



**Darwin Initiative/D+ Project
Half Year Report
(due 31st October 2019)**

Project reference	25-029
Project title	Rehabilitation of the ecosystem of the Park W landscape
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Niger
Lead organisation	TREE AID
Partner(s)	COGEZOH
Project leader	Aboubacar Gadage
Report date and number (e.g. HYR3)	31st October 2019, HYR2
Project website/blog/social media etc.	Website: https://www.treeaid.org.uk http://nigerexpress.info/2019/08/08/niger-tree-aid-lance-un-programme-plantons-utile-une-famille-un-bosquet/ Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/TREEAID/ twitter account : @TREEAID

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).

The project has made good progress against the planned outputs. Below is a summary of progress against the agreed work plan (April to September):

Output 1 Local communities in 12 villages in the peripheral area of the park W have their capacities strengthened in sustainable forest management

1.3 Update land use maps of the Tamou Faunal Reserve

Due to security concerns and restricted access to the project area, the mapping exercise did not take place (please see section 2a). A terms of reference has been drafted and a local (in-country) GIS expert will be recruited to conduct the land mapping exercise by the end of 2019.

1.4 Development of 12 local conventions and one management plan for the Tamou Faunal Reserve based on the updated land use maps.

Key stakeholders including administrative authorities, Park W management and community members attended 12 village assemblies and two inter-village meetings. The focus was to raise awareness on the laws that govern the park, explain how communities can play a role in protecting the reserve, and identifying natural resources of high interest that may lead to conflict. This process, together with the finalised mapping exercise (1.3), will feed directly into the development of 12 local conventions. We will instruct a legal consultant to support us to do this.

To develop a management plan, it has become evident that the best approach is to use the existing Park W Reserve Management Plan. Specific sections that are relevant for the project will be identified and built on to complement the existing plan. This will offer a more effective use of funding. We will work with a consultant to finalise this by the end of year 2.

1.7 Training of the population on Soil and Water Conservation Techniques (SWC) and Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) techniques.

In April, training on SWC and ANR techniques took place in six villages. There were two phases; theoretical and practical, with 313 people (48% women) attending the theoretical training which included a documentary screening on sustainable land management¹, and 293 people (43% women) participating in practical demonstrations. Furthermore, we supported communities with equipment including shovels, cutlass, rope and compass.

We are pleased to report that we have exceeded the target of 600 farmers trained, with 770 people receiving training on at least five SWC such as stone bund, zai pit, half moon, ANR, mulching and composting. In November, an evaluation will be conducted to determine if the techniques have been adopted on their land.

1.9 Establishment of 3 nurseries and training of 9 nursery staff

Of the 20,000 seedlings raised across the three nurseries in year one, due to extended exposure to the sun light, many seedlings died. We conducted replanting schemes, but still less than 15,000 reached the stage of plantation in August. More training will be conducted in preparation for the planting next year, in order to reduce losses.

1.10 Delineation of 25 ha of pastureland

The identification of 25 ha of pasture and 25 ha of degraded land within the Tamou Reserve took place in June and July.

1.11 Rehabilitation and enrichment of the 25 ha degraded by the communities

In September, 25 ha of pasture land across three villages was weeded through a cash-for-work programme. During a period of food scarcity, 757 households (1,386 people) worked between 3-5 days for cash, enabling them to purchase food before the arrival of their harvest. The rehabilitation of the 25 ha of degraded land will continue in the three other villages next semester.

1.12 Plantation of indigenous nutritional tree species on farm land

Planting of indigenous trees on private farmland occurred in Djagoga on 1st August. Under the theme: *'Plant wisely: one household one grove'*, 320 households benefited from 8,000 food trees including baobab and moringa to plant on their farm. A local filmmaker captured footage of the event and this was aired on national TV.

Output 2 Developed partnership between Park W management authorities and local communities in order to protect the biodiversity of the WTBR/Niger

2.6 Organisation of awareness raising campaigns at the village level in the project area on wildlife behaviour and strategies to prevent Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC).

An awareness campaign on wildlife behaviour and strategies to prevent HWC took place in 12 villages. In total 1,981 people (40% women) attended. The event included a documentary film screening on the subject and a discussion on the strategies to prevent HWC.

2.8 Establishment of demonstration plots for physical protection techniques against HWC.

Following training on HWC prevention initiatives, 80 households have adopted the following techniques; six 'bomas' enclosures, which include three levels of protection; dead hedge, surrounded by a live hedge and then a wire mesh belt; 63 simple 'bomas' comprising of dead wood, hedge or thorny branches, and 11 households have guard dogs. In addition, 472 people have put up scarecrows to protect their crops. In Gosso, chilli pepper and beehives were used to deter wildlife intrusion.

2.9 Support for the proper functioning of the network of local informants

Bicycles have been provided to 24 local informants to enable them to travel and monitor activity around the reserve. Local informants have been successfully reporting and recording illegal activities and wildlife intrusion (please refer to Annex 1).

Output 3 Supporting local economic development through the establishment 10 VTEs based on sustainable forest product value chains

¹ by William Critchley of VU University of Amsterdam
Half Year Report Template 2019

3.2 Follow up on the 10 VTEs established and distribution of equipment/material

We have experienced some challenges and delays with this component of the project. As mentioned in the annual report, the dedicated COGEZOH member of staff leading on this activity left the project. The plan was that they would train up another member of staff to take it forward, but unfortunately, their capacity has not been as strong and this had an impact on our ability to deliver.

In September 2019 TREE AID started a new project funded by the Swedish Postcode Lottery in the periphery of Park W. This project will also establish and train VTE groups, so we have decided to combine the planned MA&D training, with a refresher training for staff in this project (since some staff have attended past training). Next steps include contracting a specialist to conduct the MA&D training for project staff, and then training members of the VTEs on phase 3 & 4 of the MA&D. As part of this, VTE members will be supported to develop and finalise their Enterprise Development Plans and start-up their small businesses. TREE AID will ensure that the necessary resource is available to ensure this training and support to VTEs can take place before the end of year 2.

Despite the challenges, members of the 10 established VTEs have shared their knowledge with 1,311 people from wider groups in the community.

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 security situation remains a challenge. Terrorist groups have sought to claim ownership of parts of the Park W forest, so many project activities had to stop. The impact of the security situation has been mitigated by working with local field staff who have been able to continue with activities. These staff are embedded in the local context and are less 'visible' than non-locals, which is crucial when operating in this context. The Government has issued guidance to protect staff such as not having organisational logos on vehicles, that staff declare their presence in Park W at the local police station and recommends that INGO staff be escorted whilst on duty in the region. With continued monitoring and adherence to Government advice, we are confident that we will progress with project activities and meet the milestones set out in the plan over the coming months.

The capacity of some field staff in terms of the collection of information and report writing was weak. This has resulted in some delays and issues in receiving accurate data. To respond, we have recruited staff with a higher level of education. This has not affected the budget as we have reduced the number of facilitators from 4 to 2.

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:	No
Received confirmation of change acceptance	N/A

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. 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**