



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



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Darwin Initiative Main & 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)

Submission Deadline: 30th April 2025

Submit to: BCF-Reports@niras.com including your project ref in the subject line

• Darwin Initiative Project Information

Scheme (Main or Extra)	Darwin Extra
Project reference	DAREX002
Project title	Ensuring the socio-ecological viability of High Atlas cultural landscapes
Country/ies	Morocco
Lead Organisation	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	£1,399,269.00
Start/end dates of project	01 April 2022 - 31 March 2027
Reporting period (e.g. Apr 2024 – Mar 2025) and number (e.g. Annual Report 1, 2, 3)	Apr 2024 - Mar 2025 Annual Report 3
Project Leader name	Gary Martin
Project website/blog/social media	https://global-diversity.org/hacl-programme/
Report author(s) and date	Gary Martin, Tasnim Elboute, Hiba Shaimed, Aarti Gor 12th May 2025

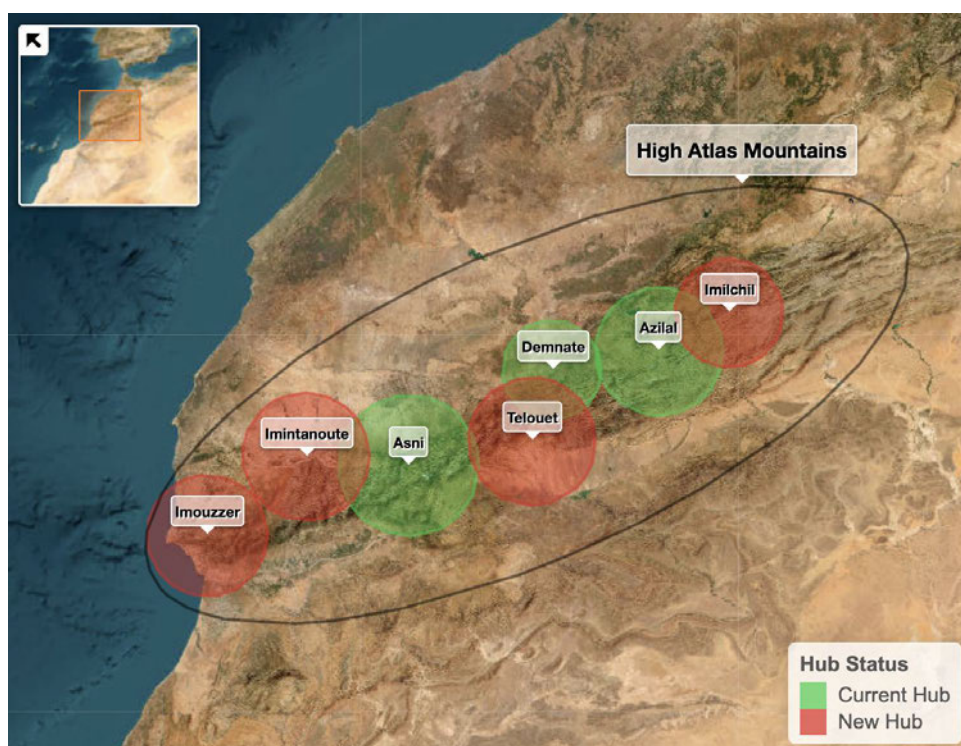
1. Project summary

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. These vulnerabilities were further exacerbated by the 2023 earthquake, which introduced new challenges for local communities in terms of displacement, infrastructure damage, and the disruption of agro-pastoral livelihoods and community-based value chains.

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 (Imegdalen and Oukaïmeden communes - Asni hub) 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, water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter, and coalition building with other post-disaster response initiatives. See Annex 6 for a map illustrating the geographic reach of our earthquake relief program.

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 expand 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 are exploring opportunities for future collaboration with Yvon Langué, the new director of the Graphic Arts department.

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 has supported 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.

