

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2010)

Project Ref No	17-020
Project Title	Enhancing the Elephant Trade Information System to Guide CITES policy
Country(ies)	Zimbabwe
UK Organisation	University of Reading
Collaborator(s)	TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa
Project Leader	<i>Dr Fiona M Underwood</i>
Report date	<i>October 2011</i>
Report No.	<i>HYR 2</i>
Project website	

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up).

1.4 Design the database and write the software:

A beta version of the new on-line database software was produced at the beginning of July 2011. All of the basic functionality of the system is now in place, with capabilities for on-line users to enter data. This is a significant achievement and provides a solid baseline from which to progress.

1.5 Install test and debug the database software:

The Darwin team have tested the beta version of the database that was installed. Further debugging (by external contractors) has not yet happened (see section 2), hence external beta testing and final installation of the software is not yet completed.

2.2 Implement and evaluate potential statistical models for producing bias-adjusted indicators:

Methodological development of the analytical framework continues.

3.2 Draft of standard operating procedures:

This work has been delayed to some extent because of the large amount of time spent on the database software development and because the SOPs require access to the new database, which has proved difficult in the last two few months (see section 2).

4.4 Undergo training programmes in selected countries

Some training activities planned for August were postponed. We have identified a need for existing ETIS training materials to be revised and a new ETIS training module on how to use the new on-line software and translation into French and Portuguese is being planned.

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

The development of the database software (by external contractors) has required far greater input from the Darwin team than originally anticipated. Focus on software development has made it difficult for time to be allocated to other parts of the Darwin project, but it has been a necessary priority because much of the rest of the project depends on delivery of the new database software.

In addition, since July, there have been a number of difficulties which have led to the current delay:

- (1) To be accessible to users in Harare and UK, as well as world-wide eventually, the database is on-line and therefore needs to be based on a server. The temporary server on which all development had been taking place, before TESA found a permanent server solution, went down in mid-July (struck by lightning). These unanticipated circumstances resulted in some database development and debugging being postponed until a permanent server was obtained and operationalised.
- (2) TESA had to liaise with TRAFFIC International to find a solution for a permanent server, has taken some time to sort out and there have been some delays in the process. The new server is now in place (since 21st October 2011).
- (3) The operational base of the contractors in the United States was struck by two, back-to-back natural disasters (earthquake and hurricane), which put them out of action for a couple of weeks in August. Indeed, since the provision of the beta version in early July, the contractors have made no further progress on the database software debugging.
- (4) Because ETIS is mandated by the CITES Secretariat, a number of issues have to be passed through the CITES Secretariat before they can proceed – for example: request for a domain name, a training/information workshop at the August 2011 CITES Standing Committee, and permission to formally approach CITES Parties to help beta test the database software. TESA have had very strong relationships with key staff in the CITES Secretariat but recent personnel changes in CITES have led to delays in decisions on these three topics

Impact on the project:

The main impact is that completion of the database software is now behind schedule and this will impact on the development of standard operating procedures and training although we are confident they will be completed within the timescale of this project

Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

The delay to the database software and its implications has been discussed with LTS International. We have been waiting until the permanent server becomes available and we can see progress by the contractors before we can submit a change request form with a revised timetable.

Regarding training, this has also been discussed with LTS and we have been waiting for: (1) news of the server and evidence of progress by the contractors, and (2) TESA to identify the impact of this on training and budgetary implications before submitting change request form.

Discussed with LTS: Yes, in Aug 2011 (month/yr)

Formal change request submitted: No – it will be submitted in the next two weeks (month/yr)

Received confirmation of change acceptance no/yes in.....(month/yr)

3. Do you expect to have any significant (eg more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes No

If yes, and you wish to request a carryforward of funds, this should be done as soon as possible. It would help Defra manage Darwin funds more efficiently if you could give an indication of how much you expect this request might be for.

Estimated carryforward request: £11,500 for training. Potentially £13,500 if database development is very delayed. Details will be provided in a Change Request Form

4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's

management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

No

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should not be discussed in this report but raised with LTS International directly.

Please send your **completed form by email** to Eilidh Young at Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk. The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message eg Subject: 17-075 Darwin Half Year Report**