



## Darwin Initiative Extra Annual Report

To be completed with reference to the "Project Reporting Information Note":  
(<https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/resources/information-notes/>)

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum of 20 pages** in length, excluding annexes)

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### Darwin Initiative Project Information

Project reference	DAREX002
Project title	Ensuring the socio-ecological viability of High Atlas cultural landscapes
Country/ies	Morocco
Lead Partner	Global Diversity Foundation
Project partner(s)	Moroccan Biodiversity and Livelihoods Association (MBLA); University Mohammed VI Polytechnique (UM6P); Emerging Business Factory (EBF)
Darwin Initiative grant value	£949,269.00
Start/end dates of project	01 April 2022 - 31 March 2027
Reporting period (e.g. Apr 2023 – Mar 2024) and number (e.g. Annual Report 1, 2, 3)	Annual Report 2
Project Leader name	Gary [REDACTED]
Project website/blog/social media	<a href="https://global-diversity.org/hacl-programme/">https://global-diversity.org/hacl-programme/</a>
Report author(s) and date	Report authored by Tasnim [REDACTED], Aarti [REDACTED], Fatiha [REDACTED], Gary [REDACTED] with contributions from Rachid [REDACTED], and submitted on Friday 19 July 2024

### 1. Project summary

Amazigh communities of the Moroccan High Atlas mountains and beyond have been managing their environment for millennia, shaping these iconic landscapes - and being shaped by them - through traditional practices of conservation. Our applied research shows that traditional High Atlas practices – including wild harvesting of plant resources, cultivation in terraced agroecosystems and the Agdal system of transhumant grazing – sustain landscapes, maintain biodiversity and provide livelihood benefits for thousands of households.

The primary threat to maintaining these cultural landscapes and associated production systems is rural exodus coupled with the interrelated challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss. With limited opportunities for building business skills, earning revenues and gaining employment, women and youth are migrating to urban areas to seek a better life. This leads to abandonment of land and traditional practices, resulting in degradation of cultural landscapes and the biodiversity they harbour and erosion of the millennial knowledge that sustains them.

Over the course of a decade of work in the High Atlas, we have learned that the catalytic action needed is to provide new ways for High Atlas community members to develop revenue streams and other livelihood benefits that are compatible with managing cultural landscapes for both conservation and production ends. Recent changes in Moroccan national law – simplifying the requirements for creating cooperatives and strengthening their governance and transparency – has enabled women in particular to create socio-economic associations in rural areas that spearhead remunerative productive activities linked to regeneration of cultural landscapes.

Currently, diverse cooperatives that produce aromatic herbs, cheese, couscous, crafts, edible oils, natural cosmetics, nuts and many other goods in environmentally sustainable ways dot the High Atlas landscape. Based on community needs, our project sustains community-based regenerative practices; builds the skills of rural entrepreneurs; improves certification, labelling and packaging of local products; supports innovation of novel goods and services; and promotes digital entrepreneurship and platforms for effective marketing.

The aim of this project is to scale up our efforts as part of a larger programme, the High Atlas Cultural Landscapes Programme. We have long established conservation interventions in collaboration with Amazigh communities in Al-Haouz (Imegdale and Oukaimeden communes) and Azilal provinces (Ait M'Hamed and Zaouiat Ahensal communes). Our area of work is expanded to the length of the Atlas corridor from Imilchil to Agadir.

In response to the September 8th earthquake, the project has integrated an 18-month programme of relief support. With the additional support of the Darwin Initiative, GDF's earthquake relief strategy takes a livelihood centric approach that overlaps and reinforces the goals of the Darwin Extra project through livelihood support for agriculture and livestock keepers. The program also accompanies High Atlas communities across the axes of education, WASH, shelter, and coalition building with other post-disaster response initiatives. Please see our project map for an outline of the 7 hubs and specific communes supported in the ongoing earthquake relief support.

## **2. Project stakeholders/ partners**

Our programme builds on our long term collaboration with our partner, the Moroccan Biodiversity and Livelihoods Association (MBLA), a Moroccan NGO which was created in 2015 with sponsorship from GDF as part of a previous Darwin project. With MBLA, we expanded our work on regenerative approaches to conservation and cultural landscape management, including collaborating with community-led cooperatives and rural entrepreneurship. MBLA is actively involved in monitoring and evaluation of the project through their leadership on output 1 of the project and support across other areas of work.

The Higher School for Visual Arts in Marrakech, ESAV, partnered with us in the first year of the project. Together, we connected senior design students with cooperatives to support their branding and marketing strategies. This partnership came to an organic end as noted in our 2024 change request. We maintain a positive relationship with the School and look forward to future opportunities for collaboration.

The Emerging Business Factory, EBF, who are experts in entrepreneurship and project incubation, have been a strong ally as we work to support thriving rural economies. Their expertise supports the project in consumer research capacity building, digital ambassador training, creation of rural digital marketing agencies, mobile and other payment service provider options and digital entrepreneurship platforms. Our partnership with EBF was strengthened through our collaboration on monitoring, learning, and evaluation of earthquake relief initiatives through Atlas Recovery Connect (see more in question 3), and is poised to expand further.

Mohammed VI Polytechnic University, UM6P, is an academic partner supporting our work on regenerative approaches to conservation. We have supported interns and researchers from the university working on soil and agrobiodiversity in the High Atlas. The university has myriad centres and initiatives relevant to our programming. Post-earthquake, we have connected with the Rebuild Initiative, UM6P's working group on post-earthquake matters to ensure there is

communication between departments, centres, and projects supporting High Atlas communities post-disaster.

In addition to our official partners, we continue our collaboration with Cadi Ayyad University Marrakech (CAU) through an internship program at the plant nurseries and through our continued support of the MARK Regional Herbarium, building on close collaboration with them in past Darwin projects. DEAFAL who are experts in social and economic empowerment of small-scale farmers and producers through sustainable agriculture projects, remain partners for our community-based agroecological interventions.

In the first year of the project, GDF was invited by the British Embassy in Rabat to participate in the 2023 International Exhibition of Agriculture in Morocco 2023 International Agricultural Exhibition in Morocco (SIAM - Salon International d'Agriculture au Maroc). The UK was featured as the honorary guest and our team seized the opportunity to showcase the impact of Darwin funds in Morocco. The project was presented to HE Lord Benyon, the UK Minister of State at DEFRA, Simon Martin CMG, the UK Ambassador to Morocco, and UK Consul General Tom Hill, as well as to the general public attending the Exhibition. After the September 8th earthquake, we connected with key resource people to exchange information on the post-disaster situation and connect on relief strategy. Specifically, Foreign, Commonwealth, & Development Office Humanitarian Advisors Jean-Marc Cordaro and Richard Dixon reviewed our earthquake relief strategy closely, including visiting sites of support with the GDF team in November 2023. Minister of State for Development and Africa Andrew Mitchell and Ambassador Simon Martin visited us in Marrakech on 13 October 2023, and the Minister announced that DEFRA would be providing an extra £450,000 to GDF for earthquake response.

Harvest Festival Marrakech, the programme's biocultural festival organised bi-annually, continues to be a hub for partnership. Since project launch, we have built an especially strong relationship with the [Melting Pot Foundation](#) (partnership established in year 1). Their project in Marrakech, [Um Mami Centre](#), provides training to emerging young Moroccan chefs. Through Harvest Festival, we host exchanges between their culinary students and High Atlas cooperative as part of their education and to promote local products to future changemakers in the Moroccan restaurant industry.

We also seek out institutional partners such as the Office for Development and Cooperation (ODCO) and the National Human Development Initiative (INDH) where possible to maximise impact and reach of our programmes.

### **3. Project progress**

Annexes mentioned below can be found in this [REDACTED]

#### **3.1 Progress in carrying out project Activities**

The second year of our Darwin Extra project was fractured, essentially split into two by the devastating 6.8 magnitude High Atlas earthquake that struck on September 8th 2023, the most significant seismic event in Morocco since 1960. The state reported an estimated 3,000 deaths and over 2.3 million people affected by the disaster. The High Atlas region has been historically dormant seismically and this emergency has reset priorities in terms of disaster preparedness and transition. Throughout this reporting period, communities experienced aftershocks up to 4.9 in magnitude.

Immediately following the earthquake, the GDF team alongside MBLA partners and community leaders organised a series of emergency supplies distributions. These were based on needs identified and assessed by our team on the ground and covered a range of items. During the emergency period, the first 3 months following the disaster, we monitored the situation across the High Atlas through community focal points, village associations, and our partner cooperatives. In addition to the hubs around Imegdale, Ourika, and Oukaimeden, our project sites that were affected by the earthquake, we intervened in some specific sites outside of these rural communes where our partner rural cooperatives have been affected by the

earthquake. These areas include Chichaoua, Amizmiz, and Taroudant. In the mid to long term, GDF is focusing its work in a broad but defined geographical area spanning four rural communes – Ighil, Ijoukak, Imegdalen and Talat n'Yacoub.

Our distributions in the emergency period included food, hygiene, and shelter materials (mattresses, blankets, and lighting). We determined our food shopping lists with community partners based on cultural appropriateness, availability of kitchen supplies, shelf stability, and even consulted a nutritionist from a partner organisation. We distributed donations of winter clothes and used emergency funds to supply shoes, undergarments, and women's clothing which were urgently needed.

Our progress in carrying out project activities reflects this reality. In the following account, we describe the project's activities from April to early September 2023, focusing on pre-earthquake advancements, followed by emergency response measures and ongoing project developments from September 2023 to March 2024. We seek to convey how we are integrating the original activities and objectives of our Darwin Extra initiative with our post-disaster response and recovery efforts, a complex process that is continuing as we begin a new project year.

Despite the earthquake, our efforts under Output 1, focused on community-based regenerative approaches, continued throughout the emergency period and beyond. This output aims to achieve biodiversity conservation, restore cultural landscapes, and enhance agroecological productivity through community seed banking and plant nurseries, seed exchanges, and support for smallholder parcels, livestock, and pastoralists. During earthquake relief efforts, our team maintained a strategic presence in unaffected areas of Azilal, specifically in communities like Ait Mhamed and Zaouiat Ahensal. Here, despite delays caused by the earthquake relief operations, activities under Output 1 were sustained.

Activity 1.1 focuses on establishing 3 new community plant nurseries and expanding our 4 existing plant nurseries. Existing community plant nurseries in Imegdalen and Oukaimeden suffered light damage from the earthquake. These 4 nurseries were repaired and operational from January 2024. In Imegdalen, the nursery space temporarily accommodated families in tents while rubble was cleared from Ourigh village.

In year 2, the project team identified Cooperative Demnatena as a community partner to expand nurseries into Demnat, Azilal province. This strategic partnership aimed to enhance sustainability through community leadership. Together with the cooperative, the team chose a suitable location accessible to community members and institutions (Annex 1.1).