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 relief. This initiative supported seed distributions as part of relief activities of the project.

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. 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 seek out new partnerships where possible to maximise impact and reach of our programmes.

3. Project progress

Annexes mentioned in the report can be found in this [Google Drive Folder](#).

3.1 Progress in carrying out project Activities

- **Output 1: Community based regenerative approaches achieve biodiversity conservation and cultural landscape restoration while increasing agro-ecological productivity**

Activity 1.1: Establish 2 new community plant nurseries and enhance 4 existing nurseries

The foundation for the new nursery in Demnat was laid in YR3 after identification of community partners and final site. The site selection started in YR2 with support of our team and lead community cooperative partner. The 3D plan has been approved, and financial estimations are confirmed with construction beginning in April 2025.

The new community plant nursery in Tiliouguite, Azilal province is now operational. The nursery is located in the Tamga Forest and has a focus on forest biodiversity. Several visits and meetings were held with the local community to select a suitable location for the nursery based on key criteria, namely soil quality and water availability. Species are selected collaboratively with the local community based on the following criteria: endemism, economic value, and endangered or threatened status. This nursery brings a new focus on forest species but continues to support key medicinal and aromatic plants.

Activity 1.2: Implement annual plant distribution of 25,000 plants of wild-harvested native species

Distribution of plants from community plant nurseries contributes to reducing harvesting of endangered wild species and making available plants of economic value to High Atlas communities. The YR3 plant distribution took place in February and March. A total of 25,005 plants of 22 species were distributed in 4 hubs: Oukaïmeden (6,468), Ait M'hamed (6,580), Imegdale (6,836) and Zaouiat Ahansal (5,121) to a total of 465 beneficiaries. Beneficiaries include individual community members, school gardens, and community cooperatives. Evaluation of the previous plant distribution (see annex 1.2b) shows 95% of the plants were replanted as intended, confirming commitment of community partners. We anticipate parallel results for YR3.

Activity 1.3: Organize seed fairs and annual exchanges of seeds among High Atlas farmers

Seed exchange among High Atlas producers was promoted through the programme's yearly seed fair in Ait M'hamed Azilal. The July 2024 fair gathered 50 farmers from Al Haouz (Talat N Yaacoub, Ighil, Imegdale, Oukaïmeden) and Azilal (Zaouiat Ahansal and Ait M'hamed) alongside seed collectors and multipliers from Imilchil, Boulmane, Brachoua, Demnat and Ghmat. Researchers and academics from Cadi Ayad University (Marrakech), Hassan I University (Settat), National Research Institute for Agriculture (INRA), and International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) participated in the exchanges around the importance of saving heirloom varieties, the links between seeds and cultural identity. The fair hosted a total of 500 visitors.

Activity 1.4: Enhance agroecosystem parcels through soil fertility interventions, local seed distributions, and capacity building for farming communities

In addition to seed exchange opportunities, the project supports farmers' access to local seed through distributions as part of Earthquake relief interventions (Output 6).

Project efforts to improve irrigation, terracing, and soil fertility across 500 agroecosystem parcels have continued, including enhancing agro-biodiversity by introducing new species. We introduced Azolla and other alternative fodders, along with the reintroduction of cactus species. We held a training session with Mr. Zakaria Mountazia, an expert in Azolla production, for farmers in the Anbdour and Tafarghousst villages. Mr. Mountazia connected the Anbdour Cooperative for Alternative Fodder with a specialist to install a hydroponic fodder chamber, which can produce 350 kg per day. He also shared his chicken farming experiences with Tafarghousst farmers interested in poultry projects. As part of our cactus reintroduction efforts, we partnered with local associations in Talat n'Yaacoub, Ighil, and Terre & Humanisme Maroc to distribute over 1,200 pads of two *Opuntia* cactus varieties to 50 farmers, initiating our multiplication and restoration efforts.

