

## 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: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022**

<b>Project reference</b>	29-021
<b>Project title</b>	More bees: Supporting agrobiodiversity and livelihoods in Amhara, Ethiopia
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	Ethiopia
<b>Lead partner</b>	Bees for Development
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Bees for Development Ethiopia, Pesticide Action Nexus Ethiopia, Pesticide Action Network UK, Bahir Dar University
<b>Project leader</b>	Janet Lowore
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)</b>	HYR1
<b>Project website/blog/social media</b>	<a href="#">More Bees: Supporting Agrobiodiversity and Livelihoods in Amhara - Bees for Development</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).**

**Project Initiation:** The Project started on 1 June 2022. Project launch workshops were conducted at regional level (12 August) and two project districts level (2 & 3 Sept). Government department stakeholders including signatory organization heads, directorates, experts and kebele level development agents, and the Project kebele administration heads attended the launch workshops. All participants understood the goal, outcome, outputs, activities, implementation approaches and budget of the project and they were inspired with the overall Project concept to address the problems related overuse of pesticides. Prior to these launch workshops all documentation was submitted to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and other necessary government departments, and received approval. This was necessary before work would begin.

**Website pages:** Project news is being shared on Bees for Development's website (see above for link to recent news item). Bees for Development Ethiopia's own independent website (new) will also carry Project news in future.

**Training:** Janet Lowore, BfD UK, Programme Manager and More Bees project leader; Mike Edwards, pollinating insects' specialist; and Alexander Stuart, PAN-UK Agroecology technical advisor visited the project areas in Sept/Oct. During this visit training materials on pollinators and agroecology were developed. Accordingly, trainings related to output 1: agroecosystem and pollination have been provided to experts, kebele level development agents and farmers. The trainees understood the concept of agroecosystem, ecosystem services, type of insects and their benefits in pollination and crop pest management. Trainings related to output 2: Integrated Pest management (IPM) are bit delayed since the main rain started one month late from the usual period. However, preparatory actions such as IPM training manual development, Farmers Field Schools (FFS) protocol development and insect identification guide preparation for pollinators, beneficial insects and insect pest are all underway and in prep. Experts and

farmers IPM trainings and actual FFS trials set-up will be conducted from 3<sup>rd</sup> week of October to 1<sup>st</sup> week of November 2022.

**Baseline survey:** Project beneficiaries selection was completed in September, following refined and agreed criteria. The tools for baseline data collection have been prepared and household-based baseline data collection has been done as per established indicators of the project log-frame. In addition, tools developed for gender analysis and the actual analysis work will be conducted in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter. Baseline data has been 285 farmers.

**Staff appointment:** Two full-time field workers have been appointed. They will play a significant role in the overall coordination at field level, provision of technical support, Farmer Field School oversight and delivery and supervision at kebele level.

**Vehicle and Equipment:** To procure a Pick-up 4 X 4 double cab vehicle, supplier identified, agreement signed with the supplier and payment effected. Vehicle delivery is on progress. Moreover, two laptops, one digital camera, 2 motor-cycles and 2 sets of furniture have been procured and are in use.

**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.**

We encountered some problems. These include (1) **late start** of the main rain (one month late) and this delayed the start of the IPM training and FFS establishment (2) declining value of the pound against Ethiopian Birr and (3) high inflation of costs related to fuel, motorcycle, and training materials – these two issues **are affecting our budget**. (4) we also experienced a delay in full sign-off of all Project documentation by Ethiopian government offices and this impacted on the **timing** of Output 3 (beekeeping training).

Trainings related to output 2: Integrated Pest management (IPM) are a bit delayed since the main rain started one month late from the usual period and full agreement signing-off was delayed by a month. However, the necessary preparatory actions are now complete. With the beekeeping output – output 3 – we are behind schedule and are in the process of re-configuring the activities to ensure that we achieve the results. The Project started on 1 June 2022 and whilst we worked hard to submit all project documentation to the relevant government offices in Ethiopia – **we did not achieve full sign-off until 11 July 2022**. This caused delay as we are not permitted to begin work officially on the Project until full sign-off and the first tasks were necessarily the familiarisation workshops (see above). By the time we were ready to start the beekeeping work the rains had started and it was not the right season to start beekeeping work for new beekeepers. However, trainings on dearth period management and prevention on insecticide effect on bee colonies and forage development will be given for existing beekeepers. Despite the IPM and beekeeping activities have not been fully implemented in the last 4 months, it will be fully managed in the next 6 months' timetable of Project activities. The declining value of the GBP and high inflation cost will affect the cost of implementation of some Project activities. Hence, there will be slight change on the quantity of activity and associated budget. The issues – concerning some budget changes and re-configuration of beekeeping component timing – will be communicated with NIRAS-LTS in a formal change request which will be submitted shortly.

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

Discussed with NIRAS-LTS: Yes

Formal Change Request submitted: Not yet (in prep)

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No

Change request reference if known:

**4a. 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: £

**4b. 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.**

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

Not at this time. No.

**If you are a new project and you received feedback comments that requested a response (including the submission of your risk register), 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.**

**Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also** be raised with NIRAS-LTS International 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](mailto: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**