

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

Project reference	24 025
Project title	Community reforestation for biodiversity, livelihood diversification and culture
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	East Timor
Lead organisation	Charles Sturt University
Partner(s)	Group Training Northern Territory
Project leader	<i>Dr Joanne Millar</i>
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	<i>HYR1</i>
Project website/blog/social media etc.	https://communityreforestationtimorleste.wordpress.com/

1. Outline progress over the last 3 months (July – Sept) 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 to end September).

This report covers the period 1st July to 30th September. The first month was spent organising contracts and appointing Jorge Ramos as CSU research officer.

Output 1 Expansion of tree plantations and agroforestry development

1.2 In August, a new terms of reference was developed for field officers. Five field officers were recruited (3 in Laclubar and 2 in Soibada). Current and new farmer participants were registered for tree planting expansion.

1.3 For this year there are 20 nurseries established- 7 in Soibada and 13 in Laclubar with a total of 21,000 seedlings. Procurement of seeds and materials for nurseries was done in August.

Output 2 Establishment of farmer managed natural regeneration (FMNR) in degraded areas

Planning and budget discussions were held between project manager in Dili and CSU and WVI and scheduling for FMNR visit was tentatively established for Nov/Dec.

Output 3. Forest carbon certification

3.1 Land use maps are currently being developed with assistance from CSU Spatial Unit at Albury.

3.5 Once the Darwin funds arrived, Jorge Ramos, Alex Sarmento and Ben Bardon were able to organise Local Stakeholder Consultation (LSC) Meetings from 19-23 September. LSC aims to meet the requirement from the Gold Standard Carbon Certification and gather the opinions of relevant stakeholders. Meetings were held in Dili, Laclubar and Soibada. There were 24 attendees in Dili with representatives from the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Environment, National Directorate for Climate Change, Department of Forestry, RAEBIA, World Vision International and Conservation International. Issues raised included more diversity of tree plantings (for biodiversity and food, not just timber); safeguards to reduce pressure on natural forests; potential extreme climate impacts, and use of participatory land use mapping for land use change planning.

Thirty two community members attended the Laclubar meeting and 24 local people attended the Soibada meeting. Laclubar farmers want to improve site selection, nursery management, seedling distribution, work scheduling and promotion of “working bees”. They are considering the creation of womens’ groups to encourage female participation, and introduction of water harvesting systems to deal with drought and tree mortality. They also thought there should be more variety of trees including fruit trees and plantings on communal land, awareness raising about grazing compliance by neighbours and use of the authority of the Chef du Suco (village chief) to reinforce compliance. Soibada’s farmers are worried about increasing landslides and want to plant trees on communal land but avoid areas that are currently contested. They also suggested providing trees to all households as a way of achieving general community participation.

3.9 After the stakeholder meetings, the five field officers based in Laclubar and Soibada were trained in forest inventory methods and tools needed for forest assessments. These methods included setting up circular plots in steep terrain and edge plots, tree diameter measurements (dbh) and tree heights. The measurements will assist in calculating carbon stocks for carbon certification and entering the carbon market. The field team was also trained in the use of hand held GPS, capture of waypoints, data downloads and storage of the information in electronic format. The goal was to provide the team with skills to map planted areas and collect field data to validate our land use map. A manual of mapping and forest inventory procedures were drafted in both English and Tetum. Safety gear was also provided.

Output 4. Biodiversity information that informs forest management, education and policy.

A website has been set up to show project activities.
(communityreforestationtimorleste.wordpress.com)

In the coming months, the team will be working on setting up the steering committee, forest inventory design based on maps, participatory land use mapping, tree nursery expansion, 2018 site and species selection, farmer training in FMNR and agroforestry techniques, development of a business plan and the GS project design document, animal ethics approval for biodiversity surveys and the baseline household survey.

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.

None

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.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary.

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

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. Additionally, if you were funded under R23 and asked to provide further information by your first half year report, please attach your response as a separate document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also** be raised with LTS International through a Change Request.

Please send your **completed report by email** to Eilidh Young at Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 22-035 Darwin Half Year Report**