongwa Makaba were supported to review their CFM constitution to address the gaps and all CFMGs held their annual review and planning meetings to assess their performance of the CF management plans and plan for the year ahead. Consent is always sought before taking

photos at community engagements. Efforts are made to meet community members in their respective zones to reduce the burden of traveling long distances to meeting places. The community in the Ntambu project site participated in the Forestry Department led International Day of Forests to create awareness of the value of forests and conservation and general awareness about the project successes.

**Regular Updates:** All stakeholders, particularly communities and traditional leadership, are updated on project implementation progress through quarterly meetings, newsletters, and fliers. Traditional leaders receive briefings on project implementation on a quarterly basis through newsletters and implementation leaflets.

**Participatory Approach:** All project activities on-site are undertaken through a participatory approach, including the formation and formalization of CFMA, boundary mapping, value chain identification, and biophysical assessments.

**Gender Inclusion:** A gender strategy and action plan have been completed to strengthen the participation of marginalized groups. Community Gender Champions have been selected in each project site and are supporting implementation of the Gender Action Plans. Awareness-raising meetings on the Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism (FGRM) and the Environmental and Social Management Plan have also been conducted.

### 3. External Stakeholders:

**Inclusive Planning:** Stakeholders have been involved in the development of the gender action plan and annual planning meetings. They have also participated in engagements with consultants, such as inception and validation meetings.

**Regular Communication:** The Project Implementation Unit (PIU) holds monthly virtual meetings with key stakeholders to plan, share information, and address any challenges in project implementation. Additionally, the PIU holds quarterly physical meetings with stakeholders at all project sites, which are combined with monitoring visits. A quarterly newsletter is sent to all project stakeholders to keep them informed.

### 4. Ministries and Government Departments:

**Government Engagement:** Various ministries and government departments, including Ministry of Green Economy and Environment, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, Ministry of Local Government, Provincial Administration in Northwestern Province, Gender Department, and Ministry of Community Development have been actively engaged. The project has facilitated Project Technical Committee meetings and monitoring visits, involving key stakeholders such as communities, traditional leadership, provincial and district government teams, and local implementation partners.

**Steering Committee:** The project is planning to hold the third PSC meeting scheduled to take place in Q1 of the next reporting period.

### 5. Private Sector Players:

**Business Opportunities:** Various engagements have been held with private sector partners to create collaboration for conservation and other business opportunities. The PIU has signed contracts with Impulse Africa Limited to support livestock production capacity building and Edgewise Business Solutions to provide capacity needs assessment and training in business and financial management. These partnerships aim to enhance the economic viability and sustainability of the project. The PIU has further signed MOUs with Good Nature Agro and Hermaton Agro (agro based outgrowers and offtakers); with Wuchi Wami (Beekeeping out grower and offtaker) who have in turn signed agreements with the CFMGs on collaboration including extension service provision, input supply and offtaking.

Overall, the stakeholder engagement plan has resulted in enhanced collaboration and involvement of various stakeholders, increased awareness and participation among communities, and strengthened partnerships with external stakeholders and private sector players. Regular information sharing, addressing of concerns, and proactive policy review have contributed to the successful implementation of the project and the achievement of its goals.

## D. Gender Equality

Does the project have a gender action plan?

