

Project Update: March 2013

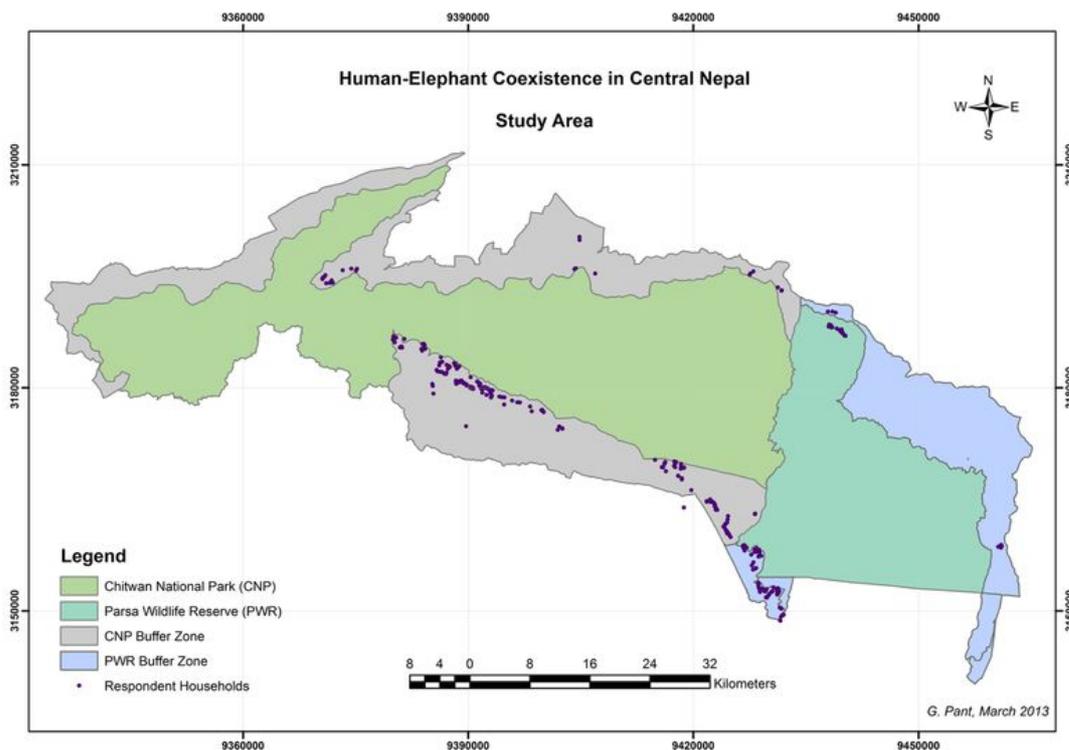
The field activities of the project commenced in December 2012.

1. Training to field assistants and questionnaire testing

Four local youths (three from buffer zone of Chitwan National Park and one from buffer zone of Parsa Wildlife Reserve) were hired as field assistants to collect the data required for the project. A 1-day orientation training course was organised at Chitwan National Park Headquarters for the field assistants on December 1st 2012 before going to the field to collect data. In addition, the questionnaire was tested in Simara, a village in Baghauda Village Development Committee of Chitwan district, which is among the human settlements affected by damage by wild elephants.

2. Household questionnaire survey

Face to face interviews were conducted with 303 respondents from buffer zone of Chitwan National Park and Parsa Wildlife Reserve. Information related to extent and causes of human-elephant conflict as well as local people's perception on prevention and mitigation measures.



Out of 303 respondents, 190 (63%) were male and 113 (37%) were female whereas 215 (71%) were from buffer zone of Chitwan National Park and 88 (29%) were from buffer zone of Parsa Wildlife Reserve.

3. Key informant interview

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 30 knowledgeable persons including protected area managers, experts and representatives from conservation partners, representatives from buffer zone organisations and media persons. Their knowledge on human-elephant conflict and its causes, measures taken and effectiveness and the possible

solution to the problem was documented. Out of 30 respondents, 27 (90%) were male and three (10%) were female. Similarly, 11 (37%) were community representatives, nine (30%) were managers, seven (23%) were experts and three (10%) were media persons.

4. Damage location mapping

Data on reported cases of damage by wild elephants in buffer zone of Chitwan National Park and Parsa Wildlife Reserve over the last 5 years were collected. In order to understand spatial distribution of crop damage, human casualties and property damage by wild elephants, the geographical locations of 220 damage sites has been recorded using handheld GPS unit.

5. Data analysis

Data analysis is in progress using various analytical tools and software such as Microsoft Access, Microsoft Excel, ArcGIS, and Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).