The series of plant distributions under activity 1.2 were completed at the start of year 2, in April 2023 encompassing a total of **25,489 plants** across the four designated sites, benefitting a total of **391 recipients**. Subsequent monitoring and follow-up were undertaken in June 2023, with 10 beneficiaries randomly selected from each site for survey purposes. Analysis of the data gathered from these surveys revealed that **63%** of the distributed plants were successfully planted, while **3%** were lost, **28%** underwent transformation by community cooperatives, **3%** were donated to other community members or local institutions, and **3%** remain unplanted.

However, challenges were encountered due to recurring drought conditions over the past five years. This is reflected in the distributed plants that did not survive or remain unplanted due to water scarcity. Furthermore, local community members have reduced their demand for these plants due to the water shortage. In Ait Mhamed, plants were distributed directly to community members, while the distributions in Oukaimeden, Imegdalen, and Zaouiate Ahensal included schools and village association networks. Please see the recipient lists in Annex 1.2 for further detail. Distributions in 2024 will be reported in the next period.

Activity 1.3, focused on exchanging local crop seeds among 5,000 households, builds on GDF long-term support for High Atlas agrobiodiversity and farmer-led seed systems. Before the earthquake, we organised two seed fairs. The first coincided with the Biocultural Festival of Azilal on May 31, 2023, featuring 50 exhibitors and engaging over 1,200 community members.



The second took place at the Oukaimden annual community festival (*moussem*) on August 10, 2023, with 15 exhibitors and approximately 150 visitors. Attendance was lower than usual as it was the first *moussem* organised after the COVID-19 pandemic. The planned edition in Imegdalen was cancelled following the earthquake, with the next event scheduled for June 2024.

Under the earthquake relief work, we organised two rounds of seed distributions – with a focus on barley, corn, fava beans, carrots, turnips, and other subsistence crops – in the earthquake-affected communes of Ighil, Talat N'Yaacoub, Ijoukak, and Imegdalen. In selecting the seed with local farmers, we took into account market availability, varietal suitability, and seed quality. We involved community associations in developing lists of recipient farmers in 92 villages in the first round and 98 villages in the second round. Reaching a total of **2,731 farmers (2,657 farmers in November 2023 and 2,731 in March 2024)**, the distributions supported agricultural productivity and food security, aligning with community agricultural calendars. Please see annex 1.3 for the full details.

We continue to monitor and evaluate the cultivation and harvest of crops these seeds are yielding. This assessment supports the selection of parcels for activity 1.4 on enhancing irrigation, terracing and soil fertility of 500 agroecosystem parcels. This experience showcases how we integrated Darwin Extra proposed activities with response to post-disaster needs.

Our endeavours to improve irrigation, terracing, and soil fertility of 500 agroecosystem parcels in the High Atlas region continued in the second year (Activity **1.4**). In year 1, we conducted 8 focus group discussions with participating villages to understand crop varieties, soil profiles, water management, and cultural practices, based on surveys from 105 farmers. However, in year 2, we prioritised communities affected by the earthquake in our program designed to deliver relief and agricultural enhancement in the most needed zones. Soil samples have been collected across the prioritised zone and are to be processed in spring 2024. Currently, we are conducting focus group discussions and surveys to ensure our initiatives align closely with the evolving needs of the affected areas. These discussions are followed by farmer field schools that respond to the local needs of each community (see Annex 1.4a for the detailed plan).

Additionally, our programme plans to repair cultural heritage sites linked to sustainable livelihoods; the proposed sites include agricultural terraces, irrigation basins and canals, community water mills, Azibs (high-elevation nomad shelters and animal corrals used seasonally), and granaries. This work on cultural heritage sites will contribute to the irrigation and terracing of over 500 plots.

As part of activity **1.5** to support the livelihoods of 500 transhumant pastoralists, the project team worked to increase access to veterinary care for livestock and offer education for livestock keepers and community stakeholders.

Between May and September 2023, our team developed and launched educational programs focusing on animal health, livestock diseases, and promoting the 'One Health' concept (*defined by the World Health Organisation as a unifying approach that aims to sustainably balance and optimise the health of people, animals and ecosystems*). Initiated in Imegdalen with a planned expansion to Aït Mhammed villages, this intervention targeted villages where livestock activities are significant. Imegdalen commune, home to 161 pastoralists with approximately 23,000 livestock, was the starting point. In June, we reached **9 villages** within Imegdalen, engaging **560 individuals** in informative sessions. This initiative revealed a lack of awareness in zoonotic diseases and their lifecycle among 95% of the participants.

Since the earthquake, formal training on this topic has been challenging to implement. From February 2024, the project integrated One Health educational action, alongside urgent activities such as veterinary or humanitarian assistance, adopting a more open approach to accommodate the emergency context while still moving forward with activity 1.5. This involved door-to-door, or in this case, tent-to-tent outreach, as well as directly addressing herders' questions and providing guidance during these visits. While this activity fell outside the scope of our original program - but is covered by earthquake response funds - we view it as a natural extension of our dedication to the well-being of pastoralist communities. Moving forward, the

project plans to expand educational workshops tailored for children in Imegdal and Ait Mhammed villages, with further outreach scheduled for Year 3.

Under the earthquake relief work, the project has provided shelter and fodder for livestock keepers. In March 2024, the project provided veterinary care to **1560 livestock** in some of the affected areas in need and assisted community members in 9 Azibs with vaccines and veterinary care.

The interventions since September 2023 helped ease the immediate difficulties experienced by pastoralist families. In the coming months, the project will initiate assistance programs to rebuild their livelihoods, ensuring continued support for the resilience and sustainability of pastoralist communities in the region. Activity lead Hakima Drissi has cultivated a supportive network that is aligned with the project mission. The team is maintaining communication and sharing updates regularly with key entities such as: National Food Safety Agency (ONSSA), National Agriculture Advisory Office (ONCA), and the National Order of Veterinarians of Morocco. The project network also includes animal health associations such as UK charity Society for the Protection of Animals Abroad (SPANNA) who participated in emergency veterinary caravans.

In pursuit of Output 2, expanding certification and labelling for High Atlas products, year 2 focused on training for food safety certification, one of the main barriers to market entry for community-led cooperatives. Due to the earthquake emergency, the Harvest label campaign was postponed. In years 3 and 4, the project will engage a committee of experts and advisors to facilitate the establishment of the High Atlas label as a tool to support the commercialization of cooperative partners. The project has moved forward with a label proposal which takes these delays into account (Annex 2.1).

While the campaign to promote the label with cooperative partners was postponed, gradual progress was achieved towards the label registration and preparation of standards under activities 2.1 and 2.5. We are currently conducting audits of cooperatives to ensure compliance not only with essential market entry criteria such as food safety clearances but also with environmental and social standards. The registration of the Harvest Label is a pivotal milestone for the project, laying the foundation for implementing quality standards. Through capacity-building initiatives, we are developing cooperatives' understanding and adherence to these standards.

The Harvest Label will be launched with a pilot group, with an aim of testing the model and evaluating the practical application of label standards (2.2). In year 2, the project provided training on food safety (ONSSA) and quality control to **47 cooperatives**, including new hubs. Currently, we are assisting cooperatives to obtain ONSSA authorization and exploring alternative methods to improve their access to markets such as brand registration under activity 2.3.

In support of labelling and certification, we have engaged consultants to enhance the visual identity and packaging for two cohorts under activity 2.4. Overall, 35 of our partner cooperatives have benefited from visual identity and packaging enhancements, reinforcing their market presence and consumer engagement. Through close collaboration with our teams, these cooperatives received tailored guidance, aiming to empower them to convey their unique stories and values while fostering growth and sustainability within their communities. Please see Annex 2.4 for before and after images of cooperative branding tools and details for application in their packaging and online dissemination.

In year 2, we continued our comprehensive series of training sessions aimed at enhancing the capacities of rural cooperatives in entrepreneurship (Activity **3.1**). We conducted sessions for two cohorts comprising a total of **47 cooperatives**. These sessions were guided by a participatory approach driven by needs assessment, discerning the specific needs of the cooperatives and serving as a crucial guiding factor in designing a holistic rural entrepreneurship program. The trainings were conducted in the months of September and November 2023.

The training modules, covering diverse topics including governance, human resources, marketing, branding, sales, e-commerce, food safety practices, certification, advocacy, communication, grant management, and new product development, were developed and executed by expert facilitators. At the end of each training session, evaluations were conducted to gather feedback and recommendations from the cooperatives, providing insights for future improvements. The training of two cohorts concluded with a field visit to a model cooperative - Tighanimine. The trainings and field visit also provided an opportunity for peer-to-peer mentorship among cooperative leaders. As the project has developed cohorts of cooperatives by geographic zone, it has deepened the opportunity for this peer mentorship.

Due to the earthquake, activity 3.2 of implementing a mentorship program was put on hold, leading to the development of a strategy to address the cooperatives' needs as the program enters its third year. The plan includes selecting mentors for the first cohort and conducting Training of Trainers (ToT) sessions to develop their mentorship capacities. A six-month mentorship program will begin for the first cohort, with both virtual and face-to-face workshops. Later in the year, the focus will shift to selecting mentors for the second cohort while continuing training for the first cohort to ensure a smooth transition. Overlapping mentor selection and training for future cohorts will guarantee the program's continuity and sustainability.

In line with our commitment to organising three High Atlas direct markets (Activity **3.3**) and identifying, marketing, and promoting 200 novel goods or services (Activity **4.1**), progress has been achieved this year. Two markets were organised, serving as platforms to promote over **165 products** from **33 cooperatives**. Targeted marketing campaigns during these events led to increased brand visibility and market exposure for the participating cooperatives.

The 6th edition of the High Atlas Food Market (HAFM), held on January 20 - 21, 2024, marked an increase in attendance, exceeding **500 visitors per day**, compared to the 250 visitors in the previous edition in March 2023. This edition was organised to celebrate the Amazigh New Year, 'Id Yennayer,' and featured the participation of 27 cooperatives, with over 60% hailing from areas affected by the earthquake. The market witnessed a surge in sales, with an increase in total sales of more than **90%**. Compared to previous editions, this increase can be attributed to the event's organisation at a new site, M Avenue, and the increased number of participating cooperatives.

The 7th edition of the HAFM was held March 8-10, 2024 coinciding with International Women's Day and the holy month of Ramadan. 17 cooperatives participated, attracting an average of **300 visitors per day**, despite the windy weather. This edition showcased cooperative products ahead of the Ramadan season, contributing to the promotion of local products and community engagement.

In the 6th edition, the total sales of 27 cooperatives were **45,085 MAD** (██████████), and in the 7th edition, the total sale of 17 cooperatives was **27,028 MAD** (██████████).

