

## Darwin Initiative/D+ Project Half Year Report (due 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019)

<b>Project reference</b>	25-019
<b>Project title</b>	Enabling sustainable, profitable and equitable community-based forest management in Tanzania
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	Tanzania
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Mpingo Conservation and Development Initiative (MCDI) Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH) Kilwa Women Paralegal Unit (KIWOPAU) WWF Tanzania Country Office Allegheny College UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC)
<b>Project leader</b>	Antje Ahrends
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR3)</b>	HYR2
<b>Project website/blog/social media etc.</b>	<p><b>Dedicated project webpage:</b></p> <p><a href="https://www.rbge.org.uk/science-and-conservation/genetics-and-conservation/global-environmental-change/forest-conservation-in-tanzania/darwin/">https://www.rbge.org.uk/science-and-conservation/genetics-and-conservation/global-environmental-change/forest-conservation-in-tanzania/darwin/</a></p> <p><b>Tweets:</b></p> <p><a href="https://twitter.com/nicolegrosscamp/status/1154687427296026624">https://twitter.com/nicolegrosscamp/status/1154687427296026624</a></p> <p><a href="https://twitter.com/nicolegrosscamp/status/1152490283705262080">https://twitter.com/nicolegrosscamp/status/1152490283705262080</a></p> <p><a href="https://twitter.com/nicolegrosscamp/status/1152488355021709312">https://twitter.com/nicolegrosscamp/status/1152488355021709312</a></p> <p><a href="https://twitter.com/nicolegrosscamp/status/1151425016183119872">https://twitter.com/nicolegrosscamp/status/1151425016183119872</a></p>

**1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – 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).**

Progress is in accordance with the agreed project timetable (with the exception of a small delay on the forest surveys, see below). Specifically, over the last 6 months we:

- **Completed all 14 baseline village surveys and subsequent Focus Group Discussions.** Ten baseline village surveys had already been done before April, i.e. over the last six months we undertook four more baseline village surveys, analysed the data, and then discussed and disseminated the results in the form of Focus Group Discussions

(in all 14 villages). The baseline survey data were also summarised in a poster (English and Kiswahili), which was made available to the respective villages and the local Government Authority. The data suggest that CBFM – in its current form - has both positive and negative impacts on villagers. For example, CBFM households have more often access to facilities such as solar electricity, less debt, a greater sense of collaboration within the village, and a higher sense of hope. However, they also experience greater problems with animal crop raiding. At the community level CBFM villages have better governance, but (gender) equity is still a major issue. The data from the Focus Group Discussions have not yet been formally analysed. This will be done in the second half of Y2, and both surveys will feed into recommendations for CBFM guidelines.

- **Completed one participatory videos** and are currently in the process of screening the second one. All eight videos are on track to be completed before the end of Y2.
- **Entered data for surveys in 12 forest.** The remaining sites (2 CBFM and 5 government reserves) will be surveyed in the second half of Y2. This constitutes a small delay (due to adverse weather) and a change request has been submitted.

RBGE has teamed up with the University of Edinburgh, who will contribute remotely sensed (L-band radar) maps of biomass change to the project. We aim to compare our ground-survey data with these maps to assess the extent to which remote sensing can be used to monitor forest degradation in coastal Tanzania. In addition, a PhD student from the University of Edinburgh completed an internship with RBGE, during which he compiled and – where possible – cleaned boundaries for all available GIS data for community managed forests in Tanzania. The areas managed with the help of MCDI all have accurate GIS boundary data, but the availability of forest GIS data in wider Tanzania continues to be patchy. Thanks to the work of the student we now have a ‘top copy’ dataset and a better understanding of the gaps. Recommendations for filling these will be part of the project outputs.

- **Entered the data collected as part of the gender training in villages.** As part of the visits (so far completed in 10 villages; remaining four villages are being visited right now) data has been collected on perceptions on gender issues (in the form of 20 questions) before and after the training. These data offer helpful insights into how perceptions are shaped by factors such as wealth and education and the impact of the intervention. The data will primarily be used to formulate recommendations – but aside from that they may form a good basis for an MSc project (currently advertised at RBGE). Four more villages will be visited in Y2.
- **Undertook capacity building with District Officers and decision makers.** In light of the recent changes in government attitudes towards CBFM (see 2a) the project has put a lot of emphasis on enhancing knowledge and awareness of the benefits of CBFM. Since April MCDI conducted training with the Kilwa District Council Management Team (28 participants), the District Full Council (104 participants), and the District Security Committee (20 participants). Specific areas covered in the workshops included the legal and policy framework for CBFM, the CBFM implementation process, success stories, lessons learnt, the link between CBFM and central government development priorities, and the contribution of CBFM to revenue generation. MCDI has been able to secure critical support for CBFM from the Full District Council. For more details see footnote<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> A first training session was held with the Kilwa District Council Management Team, who play a key role in shaping decisions made by the District Full Council (the main decision making body at local Government Authority level). This was then followed by a full-day workshop with the Full Council, who in turn also influence decision making at the national level. The previously trained District Council Management Team acted as facilitators. Important decisions reached at this meeting included that (1) the 5% of CBFM revenues that go to local government will be reinvested into CBFM, (2) there will be greater transparency on how this money is invested (through quarterly reports produced by the District Forest Officer), (3) CBFM will be actively promoted by the District, (4) MCDI continues to collect 5% of CBFM revenues with a view on making operations less donor dependent and more financially sustainable, and (5) regular meetings will be held to update the Full District Council on CBFM progress. These recommendations are now being prepared by the Council Management Team for endorsement and signing by the Full Council. The Councils decision will be

