



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

Project reference	3780
Project title	Conserving critical forest biodiversity in Guinea through sustainable agricultural livelihoods
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Guinea
Lead organisation	Fauna & Flora International
Partner(s)	L'Institut de Recherche Agronomique de Guinée (IRAG) and Centre Forestier de N'Zérékoré (CFZ)
Project leader	<i>Laura Fox</i>
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	<i>31st October 2018 HRY2</i>
Project website/blog/social media etc.	<i>www.fauna-flora.org</i>

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).

Output 1:

1.2 Coordinate and implement joint composting training.

The sisters of Sainte Ursule are delivering a compost training to the market farmers. Collaboration will be required to harmonise their work with the work of IRAG, who are leading the market vegetable farmer groups most in need of this training.

1.3 Update assessment of seed savings groups, establish new groups & support existing ones.

IRAG has set up farmer groups specializing in agroforestry, market vegetables, rice, cassava and niebe (cowpea). In Irié a demonstration plot demonstrating the effective intercropping of several crops was established. For each group IRAG provides access to improved seed varieties under a participatory variety selection process (according to stated preference and need).

1.4 Deliver targeted training sessions with ongoing mentoring on topics relevant to participating communities. Offer both single-sex and mixed-sex groups to encourage participation by all.

Rice: The general objective of the training was to support 47 small farmers (35 women, 12 men) in the improvement of their seed production and rice cultivation techniques. Market Vegetables: this was the first training course that included (7) participants from the village of Avilissou). In total 18 farmers (12 women, 6 men) participated. Progress is on track given expected season fluctuation in attendance of agriculture training.

1.5 Update agriculture extension (training methods and topics) according to participant feedback.

Farmer field group sessions were organized in a participatory manner, and as a result, some sessions shifted time or day due to farmer feedback. During discussions in Avilissou, women requested support in processing ginger instead of cassava, while the niebe (cowpea) groups experienced major losses due to pests; IRAG is now providing support for both of these groups as requested.

1.6 Develop and deliver communication plan.

With FFI support, a youth theatre group from Sérédou (Club d'écoute) performed a play in all four villages in the local languages (Toma and Mandinga). The play was filmed in both languages, and DVDs were produced to be shown in video clubs in other villages within the Ziama region in Q3 and Q4. Discussions on potential future regional radio shows and round tables are planned for Q3.

1.7 Conduct Participatory Impact Assessment in 4 target villages to ascertain effectiveness of training sessions, monitor and update communications plan, and assess impact on wellbeing.

Planned for Q3 and Q4 in year 2.

1.8 Arrange and facilitate agricultural learning exchange visits with other Ziama communities.

Due to the delayed start last year, this activity has not yet begun.

Output 2:

2.1 Identify land in the transition zone for farmers and establish agreements for long term use.

This process was restarted in Avilissou in September 2018.

2.2 With target farmers, establish baseline condition of transition land, identify appropriate crops, select appropriate farming methods and prepare the land for sustainable use.

IRAG has set up one demonstration "ecosystem plot" with bananas, plantains, mucuna and groundnuts.

2.3 Establish gender disaggregated project baselines and implement annual monitoring.

Detailed discussions on how this data can be gathered are ongoing, as some beneficiaries fear negative reactions from CFZ if they come forward as 'illegal farmers'. A consensus has not yet been reached between all three partners.

2.4 Create participative design and implementation guidelines for agricultural transition plan.

IRAG and FFI will formalise recognized and operational producer groups.

2.5 Adaptive management via monitoring of farmers' perceptions of incentives and activities.

Facilitators have always tried to encourage and re-integrate farmers who do not participate in their group's activities, via both formal meetings and informal discussions. Standardised methods are not yet in place.

2.6 Develop locally appropriate trials for irrigation systems.

An irrigation system will be set up in the market vegetable plots in Q3.

2.7 Provide training on post-harvest storage loss for niebe (cowpeas), including distribution storage bags at reduced cost and development of independent local suppliers.

PICS bags have been purchased, a logistics plan exists and transportation from Ghana to Guinea is underway. Post-harvest storage training will be provided to farmers in Q3 and Q4.

2.9 Review potential post-harvest processing opportunities in the area.

Cassava and ginger were identified as the most promising crops for post-harvest processing. Training in the post-harvest processing of these crops will begin in Q3 and Q4.

2.10 Update mapping of seed exchange groups and support in scale-up.

IRAG will continue to introduce new crop varieties within villages, and will continue to train seed farmers and develop informal seed exchanges and sales between producers in each village.

2.11 Distribute improved seed varieties at a reduced cost, providing training of planting techniques for each seed variety and ensuring collection of seed for use the following year.

380 kg of niebe (cowpea) seed was distributed and training on planting provided to 40 beneficiaries (38 women, 2 men). Due to very low yields, the same farmers were supported with the distribution of 50kg of groundnut seed and training on planting. 1600kg of rice was distributed and training provided to 67 beneficiaries (41 women and 8 men). While cumulative sales of 1088 coffee seedlings, 336 pepper seedlings and 6 native tree seedlings have been recorded, most of the seedlings are still kept in the nurseries. The proceeds from the tree sales are being used by group members to create new nurseries.

2.12 Establish and train seed farmers to maintain access to improved varieties year on year.

Seed sales and exchange groups will be set up in addition to the existing producer groups in the villages.

2.13 Monitor annual yields of improved rice varieties distributed in transition zones.

Cultivated rice is being monitored, but not yet been harvested.

2.14 Establish trials in transition zone based on lessons learnt in FFI Elephant Survey report.

This activity is planned to start in November 2018.

2.15 Monitor crop loss and human wildlife conflict in transition zone.

This activity is planned to start in November 2018.

Output 3:

3.1 Development and implementation of bas fond control and exit plan.

This activity is planned to start in November 2018.

3.2 CFZ ranger staff conduct regular patrols of bas-fonds and attend bas-fond user's association meetings on a regular basis to update users and ensure dialogue with communities.

This activity is planned to start in November 2018.

3.3 Provide training to bas fond associations on the impact and safe use of herbicides/pesticides.

Training farmers in the safe and effective application of pesticides and herbicides is planned for the second half of the current campaign (2018-2019).

3.4 Baseline survey for water quality in bas fonds, with repeat survey in year four.

Output 4

4.1 Develop restoration plan for bas-fonds based on successful work by CFZ.

FFI received a first version from CFZ. The second version was requested to be more technical than socio-economic.

4.2 Develop baseline indicators depending on conditions found in bas-fonds areas to be restored.

Q3 and Q4

4.3 Implement and update restoration plan and scale up appropriate techniques at target sites.

Q3 and Q4

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.

Of 67 rice farmers receiving seed, 49 cultivated these seeds in the bas-fonds within the protected area. These actions highlighted the need to discuss project goals with the beneficiaries and the communities again in joint visits from FFI, IRAG and CFZ.

Despite considerably increased communication and continuous contact with the focal point from CFZ and FFI project staff, work done by CFZ continues to develop very slowly. It is possible that intended repetitions of CFZ-centred activities may be fewer than originally planned and we will assess this and any potential impact on project outcomes before the end of Y2. It does not impact the budget as CFZ activities are co-funded.

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 Yes/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?