The overall skill-building program of Output 2, in alignment with activity 3.5, has equipped **47 cooperative** managers with skills such as sales techniques and market analysis, enhancing their abilities in consumer research. This ensures that managers are proficient in navigating the intricacies of consumer research. We actively assist cooperative representatives in implementing and sustaining these newfound skills, empowering them to efficiently and effectively operate their cooperatives.

We adapted our approach to selecting and training rural enterprise coordinators based on the project's evolving needs. Originally, we aimed to train 7 coordinators by the end of year 1 and retain them until project completion. However, we have found it more effective to recruit coordinators as project activities expand within each hub. In year 1, Hamza Jabary was recruited to coordinate cooperatives in Al Haouz province. Moving forward, as Cooperative Demnatna supports nursery expansion in the Demnat hub (Activity 1.4), one cooperative member will be designated as a hub coordinator in year 3. This approach strengthens our support structure for cooperative relationship management across regional hubs (Activity 3.4).

In year 2, the project launched a training module on product innovation through which each cooperative develops a product proposal guided by an expert. This resulted in **23 products** identified for development. Each cooperative cohort moving forward will participate in this series of workshops (Activity 4.1).

Similarly, in the endeavour to train 200 new digital ambassadors - defined in the proposal as rural women who learn social media marketing skills they will use beyond the end of the project and that they can pass on to others (activity **4.2**), the project has facilitated the capacity building of **63 individuals** in digital marketing. Through training programs, these ambassadors received instruction on various digital platforms including Facebook Marketplaces, Instagram, and Jumia Marketplace. The focus was on promoting the use of e-services to improve businesses and reduce digital exclusion among cooperative members. Personalised coaching and support were provided to ensure ambassadors were proficient in leveraging digital tools for organisational growth and community engagement.

Furthermore, progress has been made in improved digital marketing in the regional hubs (Activity 4.3). **57 cooperative representatives** (10 from Yr1 & 47 from Yr2) underwent workshops covering a wide range of digital marketing topics, structured into three expertise levels. These workshops equipped participants with essential skills and knowledge, ranging from product commercialization to market analysis. Additionally, we are currently in the preliminary stage of developing digital services directories in each hub, featuring profiles of young people with digital marketing skills, to enhance accessibility to digital services. In consultation with partner EBF, the digital marketing agencies create a link between cooperatives in rural zones with young people skilled in the digital and design spaces. The aim of these directories will be to include youth from the regional hubs but also leave room for urban-rural connection.

After the workshop in year 1, activity 4.4 on mobile payment has pushed us to reflect on the appropriate payment mechanisms for cooperative sales. The project aims to ensure access to online mechanisms as part of the tools needed to succeed online, a lesson from COVID 19 pandemic's impact on rural entrepreneurship. However, it is also important that all the activities align with the realities of the market in Morocco. While online payment systems are seen as significant, the local reality does not currently support such systems. We are currently re-strategising to align with these local realities.

The project is exploring partners that could deliver transportation support more directly (Activity 4.5). Coalition building and informal coordination with peer organisations has been key for the project's earthquake response. The project team was invited by the Marrakech-Safi region Center for Regional Investment to support research on economic proposals for rural cooperatives in the post disaster context. The centre's partnership with International Finance Corporation is interested in a sectoral intervention. Through this invitation, the project organised a focus group of 4 cooperatives in the medicinal and aromatic plant sector to understand their challenges and opportunities for support. One of the proposals made by GDF was to consider transportation support as a multi-sector intervention. This could entail the establishment of urban-rural transportation services that target cooperatives by location as opposed to their specific sector.

Activity **5.1** is oriented towards establishing e-commerce websites or social media accounts for 30 cooperatives annually, with the aim of contributing to an average 10% increase in annual sales per cooperative. The project has organised a step-wise approach to digital support with cooperatives, with visual identity improvement being the first step. Activity 5.1 will be most beneficial to cooperative partners after participating in activity 2.4, which is the creation and/or enhancement of visual identities and branding tools. Once cooperatives receive their final visual identities, they are able to apply these in their social media content.

The initiative to engage graphic design interns to support rural cooperatives on branding and packaging came to an organic end (Activity 5.4). This was addressed in a change request to update the project partners. This work has steadily progressed through activity 2.4 which provides branding services to cooperative partners.



Activity 5.3 aims to organise two 15-day editions of Harvest Festival Marrakech annually. As part of the Festival program, **three editions** of the Festival were organised, each with its unique theme and focus. These included a Spring edition, an adapted Autumn edition titled the "Earthquake Response Edition," and Yennayer (Amazigh New Year) edition. The festival hosted over 25 diverse events including workshops tailored to specific communities such as youth and mothers, guided knowledge-led walks, visual exhibitions hosted at a partner venue, Le Jardin Secret, concerts celebrating sonic cultural heritage, creative workshops, and talks and presentations on intangible cultural heritage. Additionally, inclusive gastronomic events centred on educational themes, including a discussion on food sovereignty post-earthquake. The team extended our platform to collaborate with other organisations involved in earthquake relief efforts, facilitating and producing events through our expanding network of collaborators in Marrakech.

One of the project goals is to support coalition building and informal coordination among organisations responding to the earthquake. With Emerging Business Factory, the team formulated a digital project, *Atlas Recovery Connect* (ARC). The larger objective of the digital project is to consolidate, map and analyse information from diverse databases, maps, spreadsheets and other sources generated by the agencies, citizens, community members and organisations involved in High Atlas earthquake response. ARC was launched at the Id Yennayer edition of the Harvest Festival in January 2024. During the festival, EBF hosted a mapathon to collectively create digital maps about earthquake response efforts in the High Atlas region. The focus was on what people were doing, where, when, why and with/for whom in four rural communes: Ighil, Ijoukak, Imegdal and Talat N'Yaaqoub. We will continue to use the festival to disseminate learnings from ARC and reinforce coalition building.

The Harvest Festival social media following experienced a significant **increase of 1000 followers**, indicative of growing interest and engagement. We estimate that our festival programming attracted over **3000 audience members**, underscoring the impact and reach of our initiatives (Activity 5.5).

## 3.2 Progress towards project Outputs

### **Output 1. Community-based regenerative approaches achieve biodiversity conservation and cultural landscape restoration while increasing agroecological productivity**

Throughout Output 1, which focuses on community-based regenerative approaches for biodiversity conservation and cultural landscape restoration, we aim to help High Atlas communities develop revenue streams and other livelihood benefits that are compatible with managing cultural landscapes.

We are confident that we will be able to achieve the regenerative goals identified in Output 1 by the end of the grant period. Year 1 set a strong foundation for the project through strategic planning. This was affected by the earthquake in year 2 but the program has adjusted its considerations. While the original timelines are shifting, output 1 activities are reinforced by the post-earthquake relief activities as livelihood support is more important now than ever. This is addressed in more detail in section 3.1.

### **Output 2. Certification and labelling expanded for High Atlas cultural landscape products that meet established criteria and performance standards**

Work under this output is progressing well. We experienced a slight delay in year 1 on brand/label registration. In the earthquake context, this was not prioritised compared to activities under outputs 1 and 3. However, at the end of year 2 the project prepared a label proposal that takes all these factors into consideration and resets the timeline.

### **Output 3. Skills of rural entrepreneurs built to enable High Atlas cooperatives to commercialise local biodiversity-friendly products from sustainable cultural landscapes**

All activities under this output are moving forward according to the proposed timeline with two training series delivered in this period. Our collaboration with cooperatives has strengthened, as we adjusted plans and supported the affected cooperatives post-earthquake. These mark

progress in boosting capacity, partnership, resilience, and inclusivity in rural entrepreneurship, positioning us well to achieve our goals.

Progress has been made across Output 3 showcasing the project's efforts toward rural economic development. Business boot-camp training sessions were held for two cohorts, engaging a total of 47 cooperatives in year 2 (indicator 3.1). This accounts for 117% of the yearly goal (47 / 40 cooperatives each project year) but 84% of the overall goal (67/80 cooperatives by end of year 2). We aim to incorporate 40 new cooperative partners into the project network each year; the induction occurs through participation in a training series referred to as 'business skills bootcamp'. In order to accommodate the delay in year 1 and the pause post-earthquake in year 2, the project delivered two series of trainers to reach more than 40 partners in year 2. The project delivered training for 57 cooperatives, marking a significant 28% progress towards our overall committed goal. Notably, a strong commitment to inclusivity was evident, with 80% of the participating cooperatives led by women. Despite delays due to seismic disturbances, groundwork for indicator 3.2 commenced strategically, including mentor selection and Training of Trainers (ToT) sessions. This year we executed three markets (an additional market is organised for May 2024) meeting (indicator 3.3). These events proved highly successful, with increased footfall (300 to 500 people per day) compared to previous editions, attributed to effective marketing and broader community engagement. Moreover, the number of participating cooperatives rose by 68% in 6th edition, showcasing a growing interest and participation in the market and ability to accommodate more participants. The ongoing efforts to build capacity measured by indicator 3.5 yielded promising results. 47 cooperative managers are receiving support to navigate market dynamics effectively, thus fostering sustainable growth in local communities.

#### **Output 4. Innovation of novel goods and services by rural entrepreneurs and cooperatives operating in High Atlas cultural landscapes incubated**

The work under this output is steadily progressing. The organising of multiple markets, training of digital ambassadors, and initial discussions on digital directories development denoted growth in marketing, digital skills, effectively aligning the project with its objectives. In year 2, the project launched a training module on product innovation and each cooperative developed a proposal guided by an expert. Each cooperative cohort moving forward will participate in this series of workshops.

Two markets were organised to showcase over 165 products from 44 cooperatives, resulting in total sales of 72,113.00 MAD (~ 5,750 GBP) across both editions (indicator 4.1). Similarly, indicator 4.2 saw progress in training 63 digital ambassadors in digital marketing, representing 31% of our project-end goal. This training equipped them with essential skills to utilise digital tools for organisational growth and community engagement. Activity 4.3, aimed at creating rural digital marketing agencies in the seven regional hubs, also made progress related to increased access to digital services and skills. 57 cooperative representatives underwent workshops covering a wide range of digital marketing topics, equipping them with essential skills and knowledge.

In pursuit of 4.4 & 4.5, involving the development of mobile and other payment options and access to transport services, year 2 did not prioritise these areas of work. However, these elements are being discussed with appropriate partners to explore implementation with relevant actors (see section 3.1). Efforts were made to initiate these outputs in the coming phases of the project to ensure comprehensive progress towards the desired outcomes.

