

Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus Half Year Report

Note: If there is any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website, please ensure you clearly highlight this.

Submission Deadline: 31st October 2023

Project reference	28-002
Project title	Pioneering sustainable grazing for plants and livelihoods in Cape Verde
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Cabo Verde
Lead partner	Fauna & Flora
Partner(s)	Biflores, Municipality of Brava, Community Association of Fajã d'Água, National Agricultural Research and Development Institute (INIDA)
Project leader	<i>Sara Calçada</i>
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	<i>HYR3</i>
Project website/blog/social media	www.fauna-flora.org

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

Steering group meetings – Several meetings were held with the steering group Apr-Sept, including a participatory workshop was held over 3 days in April to review the IUCN's grazing management plan development strategy and incorporate its guidance into the development of Brava's grazing management plan. 35 people attended, including representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MAA), Brava municipality, and livestock keepers. Biflores has also been working to secure the re-establishment of a local cooperative dedicated to the transformation of goats' and cows' milk products, supported through a public-private partnership with the MAA. This forms an important part of ensuring project benefits reach women on Brava, who are heavily involved in processing marketable products from milk.

Sustainable grazing management plan – With input from the steering group, the island-wide draft management plan outline has been built on, with previously agreed sections further developed to include specific information and planned content. The latest version was sent to Fauna & Flora's Agriculture Programme Manager in September to provide feedback and guidance prior to further collaborative drafting and populating of the plan.

Outreach and capacity-building – Once again, Biflores participated in Brava's Agronomy Fair in June, where project team members communicated the organisation's work and the importance of Brava's endemic plants to local people and promoted opportunities for community participation in projects, as well as giving practical demonstrations of DIY techniques for making mineral blocks for goats, fodder cultivation, and silage production.

Biflores supported livestock keepers in setting up forage cultivation plots before the rainy season to increase fodder availability for the coming dry season. Harvesting and participatory workshops for silage production are scheduled for October/November.

Livestock management – The construction of a corral in Mato (a small community in Brava’s interior) was begun in April, with completion anticipated in December following delays in procuring construction materials.

BeSafe’s Zootechnician, Cristina Rodrigues, delivered training on livestock nutritional health and cost-effective dietary supplementation for Biflores staff, MAA technicians, and local livestock keepers over six days in May and June (please see Annex 2 for the report with photos and content). In September, Biflores co-developed a plan with BeSafe for delivery of animal welfare and veterinary care training scheduled for November 2023.

Output 2

Data collection and mapping has continued, including maps of fodder cultivation on Brava and records of harvest yields, as well as metrics on soil erosion, water retention, invasive species presence, GPS-based goat grazing patterns, and botanical surveys and vegetation monitoring conducted at both the pilot site and additional locations around the island to permit data comparison and input into the island-wide draft management plan.

Output 3

Engagement with national-level stakeholders – Project leader Vani Furtado travelled to various islands to present this project’s work to date to stakeholders including MAA technicians and representatives, local municipality staff, NGO staff, and livestock keepers, on Fogo (April), Boa Vista (May), and Assomada and São Domingos on Santiago (August & September).

2. 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.

- Heavy rainfall and landslides around Biflores’ HQ, project communities, & monitoring sites (Aug-Sept 23) resulted in suspension of some work due to clean-up efforts, inaccessibility of project sites and communities, and availability of local government contacts.
- Transport between sites/communities is challenging (Biflores is looking to replace their vehicle but logistical issues are also related to island infrastructure).
- Staff recruitment – the absence of a project assistant from February-June made it difficult to collect data on schedule.

Impact: delays; disruption to consistent data collection; cost increase (vehicle hire)

- Ongoing suspension of the cooperative’s activities resulting from bureaucratic delays and inter-personal conflicts between stakeholders, and continued challenges encouraging female stakeholder engagement.

Impact: challenging to achieve benefits for broader population, incl. women, but lessons have been learned and Biflores is already taking steps to address these problems.

- Procurement of materials remains a challenge due to Brava’s remoteness, poor infrastructure and limited connections to the rest of the country / international manufacturers (both in terms of time and expense). e.g. procuring barrels to be used for silage storage, plastic tarpaulins for fodder processing, deparasiting medicines for cattle breeders, and corral construction materials.

Impact: delays to timetable/delivery but the Change Request for an extension has helped to ensure the delays don’t prevent the delivery of these elements of the project.

3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with NIRAS: Yes

Formal Change Request submitted: Yes

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes

Change request reference if known: CR23-053

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023)

Actual spend: ██████████

4b. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this financial year (ending 31 March 2024)?

Yes No Estimated underspend: ██████████

4c. 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 re-budget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a re-budget 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.

NB: if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.

5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

We appreciated feedback points 7 and 11 on women's involvement and poverty reduction. The socioeconomic context is more complex than we were able to represent in the report and this is something Biflores, with support from Fauna & Flora, is looking to address more proactively.

We also note Darwin's feedback querying the degree of representation offered by seeking input from 40 people for the grazing management plan during Year 2's activities, citing this as a small proportion of Brava's 6000 inhabitants. While we expect all of Brava's inhabitants to benefit in the long-term from the implementation of the grazing management plans and positive environmental impacts of this project, a very small proportion of the island's population is directly involved in livestock grazing. Similarly, while only two corrals were constructed in the pilot site of Fajã d'Água last year, the goats consequently prevented from free grazing represent a significant proportion of livestock kept in that community.

If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response, or if your Annual Report Review asked you to provide a response with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

All new projects (excluding Darwin Plus Fellowships and IWT Challenge Fund Evidence projects) should submit their Risk Register with this report if they have not already done so.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also be raised with NIRAS through a Change Request. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email.****

Please send your **completed report by email** to BCF-Reports@niras.com. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number, followed by the specific fund in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 29-001 Darwin Initiative Half Year Report**