

Darwin Initiative Main/Post/D+ Project Half Year Report (due 31st October 2017)

Project reference	22-017
Project title	Mutually supportive implementation of the Nagoya Protocol and Plant Treaty
Countries	Benin and Madagascar
Lead organisation	Biodiversity International
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Project leader	<i>Michael Halewood</i>
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Project website	<i>http://bit.ly/DarwinInitiative</i>

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project.

Activity 1.2 Project steering committee coordinates and oversees project supported research and capacity building and policy development activities. (To be conducted throughout the entire project)

The Project Steering Committees in both Benin and Madagascar have continued to coordinate project activities. They met regularly to assess the status of the implementation of the project. Some of their main tasks during the last six months included: implementing the policy instruments that were adopted in both countries in the previous six months, to implement both the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) and the Nagoya Protocol (NP), supporting discussions between potential providers and recipients of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge in both countries, and facilitating exchanges of those resources; and further development of community level best practices and policies related to developing community biodiversity protocols (CBPs). The project's overarching Expert Guidance Committee met by Skype twice during the reported-up period. Many of the members were also able to meet in person in September in Rome and in October/November in Kigali at meetings held under the framework of the ITPGRFA. Biodiversity was able to use funds from another project – the Genetic Resources Policy Initiative (GRPI) – to support attendance of one partner from Madagascar (Naritiana Rakotoniaina) and one partner from Benin (Toussaint Mikpon) at the Kigali meeting.

Activity 1.3 Project steering committees submits proposal to competent national authorities for sustainable, coordination between the organizations responsible for implementation of the ITPGRFA/MLS and CBD/NP after the three year life of the project (with continued support from Steering Committee if deemed appropriate by the competent national authorities). (To be accomplished by the end of the project)

In Benin, the long term coordination plan is embedded in the 'guichet unique system' for the implementation of the two international agreements established by the approved Decree. In Madagascar, where separate regulatory instruments are being developed for parallel implementation of the ITPGRFA and NP, longer term coordination between the lead agencies is not 'built in' the same way as in Benin. While the project's activities and governance mechanisms have assisted in coordination, there is still not a confirmed plan for post project coordination. This will need additional attention from the national partners in Madagascar in the final 6 months of the project.

Activity 2.4 Steering committees submit draft policies laws, guidelines to relevant competent authorities for consideration/adoption and support follow-up processes. (To be accomplished by the end of the project)

Both countries are making good progress towards the implementation of this activity.

In Madagascar, the arrêté/Order No. 11 567/2017 on Interim Measures to Apply for Access to Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and Benefit-Sharing under the Multilateral System (MLS) of the ITPGRFA, elaborated at the end of year 2, was adopted and registered at the Prime Minister level on May 16. The national team is currently on the process of drafting the project of law on PGRFA (bill) for which two national consultations have been organized on the 4 and 26 of September in Antananarivo, where a total of 113 stakeholders (51 of which, women) participated.

In Benin, the adopted Decree has been signed by all the ministries concerned and is currently at the level of the General Secretariat of the Government awaiting signature by the Head of State.

Activity 3.2 For functionaries identified in 3.1 above, provide awareness raising and training on how the system will function, how to execute their responsibilities. (To be accomplished by the end of the project)

A large number of stakeholders have benefited from the awareness raising and consultation meetings organized in both countries throughout the project to date. During the last six months, various meetings have been organized in both countries about the ITPGRFA and the NP and about the legal measures developed under the scope of this project. In Madagascar, three meetings were organized, where a total of 25 representatives (11 of which were women) from the Itasy and Bongolava regional governments were present. In Benin, a practical workshop about the Decree was organized in August 2017, with a total of 50 participants (12 of which were women). These meetings were also useful for identifying the capacity building needs of the different stakeholders for assuring the successful implementation of the new legal instruments in both countries.

Activity 4.2 Conduct initial awareness raising and capacity strengthening workshops (including 'capacity strengthening for capacity strengtheners'), Co-organised with national competent authorities. Workshops to ensure equitable representation of women and men, proactively promoting participation of women's organisations. (To be accomplished by the end of the project)

Following up on the efforts made during the previous two years, the project has continued to sponsor awareness raising and capacity strengthening workshops at the community level. In Analavory, Madagascar, a workshop was held on 20 September 2017 aimed at increasing the understanding of the ITPGRFA and the NP at the local level. The community was also introduced to the project activities that are to be conducted during the next few months. Thirty-six (36) people attended the workshop, 16 of which were women. Similarly, two workshop were organized in Benin to train communities on how to identify PGRFA needs, and how to benefit from the MLS of the ITPGRFA to obtain potentially suitable materials from other communities, national research institutes or other countries. Considering the two workshops together, 99 people were trained, of which 24 women. Bioversity was able to channel an additional 20,000 USD to support national teams (40,000 total) from another project – GRPI – to support further intensification of community-level capacity building and policy development in the final year of the project. During the reporting period, the associated contractual agreements were signed, funds were transferred, and the intensified activities, reported on here, were completed. They will continue until the end of the project.

Activity 4.5 Adoption of protocol and possibly related guidelines. (To be accomplished by the end of the project)

This activity, and associated community-level activities, have benefited from additional support from the GRPI project, as reported above, and from the ABS Capacity Development Initiative, as mentioned in earlier reports. The ABS Capacity Development Initiative supports the participation of Natural Justice (an NGO) to work with the national partners, and the communities in particular, in both Madagascar and Benin on the development of the community protocols. The partners have been working hard raising awareness and working with the communities for them to be in a position to meaningfully participate in the process of developing protocols.