#### **Output 5. Digital entrepreneurship and platforms promoted to increase revenues from High Atlas cultural landscape goods and services**

There are multiple activities under outputs 4 and 5 that will be implemented later in the programme timeline. However, foundational work on digital entrepreneurship has been underway with our communication team and consultant Nabil Nadifi (output 4). In year 1, the project delivered a template for an e-commerce platform to collectively market products from across the hubs. In year 2, the Harvest Festival has delivered beyond the indicators set in our project for this year's editions - 3 editions, online following growing by 1000 followers, and an in-person audience of 3000. These editions also explored urban partners and venues to support the marketing and promotion of novel goods and services.

### 3.3 Progress towards the project Outcome

Our regenerative approaches indicator (0.1) adequately measures the intended outcome because it sets specific and realistic goals for the amount of land and the number of plant species and crop varieties that can be restored and conserved, respectively, over the 5-year period of the grant. Output 1 focuses on improving production by promoting community-based regenerative approaches, which seek to ensure that local products can be harvested sustainably from wild-harvested areas, terraced agroecosystems and other cultivated areas, and seasonally-grazed pasture lands (agdals). Our work on output 1, as evidenced in section 3.1 above, has been considerable. Thousands of plants have been distributed, one nursery has been expanded and new nursery location identified, the health of multiple herds of livestock has been improved through a concerted vaccination campaign, and agroecological management of terraced agriculture has begun and focused around the earthquake epicentre to reach the most urgent zones. We are confident that our progress towards this outcome is resilient as it accommodated the September disaster and reset the project calendar.

The subsequent indicators (0.2 - 0.5) also adequately measure the intended outcome:

- 0.2 Our experience, embedded in networks of consumers, restaurateurs and retailers in Marrakech built through the Harvest Festival, attest to the fact that a High Atlas Harvest brand and label will have an impact on the market prices for High Atlas products as well as consumer preference for them. The project is on track to reach this goal by year 3. The implementation of the label will be launched through a pilot phase to be completed in the project period. See the timeline in Annex 2.1.
- 0.3 As evidenced by the priorities of the Moroccan government and state policies and initiatives (see section 4 on policies below), rural cooperatives are the leading edge of rural poverty reduction and income generation in Morocco. Our work with women-led cooperatives, in particular building their business and management skills, has already led to greater outreach and sales at the High Atlas direct markets we have organised, and greater confidence in negotiating and engaging with buyers. Year 2 activities were able to accommodate delays of years 1 and 2 to reach 67 cooperatives.
- 0.4 We have confidence in this indicator, given the eagerness for novel foods and products in the emerging market that is Marrakech and other rapidly growing urban centres in Morocco. Product innovation training was launched in year 2 and measurement of progress can be shared in the next reporting period.
- 0.5 In year 1, the project delivered a template for the e-commerce platform. The team is being advised by partners, such as EBF, on the utility of new collective platforms and is exploring options. The project maintains the importance of access to online retail for High Atlas cooperatives but is looking at different models for this support, including to join existing platforms that already have a consumer base. Any shifts in the project approach will be submitted in change requests as needed due to project needs. The project delivered beyond the set indicators for direct trade markets and is looking to maintain this momentum.

### 3.4 Monitoring of assumptions

Our monitoring of assumptions reveals that almost all of them (18 out of 20) hold largely true at this stage of project implementation, and that evidence for this is given in various sections of this report.

To give some examples:

Assumption: Rural entrepreneurs are eager and available to receive and participate in training, mentoring and capacity building programmes

Comments: As noted in 3.2 Progress towards project Outputs, under Output 3, 67 rural cooperatives have enthusiastically participated in skill-building opportunities.

Assumption: Urban consumers in Marrakech are interested in participating in High Atlas product markets

Comments: As noted in the same section, 300 to 500 consumers a day visited the High Atlas food market

For two assumptions, we have not had the opportunity to assess if they are valid, but we surmise they are and expect to provide evidence in future reports:

- Rural enterprise coordinators are motivated and available to receive training
- Consumers and cooperatives embrace alternative payment, distribution and transport services

### 3.5 Impact: achievement of positive impact on biodiversity and poverty reduction

The interventions proposed in the project are needed more than ever in the post-disaster context. Direct conservation initiatives, supporting smallholder agriculture, labelling and certification, direct trade markets, and business skills training are all contributing towards rebuilding the High Atlas rural economy in partnership with communities and community-led institutions. Our project is designed to have an impact at each stage of the market value chain, ensuring that conservation values and livelihoods benefits are embedded throughout.

The project contributes to the higher goal of biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation by:

- In terms of regenerative approaches, our project aims to educate and empower our target communities and cooperatives to revive traditional conservation practices and embrace new ones to protect the biodiversity and ecological integrity of High Atlas cultural landscapes. Seed distributions in year 2 allowed the project to reach over **2700 households** with direct livelihoods support. Households within this target group are participating in agricultural parcel enhancement. Additionally, thousands of plants were distributed in years 1 and 2 through the plant nurseries and planted out in wild and domestic spaces throughout the landscape. The expansion of these nurseries and improvement in their management and monitoring of seedling productivity, the growth of a seed exchange network to ensure the maintenance of traditional and heritage varieties, and through the agroecological training and support given to farmers to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem health, we are confident in the project goals.
- Our work with rural, mostly women-led cooperatives and those composed predominantly of women members is crucial to achieving our stated impact on human development and wellbeing. This initiative builds rural entrepreneurship capacities, enabling High Atlas community members to participate in niche markets for local, culturally relevant, and sustainable food products. This, in turn, improves rural incomes through events such as the High Atlas Food Market and Harvest Festival Marrakech. By engaging with urban buyers, retailers, chefs, and urban agroecology initiatives, we strengthen urban-rural solidarity and trade networks, brokering direct commercial relationships that enhance community livelihoods and alleviate poverty.

In year 2, we launched an initiative to support the innovation of food and other High Atlas products. We are optimistic that this will lead to product diversification and foster cooperative development. The project also aims to enhance the online and digital presence of cooperatives, with digital ambassadors drawing increased attention to their products and contributions to conservation and community economic development. Through capacity-building programs, including business training, opportunities to showcase and sell products at markets and festivals, and updating branding and packaging, we have boosted the confidence and expanded the horizons of these cooperatives.

In the long-term, our project is the foundation of a large-scale regional programme that will inextricably link biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction, thus providing a homegrown model for socio-ecological production landscapes in Morocco and beyond. It also aims to build national capacity by mentoring and valorising the knowledge, experience and expertise of Moroccan civil society organisations, like our primary partner Moroccan Biodiversity and Livelihoods Association (MBLA), and local communities in the High Atlas region. Our network of local associations has been deepened in the post-earthquake context and we are regularly looking to reinforce the project goals in our timely emergency support.



#### **4. Project support to the Conventions, Treaties or Agreements**

Our projects interventions on biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods – including monitoring biodiversity and maintaining community seed banks and plant nurseries, supporting cooperatives with beneficial environmental and land-use practices and aiding small farmers with agroecological approaches, and creating opportunities for marketing local products – align with Moroccan national policies on sustainable development and contribute to international biodiversity and development agreements.

Our interventions support the implementation of Morocco's National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) and the agricultural Green Generation (GG) Strategy. GDF's community-based regenerative approach aims to achieve biodiversity conservation and cultural landscape restoration, while increasing agroecological productivity, directly contributing to the conservation targets of the NSDS. Ongoing monitoring assesses the conservation status for local plant species and crop varieties, informed by the IUCN Red List approach. Local agroecological product commercialization through community-led rural cooperatives plays an important role in stake 2 of the NSDS – promoting the transition towards a green economy which supports the growth of green markets.

Cooperatives offer significant economic potential, especially for women in rural areas with limited access to revenue streams. Their success and impact have resulted in their recognition within the Green Generation (GG) Strategy 2020 – 2030 as a key pathway for sustainable livelihoods and economic development. The establishment of rural cooperatives is integrated as a strategy for the formation of an agricultural middle class, the high-level goal of the GG. National policy initiatives mirror targets within multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our support for rural entrepreneurship and access to digital platforms and marketing bolsters SDG 8 on inclusive and sustainable economic growth and SDG 10 on reducing inequality. Furthermore, SDG 5 on gender equality is strongly supported through women's economic development, with more than 80% of the cooperatives we work with being led by women. Our project's approach bridges environmental and social sustainability, reinforcing implementation of international legal agreements to which Morocco is a party. The aims of biodiversity conservation, promotion of sustainable use, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from use of plant genetic resources within the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) align strongly with GDF's regenerative approach to managing the High Atlas cultural landscape. Article 9 of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) which promotes farmer's rights is directly supported through the integration of local indigenous knowledge and community-led local product commercialization, ensuring the right to participate in the sharing of benefits arising from the use of plant genetic resources. Our network includes ITPGRFA focal point, Mr Moha Ferrahi, due to our interest in implementation of the treaty in Morocco and sought participation of diverse actors in past policy workshops.

Support of rural agroecological enterprises aligns with the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing, and its' harmonisation with implementing ITPGRFA's multilateral system for access. As our project embraces complexity taking on a cultural landscapes approach, we integrate community governance networks around collective management of resources in our active hubs. Scaling up the socio-ecological production landscapes approach is key for a more expansive reach of biodiversity conservation measures that also ensure sustainable livelihoods for thousands of rural households, integrating key approaches on conservation, sustainable use, and equitable access and benefit sharing as advocated in several national and international environmental policies.

#### **5. Project support for multidimensional poverty reduction**

- Our program addresses poverty through the empowerment of local communities and the enhancement of economic and social sectors. With targeted interventions, we aspire to impact 5000 households by project end. Our efforts concentrate on building the capacities of cooperatives, spanning from administrative to financial governance and extending to visual identity and digital marketing through comprehensive training sessions. Alongside this, we continue to distribute plants and provide ongoing

agroecological training, all aimed at improving the quality of food production and seeds while also uplifting rural livelihoods.

- By facilitating access to urban markets and consumers via initiatives such as the High Atlas Food Markets and the Harvest Festival, we directly contribute to income generation and the reduction of poverty within local communities. Additionally, by integrating digital entrepreneurship into our approach and enhancing visual identity and packaging, we empower cooperatives to access broader markets and increase market share, thereby fostering economic growth. Furthermore, our emphasis on providing e-services capacity building for social entrepreneurs enables them to extend their online presence, creating fresh opportunities for income generation and contributing to sustainable poverty reduction.

The turnover of our partner cooperatives has shown an increase from the fiscal year 2023 to 2024, as supported by gathered data. In 2023, the combined turnover of all the cooperatives we collaborated with totalled 1,622,000 MAD (~128,500 GBP), while in 2024, it rose to 1,643,800 MAD (~ 130,230 GBP), overall weathering the impact of the earthquake. The project is working to strengthen impact measurement of cooperative finances with consideration to cooperatives operating in affected zones.