- Yes
- Gender mainstreaming (will be uploaded to GEF Portal):
- Gender mainstreaming efforts within the project are advancing as planned. Following a comprehensive gender assessment and analysis at the project sites, a detailed gender strategy and action plan were developed. These were rigorously reviewed and validated by stakeholders to ensure that gender integration is guided by clear, context-appropriate actions.
- The rollout of the gender action plan has commenced..
- To promote gender balance in project activities, deliberate and inclusive measures have been implemented:
- A total of 24 gender awareness meetings in resource management were held across the 3 project sites, combined with the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign. A total of 1,283 community members (636 males and 647 females) were reached
  - A total of 192 women and girls took part in this year’s district-level Women’s Day celebrations, held under the theme: “For All Women and Girls: Rights, Equality, and Empowerment”. As part of the celebrations, women from the Community Forest Management Groups (CFMG) joined others in commemorating the day. They were also featured on Kasempa Radio, where they discussed opportunities and challenges for women in conservation
  - 31 women are managing the vegetable nursery.
  - At the Shibalange eco-tourism camp, 4 women have been employed.
  - 8 women were engaged in general works at the Bulking Center construction site.
  - 40 women contributed to the construction of the livestock breeding center in Kelongwa Kamanama CFMA.
  - 20 participants (5M, 15W) trained in women's participation in Natural Resource Governance
  - Project facilitated a Gender Trainer of Trainers (TOT) training for implementing partners, government staff, and PIU staff at in Solwezi. A total of 35 participants (26 males and 9 females) attended the training, which focused on building the capacities of local trainers to advocate for and implement gender-sensitive practices, ensuring these principles are integrated into all project activities
  - 26 gender champions empowered/active: These champions are actively conducting awareness meetings at both project sites and district levels, including participation in International Women’s Day celebrations and radio engagements.
  - A total of 24 gender awareness meetings in resource management were held across the 3 project sites, combined with the 16

## E. Knowledge Management

During this period, the project facilitated the first participatory knowledge management review to document lessons learned from CFM implementation in Zambia. This review also suggests best practices to ensure future success in CFM (see Appendix 8 for the detailed report). Selected CFMGs in Lusaka, Northwestern, Eastern, and Central Provinces were visited, namely Mphomwa CFMG, Musima CFMG, Mpanshya CFMG, Upper Lusemfwa, Kaafwa and Upper Munsakamba. Key lessons were drawn, which can be summarised as follows:

- 1.The need to focus on financial incentives as an entry point for CFM
- 2.The need to diversify CFMG enterprises: The honey enterprise is the most prominent enterprise that every CFMG has been dragged into, albeit at a scale that is not commercial. None of the CFMGs visited demonstrated any capacity to develop other viable Non-timber Forest Products enterprises, thereby lowering the value of the forests in relation to local livelihoods
- 3.The need to structure projects in a manner that assures sustainability after funding ends

4. There is a need to assist communities in internalising the CFM process: The case studies revealed that each group fondly associates with the initiators, such as FAO CFMG, ZIFLP CFMG, BCP CFMG, etc. This demonstrates a substantial lack of ownership of the process and suggests that the group will likely revert to their old ways of doing things in the environment at the project closure. The best practice is to shift from an all lecture-based implementation to a more participatory process
5. Lesson: There is a need to enhance women's participation in resource governance: From all of the case studies, it is evident that women's demands and duties as forest users in resource governance have received less attention. Women's rights to forest resources are often rights of use rather than property ownership. The best practice to enhance women's participation in the CFMG decision-making governance structure is to delay holding the election until in-depth gender-based awareness-raising campaigns have been conducted throughout the landscape of interest.
6. The need to build transparency in the CFMG governance: Concerns about openness are growing among CFMGs, although not prevalent. There appear to be low levels in accounting for group funds. It highlights the need to bolster CFMGs in financial management. The best practice is for the members to be assured of transparency and accountability by the Executive Committee through having general meetings as enshrined in the constitution
7. There is a need to engage technical staff to run the CFM business: The CFMG Executive functions voluntarily, and to expect them to spend their time at the office is too much to ask. The best practice would be to employ a fulltime Technical Business Unit (TBU) that comprise professional staff to assist the CFMG attain business goals

The project further developed the Knowledge management strategy that would guide implementation of KM activities during the project period.

The project has in period under review produced the first issue of the semi-annual newsletter which was shared with all stakeholders highlighting the key successes of the project.

Furthermore a curriculum review was completed, and a report on curriculum improvement was submitted and shared with four (4) higher learning Institutions namely, The Copperbelt University, Mulungushi University, Zambia Forestry College and Mpika College of Agriculture for consideration into their CFM Curriculum. The following is a summary of general feedback from participants regarding gaps in the Natural Resource Management (NRM) curricula and the short training program for Honorary Forest Officers (HFOs):

- While current tertiary programs include the topic of participation, it is largely theoretical, focusing on levels of participation rather than practical application.
- The curriculum lacks content on the establishment of Community Forest Management (CFM), despite its legal recognition for over eight years and multiple curriculum reviews by institutions.
- Although scientific forest management is well covered, CFM planning—an essential component of participatory forest management embedded in national forest policy and legislation—is entirely missing.
- Current curricula emphasize standard business management skills but overlook the business potential of nature-based solutions, which are critical for promoting sustainable and profitable income streams under CFM.

