



**Darwin Initiative Main/Post/D+ Project  
Half Year Report  
(due 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018)**

<b>Project reference</b>	23-025
<b>Project title</b>	Reducing environmental degradation through sustainable fuel interventions in Afghanistan
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	Afghanistan
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh
<b>Partner(s)</b>	ECO-A, UN Environment
<b>Project leader</b>	Sophie Neale
<b>Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)</b>	HYR3
<b>Project website/blog/social media etc.</b>	<a href="http://afghanistan.cmep.org.uk/">http://afghanistan.cmep.org.uk/</a>

**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).**

Activity 1.1 Further data on the collection and use of fuel wood is ongoing, with final pre-winter data collection planned for November and December, with repeat post-winter data collection in March 2019. Additional species have been identified in Y3 through biodiversity monitoring.

Activity 1.2 Bamyán University students – in greater number during 2018 – have gathered data at monitoring sites during 2018. Surveys suggest that additional species are being recorded compared to Y2, but it is not yet known if these are due to a reduction in collection intensity (unlikely) or simply year by year variation. Capacity and awareness has been further developed in local students.

Activity 1.3 Removed from log frame.

Activity 1.4 Identification tools developed will be in discussion with Bamyán University about their curriculum requirements and ongoing monitoring of plants in various ways. Photographs have been largely collated and identified and will form the basis of a basic tool and a training exercise for future capacity development and education both at Bamyán University and beyond. Development of this tool would not be possible without collection of information and images, during the project.

Activity 1.5 Not yet applicable as vegetation and species data still coming in.

Activity 2.1 All inception workshops completed in Y1. Final meeting in 2019 will bring together all monitoring against M&E framework and international convention goals, in collaboration with project partners.

Activity 2.2 Training in field monitoring delivered in Y2 and Y3 to students at Bamyán University. Workshops in sustainable use awareness delivered to communities in Y1 and will be replicated in 2019 using lessons learned and gaining community feedback.

Activity 2.3 Training in cookstove use delivered in Y1.

Activity 2.4 M&E training has been important with repeated visits to communities, and M&E has gone hand in hand with community and household interviews to ensure project progress and impact has been constantly in mind.

Activity 3.1 300 cookstoves installed in Y1.

Activity 3.2 Data collection on fuel collection and use has been ongoing throughout the last six months.

Activity 3.3 Community interviews in over 20 households have been conducted and repeated at regular intervals, including across 2018. Final interviews pre-winter and post-winter are planned and will be reviewed and analysed with project partners in 2019.

Activity 3.4 Indoor air quality has been assessed through (a) air quality monitors (see not appended to end of project – 5 of 6 monitors broken but enough information collected to give information on measured air quality and improvements) and (b) through interviews with households.

Activity 4.1 Poor air quality affects almost exclusively women and children, and community interviews have targeted women to establish the impact of project interventions and how these could be improved in the future.

The next months will see some detailed and depth analyses and examination of all data collected, and a final project impact and output workshop is timetabled for March 2019 (likely venue Nezahat Gokyigit Botanik Bahcesi, Istanbul (botanic garden offering opportunity for further capacity development alongside project output activities).

**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.**

There have been no major issues with the project over the last six months, as activities to monitor communities, biodiversity and fuel usage have been ongoing throughout the spring, summer and autumn. This has been despite the fact that one member of staff has been on maternity leave, and another travelled with his family to Mecca on pilgrimage. For cultural sensitivity, these activities were accepted and project management reflected any shortfalls locally. As a result, project activities were not significantly affected.

Planning for final awareness and education activities have been ongoing and are designed to be deliver in the final months of the project as some of the lessons learned from implementation become more apparent, allowing positive messages to be targeted and feedback from communities to be encouraged and acted upon.

**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: Yes

Formal change request submitted: No

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?**

None at this time.

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 R24 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 send your **completed report by email** to Eilidh Young at [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: 22-035 Darwin Half Year Report**