Through the provision of comprehensive training sessions, we have provided cooperative members with the necessary skills and knowledge to improve their productivity and efficiency. This beneficial effect is widespread, with almost every cooperative witnessing an increase in turnover. For example, we saw emerging cooperatives double their turnover from 10,000 MAD in 2023 to 20,000 MAD in 2024 (800 GBP to 1,600 GBP), while more established cooperatives averaged around 15% increase in revenues. These improvements underscore the significant contribution of our training programs towards fostering economic growth and sustainability within our cooperatives. We witnessed the earthquake's impact on certain cooperatives, which caused significant damage to their local infrastructure. This destruction inevitably obstructed their revenue generation throughout the fiscal year. Operations were disrupted, and facilities were damaged, leading to decreased productivity and a decline in their annual financial performance.

## 6. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

Please quantify the proportion of women on the Project Board <sup>1</sup> .	The main leadership team for this project within Global Diversity Foundation is 60% women. Our team members include two men (Gary Martin, Ugo D'Ambrosio) and three women (Tasnim Elboute, Fatiha Tachakourt, Aarti Gor)
Please quantify the proportion of project partners that are led by women, or which have a senior leadership team consisting of at least 50% women <sup>2</sup> .	Our main partner, MBLA, has worked on gender parity within their team. In addition, they have made great gains around women's leadership with Najwa Essiari acting as chairwoman of the board and 2/4 board members are women. Currently there are 4 women in an implementation team of 8. Gender within leadership of our other partners (UM6P, EBF) is more difficult to quantify as they are larger, more amorphous, and do not have the simple internal governance structures which allow tallying of gender proportions.

<sup>1</sup> A Project Board has overall authority for the project, is accountable for its success or failure, and supports the senior project manager to successfully deliver the project.

<sup>2</sup> Partners that have formal governance role in the project, and a formal relationship with the project that may involve staff costs and/or budget management responsibilities.

<b>GESI Scale</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Put X where you think your project is on the scale</b>
<b>Not yet sensitive</b>	The GESI context may have been considered but the project isn't quite meeting the requirements of a 'sensitive' approach	
<b>Sensitive</b>	The GESI context has been considered and project activities take this into account in their design and implementation. The project addresses basic needs and vulnerabilities of women and marginalised groups and the project will not contribute to or create further inequalities.	
<b>Empowering</b>	The project has all the characteristics of a 'sensitive' approach whilst also increasing equal access to assets, resources and capabilities for women and marginalised groups	X
<b>Transformative</b>	The project has all the characteristics of an 'empowering' approach whilst also addressing unequal power relationships and seeking institutional and societal change	

We continually reiterate and monitor our commitment to advancing gender equality within our project. Building on the foundations laid in previous years, we have intensified our efforts to actively contribute to gender equality and ensure meaningful engagement with the communities we serve. At the heart of our approach lies a theory of change grounded in community participation, with a particular emphasis on the pivotal role of women as integral community leaders, environmental stewards, and entrepreneurs.

We seek to ensure that all community engagements are gender-balanced, even in contexts where cultural norms dictate separate gatherings for men and women. By accommodating local customs and organising events, workshops, and training specifically tailored to women, we have created inclusive spaces that amplify women's voices and enhance their participation in decision-making processes. Our commitment to gender equality is further reflected in the composition of our field teams and organisational policies within the GDF. Within our team, women hold key positions as community researchers, liaisons, and leaders, underscoring our dedication to gender diversity and inclusivity.

Moreover, gender equality is integral to GDF's recruitment practices and organisational policies. We prioritise gender diversity in our teams to ensure that they reflect the communities we serve. Furthermore, gender considerations are embedded in our overarching frameworks, guiding decision-making, resource allocation, and program design across all our initiatives. By aligning our project-specific efforts with the broader recruitment and policies of GDF, we reinforce our collective commitment to promoting gender equality and fostering inclusive environments where all individuals can thrive. Through this integrated approach, we strive to create lasting impacts that transcend individual projects and contribute to broader societal transformation.

## **7. Monitoring and evaluation**

We recognise effective Monitoring & Evaluation processes are necessary to ensure successful outcomes of this project. Therefore, we maintain an online M&E table, linked to all projects within the wider HACL programme, to track progress against indicators and outcomes. We also organise 3-monthly collective evaluations during which team members present progress against project activities and discuss any challenges and upcoming work plans. We hold weekly team meetings and bi-weekly meetings with our partner MBLA to maintain a good overview of project activities and plan for important events. In addition to the ongoing

monitoring through meetings and internal evaluations, we organise yearly external evaluations for our High Atlas Cultural Landscapes programme, which includes this project.

Within MBLA's independent process, board members have been integrated as advisors for specific themes we engage on in regenerative approaches as an additional support for M&E processes, review of strategies, and action plans. In addition to our bi-weekly all-team meetings, we have instituted additional leadership meetings explicitly focused on monitoring and evaluation. They allow us to better troubleshoot any issues with the project timeline as well as tackle any gaps in activities that we witness.

We are working with consultant, Ugo D'Ambrosio, to conduct our regular evaluations throughout the year. He is intimately familiar with our programming in Morocco as a former scientific and technical advisor. After taking a step back from coordination of our conservation efforts to lead on organising the International Society for Ethnobiology 2024 Congress, Ugo is supporting the ongoing M&E of our project. We have additionally engaged former team member, Hafida Mazoud, as a trainer in product innovation and for evaluation of our cooperative training programs. Through these collaborations, we maintain the oversight of our programs with consultants who have supported project development in the past but remain external to current activities

## **8. Lessons learnt**

Our Darwin Extra project has an ambitious scope of work, building on and strengthening our past work within the High Atlas Cultural Landscapes programme. As expected, it has been a challenge to initiate scaling up and building expansive networks to grow our programme.

This challenge has been brought to the forefront in the relief activities post-earthquake. GDF and MBLA's responsive actions during the immediate emergency period and ongoing relief and recovery programming has taught us many lessons. Firstly, the strength of our project's response builds off the long term relationships with community collaborators in earthquake affected zones. This allowed our teams to bring needed support to communities despite the complex landscape of Morocco's humanitarian sovereignty. And this experience has allowed us to strengthen our networks for needs assessment, including collecting contact information for every village in the four target communes (Ighil, Talat N'Yaacoub, Ijoukak, Imedgale). It refreshes our commitment to participatory activity development, ensuring alignment with community priorities. Another major lesson reinforced in the post-earthquake period is the importance of coalition building with peer associations. In the absence of collaborative coordination of the state, we facilitated multiple coalition meetings for local and international organizations. We have also been actively participating in an informal online coordination led by ActionAid and are leaders of the livelihoods and food security cluster. Because of this coalition building support, we have been invited for consultation by organisations seeking to support communities post-earthquake, including the regional investment office of Marrakech-Safi region.

Our local partner MBLA continues to strengthen its' organisational autonomy and has been challenged by the growing number of project invitations, especially in the post-earthquake context. We have worked together to identify promising areas to expand our work, especially with regard to livelihoods support for rural entrepreneurs. Through additional funding, we are inviting cooperatives near the earthquake epicentre to a specific cohort, including emergent groups who may not fit criteria for training participation previously. MBLA has since welcomed a local products officer, Omayma Tchato, to better support this work. We continue to learn how to hone our relationship with MBLA to ensure the organisation feels fully autonomous and independent, yet also supported and mentored by GDF.

And lastly, one of the most important lessons learned in this project year is the gap of livelihood support post-earthquake. As we navigate this context, we find our proposed activities are urgently needed in the rebuilding process



## 9. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)

<p>1. Regarding Indicator 0.4 “Novel goods and services innovated by High Atlas rural entrepreneurs and cooperatives, generating 40 new products annually and 200 by project end”, it is unclear if the mentioned 40 new products are also including Year 1 of the project or how exactly this Indicator will be used to measure project progress. The same regarding Indicator 0.5: “leading to an average 10% increase in local product sales annually and 50% by project end.”</p> <p>2. The project collaborated in Year 1 with 15 existing cooperative partners. These partners have received support in the creation of their social media accounts, and more advanced cooperatives have received support through the creation of individual sites. Four cooperatives have individual sites, and 14 cooperatives received support to create and/or manage their social media accounts. Unfortunately, not all links shared in Annex 10 of the report are working and allow access to assess the created accounts. This could be improved in the next report.</p> <p>3. It would be recommended to improve the measuring of the Output level Indicators to strengthen the M&amp;E process. It may be helpful to reflect on how Indicators only bound to project end could be also measured in the previous years as for example Indicator 3.2.</p>	<p>1. In order to reach the indicator of supporting 200 cooperatives by project end, we aim to collaborate with 40 new cooperatives yearly. This collaboration is initiated through participation in intensive training termed “cooperative bootcamps.” The modules for this training are based on identified needs for cooperative development. One of the modules taught in Year 2 is on product innovation where cooperatives have to develop a new product or innovate existing products with support of a trainer. This is how the 40 new products are measured. Regarding indicator 0.5, the project is collecting financial data of each cooperative’s yearly performance and of each direct trade market. Through this data, the project tracks impact of training and other support on yearly cooperative income as well as specific earning from direct trade markets.</p> <p>In addition to product innovation, we initiate our collaborations on digital presence, branding improvement, and packaging through intensive training.</p> <p>2. Links are checked regularly to ensure they are live for future review.</p> <p>3. Year 3 strategies will include increased output level reflections as this is integrating into the M&amp;E process throughout the year. This reflection will include a breakdown for output 4. As project activities have developed, activities under output 4 need to accommodate the post-earthquake context. The project</p>
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<p>For Output 4 all Indicators are bound to project end what makes the measurement and follow up difficult. It would be recommendable to have under Output 4 some Indicators bound to years before project end. It is unclear how the planned average 10% increase in annual sales per cooperative will be measured (Indicator 5.1 and Indicator 5.2) and if the project has established a baseline for measurement.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. The report does not give any information regarding the proportion of women in the organisation of the other three project partners. This information could be added in the next report.</li> <li>5. The Lead Partner is organising yearly external evaluations for their High Atlas Cultural Landscapes programme, which includes this project and where an evaluation of the past three years of work is ongoing. It would be recommendable to share this evaluation report with the next Darwin Initiative AR.</li> <li>6. The project partners are demonstrating a great fundraising capacity. A grant agreement starting April 2023 will bring [REDACTED] matching funds to the project through GDF. Another grant through MBLA around [REDACTED] which will co-fund key aspects of this Darwin Grant. It would be helpful to understand better which part of this project will be supported and what this exactly means for the current project grant.</li> <li>7. The report states that a new programme video, as well as brochures and pamphlets on the High Atlas Cultural Landscapes programme has been produced but the reviewer could not find these materials in the report.</li> </ol>	<p>team will be in touch with BCF for any change requests.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Gender within leadership of some partners (UM6P, EBF) is more difficult to quantify as they are larger, more amorphous, and do not have the simple internal governance structures which allow tallying of gender proportions. The project will offer more detailed explanations in future reports.</li> <li>5. This report will be added to the annex folder.</li> <li>6. This is demonstrated through financial reporting on cofunding. The project will work to make this clear in reporting for all cofunding including that received by partners.</li> <li>7. The materials mentioned were developed for the National Agriculture Conference where the UK was featured as an honorary country. The video developed in April 2023 can be found <a href="#">here</a>. The pamphlet and post card can be found <a href="#">here</a>. All of these items are in the annexes folder.</li> </ol>
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<p>8. Under 'capital items' the expenditure report shows a huge under spending. The Lead partner explains that during the second half of Year 1 they realised that the cooperatives needed more foundational training before purchasing IT equipment for them. The applicant plans to spent this amount in Year 2 but did not discuss this change with DI or send a change request. This should be done as soon as possible.</p> <p>9. The workshops organised under Output 3 had sixteen participants but the report does not give the information regarding the women participants. This probably could be improved in the future reports to show the efforts of the project team to contribute to gender equity and social inclusion.</p> <p>10. The report states that the table regarding the new standard indicators has been included in the folder of annexes but the reviewer could not find this folder with the link provided in the report.</p>	<p>8. This has been resolved through the recent financial change request approved by BCF.</p> <p>9. More attention has been paid to gender breakdown in program reports.</p> <p>10. The standard indicator table is titled "Standard Indicator Annex Yr2 - Darex002." This will be added to the annexes folder.</p>
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## 10. Risk Management