Given the importance of reaching out to decision makers sooner rather than later (as highlighted in the Annual Review) RBGE decided to contribute £3k of matched funding to enable MCDI to put more emphasis on liaising with national level decision makers. MCDI is expecting to engage at least 25 members of the Parliament Standing Committee on Natural Resources and Environment, three Ministers and ten key Senior Directors in discussions on CBFM and the current forest policy environment in Y2. MCDI is also collaborating with other NGOs on these national issues (notably, WWF, the Tanzanian Forest Conservation Group and MJUMITA – as recommended in the Annual Review. In May a meeting was held between representatives of the Forest and Beekeeping Division, the Tanzanian Forestry Service, the President’s Office and Regional, Local Authorities and the respective NGOs. This was to discuss concerns around Government Notice 417 (see 2a) and to propose workable solutions that would minimise any potential impact on the smooth implementation of CBFM. The participants agreed on a set of recommendations to national government, including the need for more frequent District Harvesting Committee meetings, and permission for District Commissioners to hold extraordinary meetings that do not require permission from the Chief Executive of the Tanzanian Forestry Service.

- **Provided governance/financial management training for 10 villages.** The training focussed on the preparation of CBFM work plans and budgets, and addressed any relevant capacity gaps. These differed between villages and the training was tailored to the respective needs on a village-by-village basis (following discussions with village representatives). Some villages were already seeing a very smooth implementation of CBFM, while others lacked the capacity to produce budgets and/or struggled with governance issues such a lack of clarity around decision making processes.

**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.**

The National Government has passed a notice in May (GN 417), which stipulates that any timber harvesting in CBFM areas requires permission by the respective District Harvesting Committee. Previously, harvesting decisions only required village level approval (Village Natural Resources Committee). As detailed above, MCDI have worked with relevant national government bodies and other NGOs to find workable solutions that would minimise any potential impact of this Government Notice on the implementation of CBFM.

The Government Notice reflects a general fear amongst decision makers that communities lack capacity to manage forests. This has led to aspirations to exert greater central control over forest management, which constitutes a change in policy direction (Tanzania has a long standing history of decentralising forest management). This attitude change partly arises as a consequence of a lack of rigorous evidence on the impact of CBFM on forests and communities. The project will continue to produce the needed evidence and to disseminate it to relevant decision making bodies. As advised in the Annual Review, the project is putting a stronger emphasis on addressing these new ‘macro-level’ problems, and RBGE contributes an extra matched funding of £ to facilitate this. In addition to this we requested a change (formal request submitted): we had originally planned to undertake ward and district level training with government officials in three districts in Y2, and to reach out to national level decision makers in

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submitted to relevant ministries at national level and other key stakeholders, and MCDI will engage with these national level stakeholders. Another meeting was held with the Kilwa District Security Committee (responsible inter alia for matters related to illegal logging). This committee is chaired by the District Commissioner, who also chairs the District Harvesting Committee (responsible for issuing harvesting licences to CBFM villages). These contacts are very relevant with a view on securing smooth future working procedures for CBFM (see 2a). All workshops highlighted that most participants knew of CBFM but lacked understanding of its benefits, and its contribution to the National Government development agenda and revenue generation.

Y3 (in the form of two events). We believe that the project's resources may be better spent at the national level, i.e. instead of conducting workshops in two more districts we request being able to use that budget for engaging decision makers at national level.

While the above changes are of some concern for the project, and while there is a general fear amongst NGOs involved in CBFM that GN 417 may just be the start of a series of policy changes that reduce community rights over forests, there are also encouraging signals. For instance, the government is currently in the process of printing new CBFM books for reporting and issuing permits, and formulated new guidelines for the preparation of management plans for natural forests, including for forests under CBFM. It would be extremely difficult, and seems very unlikely, that there will be a transfer of ownership of CBFM areas to government.

Another issue affecting the project is a new government stipulation that all NGO activities in villages need to be accompanied by government officials, with the costs being carried by the NGO. This has some significant financial implications and this is another reason for the extra matched funding contributed by RBGE.

**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: No

Formal change request submitted: Yes

Received confirmation of change acceptance 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 R25 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 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: 25-035 Darwin Half Year Report**