In the two communities from Madagascar, several meetings have been held between 9 August and 15 September 2017, to continue finalizing their Community Biodiversity Registers (CBRs) and continue making progress on the CBPs. In Bonou, Benin, the first drafting of the CBPs is currently underway. Of the four case study communities, Tori-Bosito is the furthest behind, partly because prior to this project, the community had benefitted very little from direct investment and partnership from projects such as this one, and capacity for meaningful engagement is therefore lowest.

Activity 4.6 Development of community biodiversity conservation investment plans by community partners, with support provided by national competent authorities for the implementation of the ITPGRFA, CBD/NP and scientists from national agricultural and environmental organizations. (To be accomplished by the end of year 2)

Following up on the efforts made during the last part of year 2, the national teams have continued working on the investment plans together with the four communities.

In Analavory, Madagascar, a joint field mission of the DRAE (Regional Directorate of Agriculture and Livestock) and the Steering Committee of the project was conducted on 28 and 29 September 2017. The event was used to decide on the last details of the investment plan of the community. In Antavolobe, different activities have been started to make progress in the implementation of their two investment plans.

In Benin, it is expected that the preparation of the investment plans for Tori-Bosito will be finalized during the development of the local Communal Development Plan, starting in October 2017. In Bonou, the local community, represented by its King, has taken steps to obtain the land where the botanical garden will be situated. Bioversity has agreed to provide a further 2-4,000 USD (from the GRPI project) to support construction of a community seed bank in Tori-Bosito, as proposed in its investment plan.

Activity 4.7 Support discussions/negotiations between potential providers and potential recipients of genetic resources and traditional knowledge, (with at least one recipient or provider being located in Madagascar and Benin) with objective of developing ABS agreements. If negotiations are successful, finalise ABS agreements. National competent authorities and scientists from national research organizations will provide support for this process as appropriate. (To be accomplished by the end of the project)

In Madagascar, the project's research team partnered with FOFIFA (the National Center for Applied Research and Rural Development) and Africa Rice (another CGIAR Centre) and DRAE to identify potentially useful PGRFA for testing their performance in the communities through participatory breeding. The exercise resulted in the identification of ten varieties of rainfed rice for Antavolobe and another ten varieties of irrigated and rainfed rice for Analavory. They have now obtained small samples of those varieties under the conditions of the ITPGRFA's Standard Material Transfer Agreement from Africa Rice and are working together to multiply the seeds for further distribution and evaluation by multi-stakeholder project teams with farmers in the community.

In Benin, a field visit to Tori-Bosito was conducted on 14 September 2017 to assess the performance of the seeds obtained during the exchange of materials between the two communities, conducted under the scope of this project during Year 2.

In addition, during the reporting period, Benin and Madagascar have continued the process of identifying materials for exchange between the two countries, which will be subject to ABS agreements. On 25 August 2017, the two national teams held a teleconference and met

personally in September, taking advantage of the presence of partners from both countries and the Expert Guidance Committee participating in a meeting under the ITPGRFA framework, to agree on the materials to be exchanged and the following steps to effectively progress further.

Activity 5.4 Women and men in biodiversity-rich communities develop biodiversity registries (or other forms of collating information about biological diversity and uses) to, among other things, increase local awareness of biological diversity and issues associated with its erosion or conservation, increase their capacity to attract access-seekers, and to develop more advantageous ABS agreements. Women and men in communities working in close collaboration with scientists from national agricultural and environmental research organisations identify stresses to local agricultural production systems, and potentially adapted germplasm (and associated know-how) from national and foreign sources that could assist in addressing local needs/vulnerabilities. (To be accomplished by the end of the project)

Considerable progress has been achieved so far in the implementation of this activity in both countries. As of the end of September 2017, the four communities had finalized their own CBRs and continue to update them. Much work has been also conducted to continue increasing communities' awareness about how the ITPGRFA can be useful to obtain PGRFA potentially useful for their specific needs (act. 4.2).

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt 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.

Concern has been raised in the past (as reflected in the Year 2 technical report) by the national teams about the time, resources and efforts required to fully implement activity 3.2, as well as to make progress at the community level. In the past two years, Bioversity and the ABS Capacity Initiative were able to make additional resources available to the project partners – beyond that which has been made available through the grant for this project – to subsidize the community given the large amount of actors needed to be trained.

In addition, the team from Benin has communicated to the project Expert Guidance Committee that it is not receiving interest from private sector actors to obtain resources from the local communities involved in the project or to partner/invest in project activities.

2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with LTS: Yes/No

Formal change request submitted: Yes/No

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No

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

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

On 31 October 2017, project partners from Madagascar (Naritiana Rakotoniaina) and Benin (Toussaint Mikpon) participated in a side event during the 7th Session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. The side event was organized by Bioversity and the Treaty Secretariat, and sponsored by the governments of Netherlands and Rwanda. Naritiana and Toussaint presented their work on mutually-supportive

implementation of the ITPGRFA and Nagoya Protocol at the community and national levels, as supported by the Darwin Initiative. Other members of the Expert Guidance Committee were also present at this meeting. A photograph of the team was included in the Earth Negotiations Bulletin on line reporting of 7th Session of the Governing Body at <http://enb.iisd.org/biodiv/itpgrfa/gb7/3nov.html>