This year, we focused on enhancing our risk management strategies, both within the High Atlas Cultural Landscapes (HACL) program and across the broader organisation of the Global Diversity Foundation (GDF). However, unforeseen events did occur that required us to adapt and address new risks.

In response to the September 8th earthquake, our program implementation strategy had to be swiftly adjusted to prioritise supporting the affected communities. Our primary focus shifted towards providing relief and assistance to those impacted by the earthquake. During this time of crisis, we recognized the importance of safeguarding the well-being of our field teams as they engaged with the affected communities. Therefore, we developed safeguarding guidelines to ensure the safety and security of our team members while carrying out relief efforts.

As the immediate relief efforts gradually subsided and the situation stabilised, we took the opportunity to reassess our risk management strategies. We convened discussions to review and update our risk register, incorporating any new risks identified during the earthquake response.

This experience underscored the necessity of continuously evaluating and adapting our risk management practices to address emerging challenges effectively. By proactively addressing new risks as they arise, we aim to strengthen our resilience and ensure the ongoing success and sustainability of our programs. This is reflected in our project risk register.

## 11. Sustainability and legacy

The sustainability and legacy of our programs are core priorities at GDF. We understand that the long-term impact of our efforts depends on their ability to endure beyond the lifespan of individual projects. To achieve this, we have implemented strategies that ensure the continued success of our initiatives. This includes fostering strong partnerships with local communities, cooperatives, and other stakeholders, empowering them to take ownership of the program's goals and activities. Moreover, we prioritise capacity building and knowledge transfer,

equipping communities with the skills and resources they need to sustainably manage and benefit from our interventions. By integrating environmental conservation practices, promoting economic resilience, and fostering social cohesion, we aim to leave a lasting legacy of positive change in the areas where we operate.

GDF's incubation of MBLA, starting with its establishment in 2014, was the foundational element for ensuring the sustainability and legacy of the project. This project builds on this relationship, and operates as equal and independent partners coming together with a shared mission.

Our integration of community-led and -based cooperatives is also essential for project sustainability, as well as for scaling-up the programme given that we are working with autonomous networks of collective rural enterprises. Being able to engage with these networks is an important step for our initiative's sustainability as our activities are integrated into existing cooperatives.

We've been cultivating strong relationships with other organisations in the wake of the September earthquake. Our collaboration during that critical period continues, and we're still involved in coordination efforts with them. This includes sharing and exchanging livelihood-centric relief support and how to integrate community-led cooperatives into this programming. In year 1, we had a strong focus on project promotion and visibility at national level. In year 2, we focus on scaling up our approach and strengthening and/or reinforcing our networks within our hubs of work. Securing the Darwin Extra grant has also contributed greatly to the overall sustainability of the High Atlas Cultural Landscapes programme, which is now entering its second decade. This project has allowed us to take a 5-year frame as opposed to the shorter 2-3 year periods of past projects. We have also worked to engage new donors and co-fund project activities within GDF and MBLA.

## **12. Darwin Initiative identity**

We recognise the support of the UK Darwin Initiative for this project through the development of a [dedicated project page](#) on our website, and we reference the Darwin Initiative across our blog updates where relevant and appropriate. We have also included the Darwin Initiative logo to our High Atlas Cultural Landscapes programme webpage. Due to our earthquake response, the project received an additional award to address the crisis with communities around the epicentre. This support was publicised through our own channels but also in communication with relief associations. GDF actively and regularly shares progress updates and news from our Darwin funded project as part of our wider High Atlas Cultural Landscape Programme on its stories page, social media profiles (4,500+ Facebook, 2,730 Instagram and 3,000+ LinkedIn followers), and in GDF's Annual Reports.



### 13. Safeguarding

Has your Safeguarding Policy been updated in the past 12 months?	Yes
Have any concerns been reported in the past 12 months	No
Does your project have a Safeguarding focal point?	<p>Yes</p> <p><b>Safeguarding Lead:</b>  Name: Lorenza [REDACTED], GDF Operations Lead  Email: [REDACTED]</p> <p><b>Safeguarding Field Focal Point:</b>  Name: Tasnim [REDACTED]  Email: [REDACTED]</p>
Has the focal point attended any formal training in the last 12 months?	No
What proportion (and number) of project staff have received formal training on Safeguarding?	94% (18 team members)
<p>Has there been any lessons learnt or challenges on Safeguarding in the past 12 months? Please ensure no sensitive data is included within responses.</p> <p>Over the past 12 months, we are pleased to report that we have not encountered any safeguarding challenges. However, it is important to note that our team has been proactive in addressing safeguarding concerns in previous years.</p> <p>Last year, we dedicated efforts towards streamlining and strengthening our safeguarding policies and procedures. Building upon this foundation, we continue to prioritise safeguarding within our organisation, ensuring the safety and well-being of all individuals involved in our programs.</p> <p>While we are grateful for the absence of safeguarding challenges in the past year, we remain committed to maintaining vigilance and continuously improving our safeguarding practices to uphold the highest standards of safety and protection for our beneficiaries and team members.</p>	
<p>Does the project have any developments or activities planned around Safeguarding in the coming 12 months? If so please specify.</p> <p>Following the recent approval of our safeguarding policy by trustees and completion of training for all team members, our focus for the next 12 months will be on implementing and integrating safeguarding into operations</p>	
<p>Please describe any community sensitisation that has taken place over the past 12 months; include topics covered and number of participants.</p> <p>None</p>	

Have there been any concerns around Health, Safety and Security of your project over the past year? If yes, please outline how this was resolved.

None

#### 14. Project expenditure

**Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024)**

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2023/24 Grant (£)	2023/24 Total Darwin Initiative Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs (see below)				
Consultancy costs				
Overhead Costs				
Travel and subsistence				
Operating Costs				
Capital items (see below)				In our post-earthquake response, budgeting for capital expenditures was particularly challenging due to unpredictable needs. The variance in the reported capital spending was primarily driven by the urgent purchase of materials required for school construction.
Others (see below)				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£364,353</b>	<b>£364,353</b>		

**Table 2: Project mobilised or matched funding during the reporting period (1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024)**

	Secured to date	Expected by end of project	Sources
Matched funding leveraged by the partners to deliver the project (£)			Knodel Foundation, MAVA, Hans Wildorf, Salvia Foundation
Total additional finance mobilised for new activities			

occurring outside of the project, building on evidence, best practices and the project (£)			
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**15. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere: N/A**

**16. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements or progress of your project so far (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes**

I agree for the Biodiversity Challenge Funds to edit and use the following for various promotional purposes (please leave this line in to indicate your agreement to use any material you provide here).

For the 2023 autumn edition of Harvest Festival Marrakech, we reoriented our intended programming to focus on a series of events that could create space for Marrakech to come together and consider the themes of *Repair, Renewal and Resilience* in the aftermath of the earthquake.

Our Earthquake (EQ) Response Edition ran from 21.10.23 - 31.10.23. The EQ responsive programming allowed us to underline the very fact that Harvest Festival Marrakech is intertwined with the High Atlas and is therefore responsive to all that concerns it. We felt an immense responsibility to provide ongoing and long-term support to alleviate the region's suffering through not only the relief work we embarked on with our colleagues but also through using the platforms and networks we have built through the festival to speak to the situation and create spaces of discussion about the path to recovery that lay ahead of us.

We wanted to do this collectively and took the opportunity to offer our space, resources and platform to other organisations wanting to share their earthquake relief stories and efforts, either to further amplify their fundraising or to simply share concerns and questions in collective settings at a time when many of us were still attempting to understand the situation and how best to mobilise our efforts and resources.

We ran a small programme of 7 events. *Education for All*, an organisation that aims to empower young girls in the High Atlas region by providing them with the opportunity of higher education, led us through a presentation of their work and their experience of the earthquake which left all of their schools destroyed. Within the cultural space of *LE 18*, we screened *D'Terre et D'eau*, a film exploring the resilience and importance of earth architecture and its impact on three architects, one of whom, Mamoun Kadiri, joined us for discussion. Our EQ response programme also gave us the opportunity to bring together 4 of our gdf team members alongside a colleague from *MBLA* to discuss the important question of returning to food sovereignty in the affected region with regular collaborator *Um Mami Melting Pot* culinary school. In addition to this considering the impact of the earthquake on mental health we held a very important presentation and discussion with 'Resilience' focused psychologist Jihad Bnimoussa, aimed at those working in the humanitarian and social justice sector. We also held closed door creative workshops mediating the experiences of the earthquake with the mothers group of *Dar Bellarj* and their youth group.

We hope that the festival was able to offer some salve by providing us all a space to come together and process the traumatic experience we shared as well as to honour the losses and stand in solidarity as a community that shares a love of Marrakech and its cultural heritage.

Images will be added to the annexes [folder](#).

## Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against logframe for Financial Year 2023-2024

Project summary	Progress and Achievements April 2023 - March 2024	Actions required/planned for next period
<p><b>Impact</b></p> <p>In High Atlas production landscapes of high cultural and biodiversity value, cooperatives drive gender-aware and scalable improvements in conservation, equitable resource distribution and household revenue through sustainable value chain development.</p>	<p>25,000 plants at risk of biodiversity loss planted and distributed to communities yearly; active management of community seed banks to ensure local varieties are preserved and to encourage production of large variety of plants; cooperatives managing landscapes through sustainable wild harvesting; small producers integrating agroecological techniques for increased productivity and greater sustainability</p>	
<p><b>Outcome</b> 200 High Atlas cooperatives, comprising 5000 households in 7 regional hubs, increase revenues long term through improved local product commercialisation while optimising agro-pastoral activities that regenerate cultural landscapes and conserve biodiversity.</p>		
<p>Outcome indicator 0.1</p> <p>At least 1000 hectares of cultural landscapes restored through wild species replanting, agroecological cultivation and seasonal grazing within a 30,000 km<sup>2</sup> region of the High Atlas, leading to quantifiable conservation of 15 indicator plant species and crop varieties by project end</p>	<p>Established strategies working towards restoration of 1000 hectares of cultural landscapes, with expansion to new hubs launched in Demnat</p>	<p>Maintenance of regenerative approaches work in 3/7 hubs; active engagement in 5/7 hubs</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.2</p> <p>High Atlas Harvest brand established by YR1, linked to established certification and labelling standards by YR3, and used on packaging of at least 200 local cooperative products by project end;</p>	<p>Label proposal developed with timeline reset to accommodate delays post-earthquake</p>	<p>Finalisation of Harvest label as a brand; establishment of its standards and model for implementation</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.3</p> <p>Rural entrepreneurs trained in business skills and mentored, leading to 200 rural cooperatives, 80% of them women-led, with enhanced marketing and commercialisation capacity, experience and knowledge by project end;</p>	<p>Two series of business boot camps conducted in YR 2; established networks in 4/7 hubs</p>	<p>Cooperative business bootcamps implements with newly recruited cooperatives and in new hubs</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.4</p> <p>Novel goods and services innovated by High Atlas rural entrepreneurs and cooperatives, generating 40 new products annually and 200 by project end, presented to domestic urban consumers by 200 digital ambassadors and original distribution and marketing services</p>	<p>Launch of product innovation training in training bootcamps, implemented with 2nd cohort of cooperatives</p>	<p>Continued development of novel products through training; initiation of label campaign after standards are finalised</p>



<p>Outcome indicator 0.5</p> <p>An online marketplace, 150 e-commerce websites or social media accounts, 10 urban harvest festivals, improved branding and packaging and enhanced social media marketing achieved by project end, leading to an average 10% increase in local product sales annually and 50% by project end, increasing cooperatives' annual revenues by an average of 30% over the project period.</p>	<p>Ecommerce template established in Yr 1; exploration of online marketing engagement models for cooperatives with partners in Yr 2</p>	<p>Strategy development for moving forward with an online platform or establishing partnership with existing ones (based on uptake of cooperative partners)</p>
<p><b>Output 1 Community-based regenerative approaches achieve biodiversity conservation and cultural landscape restoration while increasing agroecological productivity</b></p>		
<p>Output indicator 1.1</p> <p>Three rural plant nurseries and associated seed reproduction parcels established by YR3 and four nurseries and parcels expanded YR2;</p>	<p>Successful evaluation and improvement of 4 nurseries with evaluation processes established to initiate expansion of nurseries in phase 2</p>	<p>Phase 2 includes an expansion to 2 new hubs to establish plant nurseries</p>
<p>Output indicator 1.2</p> <p>25,000 plants of wild-harvested native species distributed annually for five years;</p>	<p>Successful distribution in Year 1 of 25,000+ plants</p>	<p>Plant nurseries currently in operation will be maintained to meet community needs around plant distribution</p>
<p>Output indicator 1.3</p> <p>Seeds of local crop varieties exchanged among a total of 5000 households by project end;</p>	<p>A seed exchange was scheduled in the Spring 2024 Harvest Festival events in Azilal province</p>	<p>Seed exchanges will continue to be planned including integration into existing biocultural events</p>
<p>Output indicator 1.4</p> <p>500 agroecosystem parcels with enhanced irrigation, terracing and soil fertility;</p>	<p>Field research conducted and concluded to identify agroecosystem parcels</p>	<p>Implementation of the planned strategies for engaging farmers on agroecological interventions (villages chosen for agroecological, training and activity implementation plants) Implementation of planned strategies for collaboration with pastoralist communities</p>
<p>Output indicator 1.5</p> <p>Livelihoods support provided to 500 transhumant pastoralists, 50% of them women, in Agdal communal grazing areas</p>	<p>Engaged pastoralist network, with active planning for capacity building programming Implemented a vaccination campaign for livestock in Al Haouz province Launched training program around seed entrepreneurship for diversification of cooperative activities and better wild harvesting management</p>	<p>Deliver awareness campaign on health and safety in engagement with animals through school networks</p>

<b>Output 2. Certification and labelling expanded for High Atlas cultural landscape products that meet established criteria and performance standards</b>		
Output indicator 2.1. High Atlas Harvest registered as a brand with the Office Marocain de la Propriété Industrielle et Commerciale and as a label with Institut Marocain de Normalisation by YR1;	Branding application for the High Atlas Harvest label underway with OMPIC	Complete successful registration of Harvest label with OMPIC
Output indicator 2.2. Participatory guarantee system for cooperatives established by YR3, 100 cooperatives certified by project end;	Proposal of SPG process presented to community members, researchers, and cooperative members at Spring 2023 Azilal Biocultural Festival	Establish standards; Convene label advisory committee to consult on Harvest label proposal and review standards
Output indicator 2.3 Certification of an additional 100 cooperatives by Office National de Sécurité Sanitaire des Produits Alimentaires by project end;	Cooperatives benefiting from YR 2 capacity building trained on food safety and application process	Work with current cooperative network on ONSSA certification, an essential step for participation in programming on digital entrepreneurship and access to urban markets
Output indicator 2.4. Visual identity and packaging improved for 40 cooperatives annually, YRS 1-5	Cooperatives benefiting from YR 2 capacity building improved visual identity and packaging	Establish reference committee of cooperatives to advise on SPG processes
Output indicator 2.5. 200 products designated with High Atlas Harvest label by project end		
<b>Output 3. Skills of rural entrepreneurs built to enable High Atlas cooperatives to commercialise local biodiversity friendly products from sustainable cultural landscapes</b>		
Output indicator 3.1 Business skills training provided to members of 40 cooperatives annually YRS 1-5, with a total of 200 people, 80% of them women, by project end;	Two series of business bootcamps have been delivered in YR2	Organization of capacity building programming for new cooperatives; working towards working with 40 new cooperatives yearly
Output indicator 3.2 Mentorship programme established and available progressively for a total of 200 rural entrepreneurs, 80% of them women, by project end;		Organisation of mentoring programme for rural entrepreneurs based on foundation set up in yr2

Output indicator 3.3 Three High Atlas direct trade markets organised in Marrakech annually YRS 1-5 for a total of 15 markets;	3 High Atlas direct trade markets organised in YR2 including one during the Harvest Festival 2023 which coincides with GDF's organisation of the 18th Congress of the International Society for Ethnobiology in Marrakech	3 High Atlas direct trade markets to be organised
Output indicator 3.4 Seven rural enterprise coordinators, the majority women, selected and trained by YR1, employed until project end;	One rural enterprise coordinator recruited as liaison with current cooperative partners, four existing community researchers acting as community liaisons	rural enterprise coordinator to be recruited as collaborations grow in new hubs
Output indicator 3.5 Consumer research capacity building given to seven rural enterprise coordinators and 50 cooperative managers by YR3	Consumer research skills are integrated into cooperative business bootcamps	Continue to enhance consumer research skills during bootcamps
<b>Output 4. Innovation of novel goods and services by rural entrepreneurs and cooperatives operating in High Atlas cultural landscapes incubated</b>		
Output indicator 4.1 40 novel goods or services identified, marketed and promoted annually YRS 1-5 for a total of 200 by project end;	Supported EBF in identification of innovation business solutions and collaborated on mobile payment exploration in Yr1; Yr2 collaborated on plans for digital marketing access for cooperatives and the Atlas Recovery Connect project to map impact Established partnership with Melting Pot Foundation to explore food innovation  Training of digital ambassadors featured as part of ongoing capacity building offerings	Using established plans for phase 2, develop in depth strategies to achieve indicators on novel goods and services; continue product innovation training and follow up on implementation  Continue working in partnership on cooperative innovation with EBF, Melting Pot, and others  Continue training programming to expand digital ambassadorship of High Atlas cultural landscapes as part of training 40 cooperatives yearly Identify opportunities to support access to improved transport services for cooperatives
Output indicator 4.2 40 new digital ambassadors, 90% of them women, trained annually YRS 1-5 for a total of 200 by project end;		
Output indicator 4.3 Creation of rural digital marketing agencies promoted in the 7 regional hubs by project end;		
Output indicator 4.4 Mobile and other payment service provider options developed by project end;		
Output indicator 4.5 Distribution and transport services provided in each of 7 regional hubs by project end		
<b>Output 5. Digital entrepreneurship and platforms promoted to increase revenues from High Atlas cultural landscape goods and services</b>		
Output indicator 5.1 E-commerce websites and/or social media accounts created for 30 cooperatives annually YRS 1-5, contributing to an average 10% increase in annual sales per cooperative;	Training on e-commerce platforms and social media use delivered to each cohort of cooperatives  3 editions of Harvest Festival Marrakech organised	Expansion of digital entrepreneurship support for cooperatives who have participated in capacity building efforts
Output indicator 5.2		

<p>Digital Tiwizi online marketplace fully operational with over 1000 products from 200 cooperatives by project end, contributing to an average 10% increase in annual sales per cooperative;</p>	<p>Active social media presence for Harvest and other promotion of rural entrepreneurship maintained</p>	<p>Exploration of online platform options with partner EBF</p>
<p>Output indicator 5.3</p> <p>Two 15-day editions of Harvest Festival Marrakech organisation annually, for a total of ten by project end, contributing to an average 10% increase in annual sales per cooperative;</p>		<p>2 editions of Harvest Festival to be organised in YR3</p>
<p>Output indicator 5.4</p> <p>50 graphic design interns placed in creative agencies working with rural cooperative on branding and packaging by YR3</p>		
<p>Output indicator 5.5</p> <p>Social media communication campaign established in year 1 and maintained until project end</p>		

