

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2013)

Project Ref No	20-020
Project Title	Madagascar Agroforestry Livelihoods Project
Country(ies)	Madagascar
Lead Organisation	Royal Botanic Gardens Kew
Collaborator(s)	Silo National des Graines Forestières (SNGF) Feedback Madagascar and Ny Tanintsika (FBMNT)
Project Leader	Stuart Cable
Report date and number (eg HYR3)	22/11/13 HYR1
Project website	http://www.kew.org/science-research-data/directory/projects/Madagascar-Sustainable-Livelihoods-Project.htm (interim)

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).

The first 6 months was devoted to project building: forming a good working relationship between the partners, building management structures between and within the partners and training project staff, particularly the FBMNT extension workers.

Notable activities:

- 1) first project initiation workshop
- 2) Itremo: first training for communities on *tapia* forest restoration and agroforestry
- 3) Itremo: construction of tree nurseries and seed collection of *tapia*
- 4) COFAV: first training for communities on agroforestry
- 5) COFAV: project planning with community associations (COBAs)

We have acquired remote sensing images for Itremo and are liaising with Conservation International for COFAV (they are about to undertake their 5-yearly forest survey so can provide the baseline images for our project). The monitoring methodology is not decided yet, but it is likely that we will use remote methods (lower resolution satellite images and/or a drone) to save on cost and logistical issues for community teams, especially covering restoration sites.

We have begun discussions with Muji to supply Indigo dye from Itremo and Symrise AG to supply organic vanilla and essential oils from COFAV. Both require development of technical capacity with the communities, but Symrise AG in particular is keen to facilitate development and help out with expertise from their vanilla operation in NE Madagascar. We are optimistic that both Muji and Symrise AG will become commercial partners to the project/communities.

Unexpectedly, we have discovered that *Inga edulis* was introduced to Madagascar in the 1990s and is grown in the project area and maybe suitable at both sites. It is quicker growing than most native species and is grown for its edible seeds. We are investigating whether it is exhibiting any potential to become invasive, but have bought seeds for nursery propagation.

Against the baseline timetable we have started all Q1-2 activities, except for ground surveys at COFAV and analysis of remote sensing data. We have compiled species lists from herbarium collections, but the area is poorly known. The training of communities will be a longer process than in the timetable and is likely to be an ongoing process throughout the project. Two communities in COFAV have been dropped as we could not come to an agreement over payments for running the tree nurseries. Negotiations have started with two new communities.

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments 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 political uncertainty and deteriorating security have not had a significant impact so far, but we are concerned that the work in Itremo may be affected at some point. The region has a history of small-scale cattle rustling, but recently the attacks on communities have been by larger armed gangs and have targeted personal property as well as cattle. The first round of the presidential elections on the 25 October was peaceful, but inconclusive, and a second round is scheduled for 20 December. Even if the elections prove successful and international aid resumes, it may be sometime before security improves. We are in close contact with the new UK Embassy in Antananarivo as well as local authorities in the Itremo region.

Salary costs are higher than anticipated for the FBMNT team, including the community technicians, as we underestimated the scale of support need for the 20 COFAV communities. We hope to offset this with reduced salary costs for KMCC through matched contributions. Also, the first agroforester recruited to the KMCC team resigned immediately due to being successful in a prior grant application with the University of Antananarivo. We are about to appoint someone else subject to suitable references, so have saved on salary costs for year 1.

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 expect to have any significant (eg more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes No

3b. If yes, and you wish to request a carryforward of funds, this should be done as soon as possible through the formal Change Request process. However, it would help Defra manage Darwin funds more efficiently if you could give an indication now of how much you expect this request might be for.

Estimated carry forward request: £

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

No

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 or budget should not be discussed in this report but raised with LTS International through a Change Request.

Please send your **completed report by email** to Eilidh Young at Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk. The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message eg Subject: 17-075 Darwin Half Year Report**