Recommendations:

- Design a three to six month short course on Community Forest Management, to be offered in both full-time and online formats. The online version should include a two-week field practical component.
- Integrate key elements of CFM into full-time NRM programs to align with recent shifts in forest policy and enhance relevance to current sector needs.

### III: Minor Amendments

CONTEXT	
Result Framework	
Components and Cost	
Institutional And Implementation Arrangements	
Financial Management	
Implementation Schedule	
Executing Entity	
Executing Entity Category	
Minor Project Objective Change	
Safeguards	
Risk Analysis	
Increase of GEF Financing up to 5%	
Co-Financing	
Location of Project Activity	
others	

#### IV: Geographic Coordinates of Project Activities

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Kelongwa Makaba CFMA	-13.804391	26.307556	12,492,700

Location Description:

**Community Forest Management Area within Kasempa District**

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Kamikolo CFMA	-11.94881	25.67374	12,547,092

Location Description:

**Community Forest Management Area within Kalumbila District**

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Chulu CFMA	-12.4712143	24.7961687	12,547,155

Location Description:

### Community Forest Management Area Within Mwinilunga District

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Kahundula CFMA	-12.3537631	24.9508801	12,547,156

Location Description:

### Community Forest Management Area Within Mwinilunga District

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Kanyamisovu CFMA	-12.3676641	25.0342282	12,547,157

Location Description:

### Community Forest Management Area Within Mwinilunga District

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Kayisumpa CFMA	-12.3186912	24.9486147	12,547,158

Location Description:

### Community Forest Management Area Within Mwinilunga District

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Kayonge CFMA	-12.3523909	24.6601626	12,547,159

Location Description:

### Community Forest Management Area Within Mwinilunga District

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Kema CFMA	-12.3196491	24.9084903	12,547,161

Location Description:

### Community Forest Management Area Within Mwinilunga District

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Kewundu CFMA	-12.414254	24.9733585	12,547,162

Location Description:

### Community Forest Management Area Within Mwinilunga District

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Kimba CFMA	-12.4162615	24.8125849	12,547,163

Location Description:

### Community Forest Management Area Within Mwinilunga District

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Makuya CFMA	-12.3396005	24.9950283	12,547,164

Location Description:

### Community Forest Management Area Within Mwinilunga District

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Mumpulumba CFMA	-12.4937229	24.6073445	12,547,166

Location Description:

### Community Forest Management Area Within Mwinilunga District

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Muyange CFMA	-12.3751408	24.9587794	12,547,168

Location Description:

### Community Forest Management Area Within Mwinilunga District

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
---------------	----------	-----------	------------

Ntambu Central CFMA	-12.3992241	24.9606909	12,547,170
---------------------	-------------	------------	------------

Location Description:

### Community Forest Management Area Within Mwinilunga District

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Ntambu Honey Processing Plant	-12.3939958	24.9540434	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Ntambu Livestock Demo plot	-12.3939958	24.9540439	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Honey storage facility	-12.4703739	24.8768707	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Mumpulumba market area	-12.4703739	24.8801774	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Tabula market	-12.4081726	24.9779318	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Kelongwa makaba CFMG	-13.6790399	26.3451746	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Proposed Kelongwa Makaba Bulking center	-13.6790299	26.3451745	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Shibalangi Stone hill	-13.6795044	26.303667	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Sub chief Makungu Palace	-13.5441933	26.2734343	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Kamikolo Agriculture area	-11.9700976	25.6252997	12,954,037

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Kamikolo Agriculture area_2	-12.0010156	25.7617462	12,954,038

Location Description:

---

Activity Description:

---

## V. ANNEX

---

Uploaded Document

Document Category  
M and E Document

Title  
10192-PIR-UNEP-2025-North Western Zambia