## Annex 2: Project’s full current logframe as presented in the application form (unless changes have been agreed)

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<p><b>Impact:</b> In High Atlas production landscapes of high cultural and biodiversity value, cooperatives drive gender-aware and scalable improvements in conservation, equitable resource distribution and household revenue through sustainable value chain development.</p> <p><b>Outcome:</b> 200 High Atlas cooperatives, comprising 5000 households in 7 regional hubs, increase revenues longterm through improved local product commercialisation while optimising agro-pastoral activities that regenerate cultural landscapes and conserve biodiversity.</p>	<p>0.1: At least 1000 hectares of cultural landscapes restored through wild species replanting, agroecological cultivation and seasonal grazing within a 30,000 km2 region of the High Atlas, leading to quantifiable conservation of 15 indicator plant species and crop varieties by project end</p> <p>0.2 High Atlas Harvest brand established by YR1, linked to established certification and labelling standards by YR3, and used on packaging of at least 200 local cooperative products by project end;</p> <p>0.3 Rural entrepreneurs trained in business skills and mentored, leading to 200 rural cooperatives, 80% of them women-led, with enhanced marketing and commercialisation capacity, experience and knowledge by project end;</p> <p>0.4 Novel goods and services innovated by High Atlas rural entrepreneurs and cooperatives, generating 40 new products annually and 200 by project end, presented to domestic urban consumers by 200 digital ambassadors and original distribution and marketing services;</p> <p>0.5 An online marketplace, 150 e-commerce websites or social media accounts, 10 urban harvest festivals, improved branding and packaging and enhanced social media marketing achieved by project end, leading to an average 10% increase in local product sales annually and 50% by project end, increasing cooperatives’ annual revenues by an average of 30% over the project period.</p>	<p>0.1 Baseline data of indicator species and crop varieties, datasets and results from annual ecological monitoring records, GIS maps of restored landscapes, photo essays</p> <p>0.2 High Atlas Harvest branding guidelines and material, certification and labelling standards manuals, images of High Atlas Harvest label featured on product packaging, local press releases and announcements</p> <p>0.3 Capacity building training reports, training programmes and materials, participant lists, blog posts</p> <p>0.4 Product lists and descriptions, marketing materials, product distribution records, photo essays</p> <p>0.5 Operational website for online marketplace, links of ecommerce websites, press articles on urban harvest</p>	<p>Community members are motivated and willing to participate in restoring their cultural landscapes and maintaining agroecological practices</p> <p>Cooperatives are interested in using the High Atlas Harvest label and engaging in associated certification</p> <p>Rural entrepreneurs are eager and available to receive and participate in training, mentoring and capacity building programmes</p> <p>Cooperatives are motivated to enhance their branding, marketing and packaging</p> <p>E-commerce websites, online marketplace and urban harvest festivals significantly increase local product sales and cooperatives annual revenues</p>
<p>Output 1. Community-based regenerative approaches achieve biodiversity conservation and cultural landscape restoration while increasing agroecological productivity</p>	<p>1.1 Three rural plant nurseries and associated seed reproduction parcels established by YR3 and four nurseries and parcels expanded YR2;</p> <p>1.2 25,000 plants of wild-harvested native species distributed annually for five years;</p> <p>1.3 Seeds of local crop varieties exchanged among a total of 5000 households by project end;</p> <p>1.4 500 agroecosystem parcels with enhanced irrigation, terracing and soil fertility;</p>	<p>1.1 Plant nursery design plans, plant lists, cultivation records, photo essays, blog posts</p> <p>1.2 Plant distribution records, beneficiaries lists, blog posts, local press articles</p> <p>1.3 Seed lists, records of seed exchanges, participant lists</p>	<p>Community members are eager to establish rural plant nurseries and understand these offer an effective approach for biodiversity conservation</p> <p>Rural plant nurseries will produce sufficient plants for annual plant distributions</p>

	1.5 Livelihoods support provided to 500 transhumant pastoralists, 50% of them women, in Agdal communal grazing areas	1.4 Datasets and records of ecological monitoring results, workshop reports, documentation of improved irrigation infrastructures 1.5 List of supplies, educational services, veterinary care and transport assistance provided; photo essays	Farmers are willing to exchange seeds of local crop varieties Farmers are available and interested to enhance irrigation systems, terracing practices and soil fertility
Output 2. Certification and labelling expanded for High Atlas cultural landscape products that meet established criteria and performance standards	2.1 High Atlas Harvest registered as a brand with the Office Marocain de la Propriété Industrielle et Commerciale and as a label with Institut Marocain de Normalisation by YR1; 2.2 Participatory guarantee system for cooperatives established by YR3, 100 cooperatives certified by project end; 2.3 Certification of an additional 100 cooperatives by Office National de Sécurité Sanitaire des Produits Alimentaires by project end; 2.4 Visual identity and packaging improved for 40 cooperatives annually, YRS 1-5 2.5 200 products designated with High Atlas Harvest label by project end	2.1 Official documentation confirming establishment of High Atlas Harvest brand and label 2.2 PGS official documentation, list of 100 cooperatives 2.3 List of 100 cooperatives that received certification 2.4 Database and archive with visual identity and packaging material 2.5 Product records with High Atlas Harvest label, photo essays	Cooperatives are eager to use the High Atlas Harvest Label, to be certified and willing to improve their visual identity and packaging
Output 3. Skills of rural entrepreneurs built to enable High Atlas cooperatives to commercialise local biodiversity friendly products from sustainable cultural landscapes	3.1 Business skills training provided to members of 40 cooperatives annually YRS 1-5, with a total of 200 people, 80% of them women, by project end; 3.2 Mentorship programme established and available progressively for a total of 200 rural entrepreneurs, 80% of them women, by project end; 3.3 Three High Atlas direct trade markets organised in Marrakech annually YRS 1-5 for a total of 15 markets; 3.4 Seven rural enterprise coordinators, the majority women, selected and trained by YR1, employed until project end; 3.5 Consumer research capacity building given to seven rural enterprise coordinators and 50 cooperative managers by YR3	3.1 Training reports, blogs, participant lists 3.2 Programme documentation, photo essay, participant lists 3.3 Market reports, blogs, social media posts, local press articles 3.4 Training programme and reports, photo essay, participant list 3.5 Capacity building workshop reports, participant list	Cooperatives are motivated and available to participate in business skills trainings and mentorship programmes Urban consumers in Marrakech are interested in participating in High Atlas product markets Rural enterprise coordinators are motivated and available to receive training
Output 4. Innovation of novel goods and services by rural entrepreneurs and cooperatives operating in High Atlas cultural landscapes incubated	4.1 40 novel goods or services identified, marketed and promoted annually YRS 1-5 for a total of 200 by project end; 4.2 40 new digital ambassadors, 90% of them women, trained annually YRS 1-5 for a total of 200 by project end;	4.1 Product and services lists, marketing materials 4.2 Training programme, workshop reports, list of digital ambassadors 4.3 Official records of agencies establishment	Cooperatives understand the importance of digital marketing 7 regional hubs need digital ambassadors and marketing agencies to



	<p>4.3 Creation of rural digital marketing agencies promoted in the 7 regional hubs by project end;</p> <p>4.4 Mobile and other payment service provider options developed by project end;</p> <p>4.5 Distribution and transport services provided in each of 7 regional hubs by project end</p>	<p>4.4 List of developed payment services and associated documentation</p> <p>4.5 List of distribution and transport services and associated documentation</p>	<p>promote novel goods and/or services</p> <p>Consumers and cooperatives embrace alternative payment, distribution and transport services</p>
<p>Output 5. Digital entrepreneurship and platforms promoted to increase revenues from High Atlas cultural landscape goods and services</p>	<p>5.1 E-commerce websites and/or social media accounts created for 30 cooperatives annually YRS 1-5, contributing to an average 10% increase in annual sales per cooperative;</p> <p>5.2 Digital Tiwizi online marketplace fully operational with over 1000 products from 200 cooperatives by project end, contributing to an average 10% increase in annual sales per cooperative;</p> <p>5.3 Two 15-day editions of Harvest Festival Marrakech organisation annually, for a total of ten by project end, contributing to an average 10% increase in annual sales per cooperative;</p> <p>5.4 50 graphic design interns placed in creative agencies working with rural cooperative on branding and packaging by YR3</p> <p>5.5 Social media communication campaign established in year 1 and maintained until project end</p>	<p>5.1 List and direct links to websites and/or social media accounts, cooperative sales records</p> <p>5.2 Link to online marketplace and product pages that features over 1000 products, cooperative sales records</p> <p>5.3 Festival programme, social media posts, videos, press releases and articles, blogs, cooperative sales records</p> <p>5.4 Internship agreements</p> <p>5.5 Campaign materials, social media posts</p>	<p>Cooperatives request effective e-commerce websites and/or social media accounts to increase their annual sales</p> <p>Cooperatives eager to participate in the Digital Tiwizi online marketplace and Harvest Festival Marrakech</p> <p>Cooperatives increase annual sales through participation in the online marketplace and Harvest Festival Marrakech</p>
<p><b>Activities</b> (each activity is numbered according to the output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1)</p> <p>1.1 Establish 3 new community plant nurseries and expand 4 existing nurseries</p> <p>1.2 Implement annual plant distribution of 25,000 plants of wild-harvested native species</p> <p>1.3 Exchange seeds of local crop varieties among 5000 households</p> <p>1.4 Enhance irrigation, terracing and soil fertility of 500 agroecosystem parcels</p> <p>1.5 Support livelihoods of 500 transhumant pastoralists</p> <p>2.1 Register High Atlas Harvest as an official brand and label with associated Moroccan national authorities</p> <p>2.2 Establish participatory guarantee system (PGS) for cooperatives</p> <p>2.3 Support certification of an additional 100 cooperatives</p> <p>2.4 Improve visual identity and packaging for 200 cooperatives</p> <p>2.5 Designate 200 local products with High Atlas Harvest label</p> <p>3.1 Provide business boot-camp training to 200 cooperative members</p> <p>3.2 Establish mentorship programme for 200 rural entrepreneurs</p> <p>3.3 Organise 15 High Atlas direct trade markets in Marrakech</p> <p>3.4 Select and train 7 rural enterprise coordinators</p> <p>3.5 Provide capacity building in consumer research to 7 rural enterprise coordinators and 50 cooperative managers</p> <p>4.1 Identify, market and promote 200 novel goods or services</p> <p>4.2 Train 200 new digital ambassadors</p>			

- 4.3 Create rural digital marketing agencies in the 7 regional hubs
- 4.4 Develop mobile and other payment service provider options
- 4.5 Support establishment of distribution and transport services in each of 7 regional hubs
- 5.1 Create E-commerce websites and/or social media accounts for 150 cooperatives
- 5.2 Support operations of the Digital Tiwizi online marketplace with over 1000 products from 200 cooperatives
- 5.3 Organise 10 15-day editions of Harvest Festival Marrakech
- 5.4 Engage 50 graphic design interns in creative agencies working with rural cooperatives on branding and packaging
- 5.5 Establish a social media and communications campaign to promote local products and Harvest Festival Marrakech