



BID Africa 1 – Early Progress narrative report for the Albertine Rift Biodiversity Data Mobilization project

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2. Project Description

2.1. Consortium coordinator: Institution/network/agency name:

2.2. Main contact person and role:

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2.3. BID proposal identifier:

BID-AF2015-0115-REG

2.4. Project title:

Strengthening collaboration for increased biodiversity mobilization on key biodiversity ecosystems of the Albertine rift Region

2.5. Start date and end date of the reporting period:

1st June 2016 – 30 November 2016



This programme is funded by the [European Union](#)



2.6. Country(ies) in which the activities take place:
 Uganda, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo

3. Overview of results

3.1. Executive summary

Give a short summary of the activities implemented and the outcomes of the project for the reporting period (no more than ½ page)

The current reporting period of the implementation of the Albertine Biodiversity Data Mobilization project was marked by the setting up of the project and putting together the implementation team through online meetings and also meeting with stakeholders to discuss their contribution in the project.

ARCOS as the leader has coordinated the get-togethers of the project team and at least a visit with one project collaborator (Centre of Excellence for Biodiversity under the University of Rwanda) was arranged.

In CRSN, a consortium partner, this period consisted of remobilizing the digitization team to resume the digitization initiative that was started 4 years ago on an on-off basis. At least 1000 specimens have now been pre-digitized (prepared for digitization) of which 304 are digitized and scanned. Of these, 10 specimens are type specimens for species identification, and 192 specimens are species endemic to Central Africa. The Family Acanthaceae is the one that has been given focus for this first step of digitization.

In NBDB, another consortium partner, the project team has been capturing data from different surveys from the Ugandan Central Forest Reserves (13) and National Parks (4). 18,133 records of birds and mammals from these surveys have been captured so far as outlined in the table below:

Taxon	Number of records (geo-referenced)
Higher plants	5,775
Moths	2,065
Butterflies	7,143
Birds	2,292
Mammals	858
Total records mobilised	18,133

Finally, the consortium partner no 3, CGIS, had difficulties with the contract signign modalities that were not agreeable by the host institution. However, ARCOS found and arrangement to sign the contract with BID on behalf of the partner and has now issued a subcontract to CGIS to implement the activities assinged to this partner in the proposal. However, this process has taken long and called for a revision of the initial timeline for certain activities as outlined in section 5 of this report.



3.2. Progress against expected milestones:

Expected milestones/activities	Completed? Yes/No	Name of institution/organisation	Explanatory notes	Sources of verification
Completed capacity self-assessment questionnaire for data holding institutions (http://www.gbif.org/resource/82785)	Yes	ARCOS CGIS NBDB CRSN	All of the 3 consortium members as well as ARCOS have completed the capacity self-assessment questionnaire	The filled in forms sent by email to the BID team
At least three national data publishing institutions are registered with GBIF.org For registered data publishers see: http://www.gbif.org/publisher/search	No	CRSN	This period has been dedicated for digitization and training of project personnel in data publication. The data publication itself is planned to start after the digitization is completed and data already integrated in the internal database of the institution. After that, CRSN will register as a GBIF Publisher endorsed by the new DRC GBIF Node and ARCOS will serve as the data host under its ARBIMS portal.	GBIF website
At least one person from the project team has completed the certification process following the first BID Capacity Enhancement workshop	Yes	CRSN, ARCOS	ARCOS as the host of the CE workshop was given the privilege to register two project staff for the CE workshop. The certificates have not yet been issued though.	CE workshop records
Knowledge dissemination activities have been scheduled following the first BID Capacity Enhancement workshop	Yes	CRSN, ARCOS	The trainee from CRSN has held on-service trainings with herbarium lab assistants on the various aspects of biodiversity data management	Photos





3.3. Datasets published on GBIF.org

If the dataset is not yet published, please indicate the name of the institution that is expected to host the data when published in the column "DOI or URL/Planned hosting institution". Add as many rows as needed.

