

## Darwin Initiative/Darwin Plus Projects Half Year Report (due 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020)

<b>Project reference</b>	25-013
<b>Project title</b>	NTPF micro-enterprises for competitive forests and livelihoods in Ethiopia
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	Ethiopia
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Huddersfield Business School (HBS), part of the University of Huddersfield (UoH)
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Ethio-Wetlands & Natural Resources Association (EWNRA), Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, Apinec, Nati Spices, Ecopia and Bench Maji Zone Environmental Protection and Forest Office, in SNNPRS.
<b>Project leader</b>	Professor Adrian Wood
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR3)</b>	HYR3
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	<a href="https://research.hud.ac.uk/institutes-centres/surge/src/projects/environmental-sustainability-and-natural-resource/honeyspiceandjams/">https://research.hud.ac.uk/institutes-centres/surge/src/projects/environmental-sustainability-and-natural-resource/honeyspiceandjams/</a> @CSRC_hud <a href="https://research.hud.ac.uk/institutes-centres/surge/src/">https://research.hud.ac.uk/institutes-centres/surge/src/</a>

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

Output 1 Honey

Y3 harvests were due to be quality assessed and prices negotiated. Y2 sales, delayed by C-19, were agreed for 2 of 3 districts with the Coop Union buying. Further training on production, quality control and transitional hive construction was provided to 100 people. Visits with and to government offices were undertaken to encourage provision of long-term support. Y3 honey samples have been sent to Apinec (private sector partner) for quality assessment – results awaited. Apinec could not visit because of C-19 restrictions. Prices for honey have been unusually high as people believe it helps combat C-19. This has resulted in higher profit margins (ranging from 20%-37.5%), though some of this benefit has been offset by lower production volumes due to a particularly heavy rainy season.

Output 2 Forest fruits

Y2 production was due to be undertaken, assessed, further training provided and sales orders placed for Y3. Training on and assessment of Y2 production has been undertaken and was positive. Further training on production of jams and juices was delivered by project partner Ecopia to all three micro-enterprises with 42 community and 12 government participants. Backyard fruits (rather than forest fruits) had to be used because C-19 restrictions prevented training during forest fruit ripening season. MOUs for use between the company (Ecopia) and communities were developed. These have yet to be signed because of C-19 restrictions which prevented travel. Purchase of and orders for the fruit jams and juices will not proceed until the MOUs have been signed. We are working with the partner to address this.

### Output 3 Spices

Spices were due to be harvested, dried and stored early in Y3, as well as sales negotiated and quality assessed. In addition to the training provided by the project, the four spice micro enterprises have harvested and/or bought 3,000 kg of black pepper, 500 kg cardamom, 110kg of long pepper/Timiz and 50kg of ginger. The spices have therefore been harvested, dried and stored. However, as a result of C-19, there is currently very little demand for spices, traders have been unable to travel to assess the quality, and prices are reportedly very low. In seeking to counter this lack of demand the project will facilitate a stakeholders' forum in Q3Y3 and has already agreed future support from two of the unions likely to buy spices if markets rebound.

### Output 4 Luya seed analysis

Lab analysis and comparison of results with similar species from Southern Africa were due in Q3Y1 and throughout Y2. However, multiple delays have been experienced linked to the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute's (EBI) Access & Benefit Sharing rules. As a result, the seeds were collected and stored by EBI in Q3Y2 but have yet to be exported to the UK where lab analysis arrangements are in place. In Q1Y3 the seeds were due to be brought to the UK by an EBI approved member of staff. C-19 restrictions were imposed before this was possible. This has prevented the seeds from being transported to the UK. We are currently exploring two alternative options, including analysis in Ethiopia by a new lab that has been located. In addition, we have identified an Ethiopian university that is willing to submit a new request for export on our behalf. The latter would overcome the UK Competent National Authority's unwillingness to sign the letter from EBI's Access & Benefit Sharing Directorate. We hope to complete the analysis by the end of the project and to share results with the Ethiopian government and communities. The potential for cosmetic product lines will only be exploratory, if it can be achieved by project end.

### Output 5

Biodiversity endline survey has been rescheduled from Q3Y3 to Q4Y3. The consultant has confirmed availability. Y2 community biodiversity monitoring is scheduled for Q3Y3. Previous community monitoring has been delayed both by insecurity in Y1 and by C-19 in Y2.

### Output 6

Participation in appropriate national level discussion fora had been scheduled for Q3Y3. This is being pushed to Q4Y3 because delays in generating results from the project mean that we need more time to gather results that will usefully inform such discussions. C-19 restrictions mean that UoH staff cannot travel to Ethiopia for these discussions, but Ethiopian consultants and staff involved in the project have agreed to lead these in the absence of UoH staff. Topics and invitees are under development.

**2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months (for Covid-19 specific delays/problems, please use 2b). Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.**

Despite regular contact with the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, Output 4 has experienced significant problems linked to Ethiopia's Access Benefit Sharing procedures. UoH has contacted the UK's Competent National Authority and other agencies to explore alternatives. We believe we now have two viable alternative options for analysis of the seeds. The main impact will be exploration of potential cosmetic product lines for future development. It is unlikely that this will be achieved. But, if the seeds' properties have commercial potential then this can be explored post-project so could still help reduce poverty.

High rainfall negatively affected honey production, but high prices acted as a counterbalance.

**2b. Please outline any specific issues which your project has encountered as a result of Covid-19. Where you have adapted your project activities in response to the pandemic, please briefly outline how you have done so here. Explain what residual impact there**

**may be on your project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.**

C-19 has had far reaching impacts. Travel restrictions meant training sessions and product quality assessments by private sector partners suffered delays of up to 8 months, with knock-on effects such as seasonal product availability for use in training. Market prices have suffered for all products except honey. Community participation has been weaker as a result of effects on families, with schools, universities, businesses and government closed or restricted for 3-9 months. Products have had to be stored for longer than is desirable, sometimes in people's homes. Scheduled training and support has been less frequent than envisaged and dependent upon availability and restrictions. Activities have been consistently rescheduled where possible and our support has continued to be provided through internet alone. Support for C-19 equipment has been requested by government and provided by the project, as have salary sacrifices.

**2c. 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

Formal change request submitted: Yes

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes

**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. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.**

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

There are contingency plans in place, e.g. in the event that we cannot analyse the Luya seeds. We will continue to update LTSI of progress against this output and others if they emerge.

We expect to make further progress against all outputs by the project end, but we do not expect to see the gains in household income that had initially been envisaged. This is due to the factors outlined above, most of which relate to C-19 restrictions and related consequences.

**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 can be discussed in this report but should also be raised with LTS International through a Change Request. Please DO NOT send these in the same email.**

Please send your **completed report by email** to [Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk](mailto: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: 25-001 Darwin Half Year Report**