



**Darwin Initiative/D+ Project  
Half Year Report  
(due 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019)**

<b>Project reference</b>	26-001
<b>Project title</b>	Community livelihood and capacity support for securing Zimbabwe's wetland biodiversity.
<b>Country(ies)/territory(ies)</b>	Zimbabwe
<b>Lead organisation</b>	BirdLife Zimbabwe
<b>Partner(s)</b>	Chikukwa Ecological Land Use Community Trust (CELUCT), Zimbabwe AIDS Prevention Project- Regai Dzive Shiri (ZAPP-RDS) Trust, Environmental Management Agency (EMA)
<b>Project leader</b>	<i>Togarasei Fakarayi</i>
<b>Report date and number (e.g. HYR3)</b>	<i>31 October 2019, HYR1</i>
<b>Project website/blog/social media etc.</b>	

**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).**

This project started on 1 June 2019. The report covers the period 1 June 2019 to 30 September 2019. A preparatory meeting conducted with two of the project partners in June 2019 discussed plans for implementing the project. This meeting held at BirdLife Zimbabwe (BLZ) offices was attended by ZAPP-RDS Trust and CELUCT. The partners got opportunity to know each other and interact. The Environmental Management Agency (EMA) could not make it that day. A separate meeting held with EMA in Harare in July 2019 discussed the implementation plan of the project. All project partners welcomed this project. Two follow-up meetings were held with ZAPP-RDS in July and August 2019 where the role of this organisation in the project, contractual and reporting requirements were discussed in detail. In August 2019 a meeting held with Samuel Chimbarara of CELUCT discussed in detail activity plan for CELUCT. Below are key deliverables during this reporting period;

Output 1

Mapping of key wetlands in core crane breeding and foraging areas in the Driefontein Grasslands was initiated in July 2019. This was done by a team contracted from the University of Zimbabwe (Geography and Environmental Science Department). An area covering a total of 58,802.61 hectares was mapped. A map was produced in August 2019 showing land cover categories of wetlands, grasslands, cultivated lands and forestry (Annex 1).

Consultative meeting held with the Chief Executive Officer of Gutu Rural District Council (RDC) in June 2019 discussed the components of this project and how it will contribute to biodiversity conservation and human livelihoods in the district. In the same month a separate meeting held with the District Administrator (Gutu District) raised awareness on this project. Both Gutu RDC and District Administrator's Office welcomed this project. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was developed and signed between BirdLife Zimbabwe and the local authority-Gutu RDC (Annex 2). BirdLife Zimbabwe will participate in District Environmental Committee meetings to facilitate sharing of progress of the project at district level. In August 2019, The Project Leader held a meeting with the District Environmental Officer (EMA) and the natural resources officer of

Gutu RDC. Details about this project were shared during this meeting including plans and approaches for engaging local communities to help reduce wetland cultivation. The natural resources officer of Gutu RDC (to be accompanied by EMA and BLZ) will visit wetland areas to have better understanding of the issues on the ground.

Different roles of men and women in biodiversity conservation and livelihood activities were identified during informal brief meetings held with the communities in August 2019 and September 2019. Both men and women are involved in agricultural activities (crop production in particular) which is currently the main source of income in the area, and responding to fires. However, a discussion with women revealed that women get involved in most of the income generating activities at household level but in most cases decisions are made by men although consultations with spouses are done. Men seem to make more decisions than women in the community. Information gathered reveals that village committees are dominated by men although there is women participation in most meetings. People living with disability and young people seem to be silent in decision making although they are recognised groups in the communities. However, this still needs further ascertained. Data on gender will continue to be collected and gender gaps identified addressed during the project.

In September 2019, BLZ and EMA discussed plans for conducting joint training in wetland and fire management. Since the fire season was coming close to the end it was agreed to start with fire management training. The fire management training was scheduled for October 2019.

A total of 150 fire beaters and 10 fire knapsacks were procured in September 2019 (Annex 3). These firefighting equipment await distribution during the fire management training scheduled for October 2019.

Ground surveys of cranes were carried out in August 2019 by a team of five people with two vehicles. The surveys were conducted in collaboration with EMA and the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority. Cranes are 'Specially Protected Bird Species' under the Parks and Wildlife Act of 1975 (amended in 1996). A total of 54 Wattled Cranes and 125 Grey Crowned Cranes were recorded (Annex 4a-c field photos). These comprised of 8 breeding pairs of Wattled Cranes, 1 Juvenile, 2 chicks, and flocks of 9, 10, and 15. The Grey Crowned Cranes comprised of 6 pairs and flocks of 50, 37, 13 and 12. Threats to sites were identified during these surveys. Also awareness on crane conservation was raised among villagers whom the team came across with during the ground surveys.

A project launch event conducted in Harare on 10 September 2019 raised awareness on this project. The project was officially launched by the Ministry of Environment, Tourism and Hospitality Industry (METHI). All project partners including BirdLife International attended this launch event. The four target communities (Shashe, Chinyaure, Markdale and Daviot) were represented at the launch by local community conservation group leaders. Other key stakeholders who attended included Gutu Rural District Council, and the District Administrator (Gutu District), Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority, and Forestry Commission (Annex 5-list of participants). The Deputy Director from the METHI thanked BLZ and its partners for this work. In his official speech the guest speaker expressed gratitude to BLZ work and indicated that although BLZ is an NGO they see this organisation as a desk in the ministry due to great impact on biodiversity work delivered by BLZ. He had confidence that this project will improve both biodiversity and community livelihood in Driefontein Grasslands contributing to achievement of the international conventions that include CBD and Ramsar and national biodiversity strategies in the country.

## Output 2

A socio-economic baseline survey conducted in Driefontein Grasslands in August 2019 established information on current household incomes. This survey was conducted in the four target communities. Data on vulnerable households and gender was also collected during the socio-economic baseline survey. Vulnerable households (with low incomes) identified include female and child headed households, household with people living with disability, elderly and sick people. This baseline was conducted through questionnaire surveys. Data was collected from a total of 161 households from the four target communities and a few household sampled from a nearby village (Annex 6 summary report, Annex 6a, 6b). Information gathered revealed monthly household incomes of less than USD75 for about 56% of the households. About 20% of the households have monthly income of less than USD25, and about 22% of the households

have monthly income of USD25-50. Subsistence crop production was identified as the main source of income in the area. During the baseline survey it was established that loss of cattle to a disease between 2018 and 2019 in the target communities exacerbate poverty. Most households lost their cattle which form part of their sources of incomes. Livestock also plays an important role in providing draught power for agriculture and putting fireguards. Loss of livestock therefore exposed villagers to limited resources available for their survival.

The first training on bee keeping facilitated by CELUCT was conducted in September 2019. The training conducted with Chinyaure Community was attended by a total of 95 people. These comprised of 53 women and 42 men.

**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.**

Procurement of materials for bee keeping, poultry houses and pig sty has not yet been done as planned in the project timeline. This was to allow bee keeping, poultry and pig production training to take place to help guide on the materials required. Plans are in place to buy these materials in the third quarter. This delay will have no impact on the budget and timetable of project activities.

One of the lessons learnt was that there is potential for knowledge sharing on livelihoods and biodiversity conservation across the target villages. Active participation in the project of the target villages has been impressive. The involved communities are being motivated by the alternative livelihoods to be implemented. They are realising the opportunities associated with biodiversity conservation.

**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 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?**

No