Dataset title	Publishing institution	DOI or URL/Planned hosting institution	Date/expected date of publication	Explanatory notes
Plants of the eastern DRC	CRSN	http://arbims.arcosnetwork.org	January 2017	This will derive from the digitization process on-going within CRSN
Reptiles of Western Uganda	NBDB	http://arbims.arcosnetwork.org	January 2017	Data captured from the surveys in national parks and reserves
Amphibians of Western Uganda	NBDB	http://arbims.arcosnetwork.org	January 2017	Data captured from the surveys in national parks and reserves
Insects of Uganda	NBDB	http://arbims.arcosnetwork.org	January 2017	Data captured from the surveys in national parks and reserves
Mammals of Uganda	NBDB	http://arbims.arcosnetwork.org	January 2017	Data captured from the surveys in national parks and reserves
Key biodiversity indicator species along Kagera basin, 2016	ARCOS	http://arbims.arcosnetwork.org	January 2017	Data captured from surveys under the Water-Energ-Food security nexus project of ARCOS, 2016
Key biodiversity indicator species along Kagera basin, 2017	ARCOS	http://arbims.arcosnetwork.org	May 2017	Data captured from surveys under the Water-Energ-Food security nexus project of ARCOS, 2017





3.4. Examples of use of biodiversity data available through GBIF

Use the table to document use or planned use of data available through GBIF as part of your project. Please provide the DOI for datasets published on GBIF or data downloaded from GBIF in the "Dataset" column. Briefly describe how the data have been used or are planned to be used in the "Data use" column (ca. 50 words). Provide the date or approximate time frame in months for the use or planned use in the "Date/time frame" column. Please provide links to any documents or webpages documenting the use in the "Sources of verification" column. Add as many rows as needed.

Dataset	Data user	Data use	Date/time frame	Sources of verification	Notes
Plants of the eastern DRC	ARCOS Network	Production of the AR state of biodiversity report	2018		ARCOS and its partners under the AR biodiversity monitoring framework committed to produce biennially the state of biodiversity report for the AR region. The data mobilized under this project is thus crucial for the compilation of that report.
Plants of Uganda	ARCOS Network	Production of the AR state of biodiversity report	2018		
Insects of Uganda	ARCOS Network	Production of the AR state of biodiversity report	2018		
Mammals of Uganda	ARCOS Network	Production of the AR state of biodiversity report	2018		
Birds of Akagera basin	ARCOS Network	Study on the Water-Energy-Food security (WEF) nexus in the Kagera basin			

3.5. Events organized as part of the project

List all the events that have been organized as part of your project. Please provide links to any documents or webpages documenting the use in the "Sources of verification" column. Add as many rows as needed.

No event organized during the reporting period



4. Implementation of BID project activities

Refer to section 2.2 “Deliverables, activities and reporting criteria” in your BID full proposal. Provide updates on each of the activities using the reporting criteria and other sources of verification as appropriate.

Sources of verification are for example links to relevant digital document, news, newsletter, brochures, copies of agreements with data holding institutions, workshop related documents, pictures, etc.

4.1. Goal 1: Establish or strengthen international collaborations to mobilize biodiversity data

Activity 1 name: *Data holders mobilization*

Description of any implementation during the reporting period

A number of contacts have been made but systematic visits for physical meetings have not yet started. A meeting with one collaborator has been effected, the centre of Excellence for Biodiversity, who expressed good will to contribute to the success of the project specifically through the engagement of youth in the citizen science programme due to be initiated through the project. ARCOS and CoEB agreed on many other aspects that go beyond the scope of the project but that nevertheless have a bearing on biodiversity data mobilization. One such aspect is the collaboration in the implementation of a biodiversity monitoring programme, a programme termed ILAM¹ that ARCOS already has been implementing for 4 years now in a number of key biodiversity sites of the Albertine Rift region.

In terms of mobilizing new partners, at least 4 institutions in Rwanda have been identified and initial contacts made to explore their potential involvement. High-level meetings with the heads of these institutions are being planned to push for their fully engagement in the initiative. These institutions are: University of Rwanda (Biology Department), Dianne Fossey Gorilla Fund International (Karisoke Research Centre), Wildlife Conservation Society (Rwanda office), and the International Gorilla Conservation Programme (IGCP).

Sources of verification

Activity 2 name: *Data publication and standards training*

Description of any implementation during the reporting period

ARCOS has hosted the 1st main training event under the BID programme in Africa and though it has not been possible to hold a separate training for the actors in the Albertine Rift region as it was previously contemplated, we now have enough materials that we are improving upon to use in the said training which has now been rescheduled to January 2017 (see section 5).

The project has now 3 involved personnel who are conversant with data publication and standards and these people will be instrumental during the organization of the forthcoming training, plus the involvement of CGIS which will bring in their experience in GIS and Modeling, both aspects that are being incorporated in the training module under preparation.

Sources of verification

List of GBIF trainees certified in biodiversity data standards & publication (<http://www.gbif.org/event/82794>)

¹ Integrated Landscape Assessment and Monitoring





4.2. Goal 2: Increase available biodiversity data, within and beyond the grant period

Activity 1 name: Partnerships formalization

Description of any implementation during the reporting period

An MoU with the Rwanda Development Board, the body that regulates EIAs in Rwanda has been prepared and agreed upon but the Agency has been busy lately to be able to conclude on the partnership. Apart from RDB, other potential collaborators in the ARBIMS initiative have been identified and contacted and the next period will consist of a series of meetings with these institutions to explore their formal involvement in the initiative. Given the change in leadership within initial members of the Albertine Rift Data Sharing agreement, a request for the revision/update of the MoU has been done and ARCOS will push for the inclusion of a clearly open licencing scheme for all shared datasets in the new MoU.

Sources of verification

Copy of the Unsigned MoU with RDB. Filename: **MoU ARCOS-RDB-Final_Draft.docx**

Activity 2 name: CRSN Herbarium digitization sub-project

Description of any implementation during the reporting period

CRSN has finalized the setup of the apparatus to re-initiate the digitization of its Herbarium. The laboratory has now at least 3 trained staff and all the equipment has been prepared for the job. The internet accessibility remains a big issue at the institution and this has made it impossible to go on with the initial plan to use crowdsourcing for the transcription step of the process.

Sources of verification

Photos of project personnel during the digitization process, data from the process published through ARBIMS portal. **(to be provided soon)**

Activity 3 name: Data publication

Description of any implementation during the reporting period

This activity has not yet started now.

Sources of verification

Activity 4 name: Data papers publication

Description of any implementation during the reporting period

This activity has not yet started now. However, initial steps have been made to get in touch with individual researchers who have done this before to share their experience and provide guidance when we start.

Sources of verification

Activity 5 name: Citizen science programme

Description of any implementation during the reporting period

This activity has not yet started now. Initiation steps have been taken in terms of rallying partners to help mobilize the youth, especially university students, so they can get engaged when the programme kicks off. Also, we have got contacts of another similar programme in





South Africa with which we plan to seek practical advice on the best way to implement this programme.

Sources of verification

4.3. Goal 3: Apply biodiversity data in response to conservation priorities

Activity 1 name: EIAs improvement support

Description of any implementation during the reporting period

This activity has not yet started now.

Sources of verification

Activity 2 name: Environmental reporting

Description of any implementation during the reporting period

This activity has not yet started now.

Sources of verification





5. Updated calendar for the BID project implementation and evaluation period

The calendar should be completed in the same way as in the Full Project Proposal, but should include any expected changes. Provide reasons for any expected changes in section 5.1 'Explanatory Notes'.

Implementation period (maximum 24 months, starting 1 June 2016 at the earliest)																										
Implementation period start date and end date (01/06/16 – 31/05/17)																										
Activity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	Notes	
BID Capacity Enhancement workshop 1				X																						
6-month progress analysis							X																			
Mid-term evaluation & reporting											X	X														
Data holders mobilization			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X																This will be a sporadic activities involving meetings with different individuals and visits to different organizations
Data publication and standards training										X																The training will take only 3 days but other preparatory and follow up activities will be needed.
Partnerships formalization						X	X	X	X	X																This will be a one-day meeting but there will be many prior consultations
CRSN Herbarium digitization sub-project				X	X	X	X																			
Data publication									X	X	X	X														
Data papers publication									X	X	X															
Citizen science programme					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X														Month 5 & 6 will be used to set up the platform and the subsequent period will be used to publicize the programme and collect data
EIAs improvement support							X	X	X	X	X	X														
Environmental reporting							X	X	X	X	X	X														



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Evaluation period (maximum 6 months, ending 31 December 2018 at the latest)							
Evaluation period start date and end date (dd/mm/yy)							
Activity	1	2	3	4	5	6	Notes
Final financial and narrative reporting	X	X	X				
Dissemination of materials produced under the project to appropriate audiences	X	X	X	X	X	X	
On-going online communication by the ARBMS technical committee on the published data quality checks	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Final financial and narrative reporting	X	X	X				
Dissemination of materials produced under the project to appropriate audiences	X	X	X	X	X	X	

5.1 Explanatory notes:

Due to various issues that have surrounded the on-set of the project various activities have been postponed as indicated in the table above where the pointers are highlighted in yellow. Notably, these activities include:

- **Data holders mobilization:** This is inherently an on-going activity. So far, contacts have been made but systematic visits are still yet to be conducted to engage the identified possible data publishers and assess their needs and expectations.
- **Data publication and standards training:** This training was postponed since it was not possible to organize it back to back with the CE workshop that ARCOS hosted in August 2016. The training will be held in March 2017.
- **CRSN Herbarium digitization sub-project:** This activity was kicked off earlier than previously planned



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6. Beneficiaries/affiliated entities and other Cooperation

6.1. Relationship with project partners

Please describe the relationship between your project coordinating team/institution and your project partners, and with any other organisations involved in implementing your BID project.

As indicated in previous sections, the project has had a difficult time during the setup period depending on the different nature of the partners involved. Specifically, CGIS whose mother institution is a government institution needs to go through very lengthy process whenever an administrative decision needs to be taken even for small things. This has affected the overall project implementation arrangement where CGIS participates as a sub-contractor to ARCOS instead of contracting directly with BID as other partners do. However, due to the commitment of the management of CGIS and the flexibility of the BID team, we have come to this alternative arrangement and the project could go on unaltered.

Another hitch has been the recent closing of the University of Makerere which is the mother institution of NBDB. Again, the NBDB management has shown resilience and determination to keep the project going although this has affected our communication during the reporting period.

Finally, the project team was glad to have an English-speaking management at CRSN which facilitated a lot the communication since English could be used as the sole language in the implementation of the project.

6.2. Links to other projects and actions

Where applicable, outline any links and synergies you have developed with other actions, e.g. GBIF nodes, other BID funded projects, etc. If your organisation has received previous grants in view of strengthening the same target group, to what extent has your BID project been able to build upon/complement the previous project(s) ?

This project came as a logical continuation of previous projects that ARCOS had conducted in partnership with different partners some of whom are part of this project as well (NBDB & CRSN). In CRSN for instance, the digitization sub-project was very easy to quickly set up because there was an existing apparatus and team with experience gained through previous project jointly implemented with funds from JRS Biodiversity Foundation.

Moreover, the project has been in contact with a number of other BID-funded projects especially the ones in DRC and Uganda.

7. Visibility

Please refer to the [BID guidelines](#).

7.1. Visibility of the BID project

How is the visibility of your BID project being ensured?

Short summary

A number of project visibility materials have been produced including brochures and posters that are used during any project-related meeting. The project has not yet produced news-worthy achievements but the platforms are in place to help disseminate news about the project when necessary. These include the ARCOS website, its social media, the ARCOS mailing lists, etc.





Sources of verification

Electronic copies of the project brochure, poster, and other outreach materials.

ARCOS_AR-Biodiv-data-management_poster.png

BID project_Brochure_June2016.pdf

7.2. Visibility of the EU contribution

How is the visibility of the EU contribution being ensured within your project implementation?

Short summary

The visibility of EU contribution is ensured through the use of EU logo and proper acknowledgement as set out in the project contract.

Sources of verification

Copies of project's outreach materials (***see above section***)