In December 2024, we conducted pruning training for 32 farmers across five villages in the communes of Ighil and Talat n'Yaacoub. The sessions, held from December 19-23, included both theoretical and practical training on tree physiology, pruning techniques, and tool usage demonstrated on a 100m² parcel. Preparation for the training revealed challenges like non-certified pruners and improper tools. The goal was to improve tree health, reduce disease

spread, cut labor costs, and enhance orchard productivity. The sessions covered tree physiology, types of pruning, tool handling and disinfection, and wound protection. Farmers practiced techniques under supervision, focusing on apple, olive, pomegranate, almond, and pear trees (see Annex 1.1a).

Post-training follow-up until March 2025 demonstrated strong uptake: farmers pruned over 600 trees across 52 terraces, covering a total surface of approximately 3500 m². This confirms farmers' ability to adopt improved practices and skills as a result of participatory, skills-based training, and the contribution of these trainings to socioecological resilience.

Remaining challenges identified post-training including the cost of pruning tools and adapting techniques across different trees.

In the transition of relief programming, the project piloted a seed multiplication initiative with 6 farmers from our network of beneficiaries in activity 1.4.

Both 2024 seed distributions prioritized sourcing from smallholder farmers cooperatives in Midelt and Imilchil. This initiative contributes to locally adapted seed availability and longer term vision for seed sovereignty in earthquake affected communities.

The project initiated local multiplication of fava beans, peas, carrots, onions, and turnips. The first cycle involves six farmers across four villages in Talat N'Yaacoub and Ighil, with technical support focused on agroecological practices and varietal purity. By anchoring multiplication at the community level, the initiative promotes local knowledge, contributes to reduction of external dependency, and fosters seed exchange networks rooted in trust and experience.

A second round of multiplication is planned following the harvest of the first cycle, with more farmers expected to join based on interest and observed outcomes. Over time, this initiative aims to strengthen seed autonomy and exchange in the region, support diverse local agrobiodiversity, and enable more resilient and self-sufficient farming systems.

Activity 1.5: Support sustainable practices of 500 pastoralists and livestock keepers, 50% of them women

From June to July 2024, we provided veterinary care for 570 working animals in Talat N'Yaacoub, Ighil, Aghbar, Imegdale and Oukaimden. Our ongoing animal health support included awareness-raising efforts, remote assistance and transportation to clinics as needed. Mobile veterinary care was provided for the animals of 140 pastoralists and 421 livestock keepers in YR3, 45% of them women.

In collaboration with Society for the Protection of Animals Abroad (SPAN) and animal organization SOREC, we organized training sessions for farriers in Al Haouz province, including a two-day session in Marrakech and one-day sessions in Talat N'Yaacoub and Aghbar, focusing on animal care practices, delivered in September and October. 11 farriers benefited from this training (see Annex 1.5b).

The project supported community members from Ighil commune to form an association for shepherds and semi-transhumants, comprising 21 members from Tikhfist and nearby *azibs* (high elevation pastoralist shelters and corrals), representing a community caring for about 5,000 animals annually. Starting in August, we worked with stakeholders to plan the restoration of transhumance shelters and landscapes in the High Atlas, supporting traditional lifestyles.

Throughout the winter period, the project supported pastoralists and livestock keepers with animal fodder: barley (10T), alfalfa (180 bales). 53 pastoralists and 120 livestock keepers benefited from this support, representing 150 working animals and 4700 ruminants. Please see further details on animal fodder distributions and animal shelters in activity 6.4.

In the next reporting period, the project focuses more on capacity building and training. Preparation for the launch of the Livestock-based Farmer Field Schools started in March 2025. See Annex 1.5c and Annex 1.5d for concept notes of planned future interventions.

■ **Output 2: Community based regenerative approaches achieve biodiversity conservation and cultural landscape restoration while increasing agro-ecological productivity**

Activity 2.1: Register High Atlas Harvest as an official brand and label with associated Moroccan national authorities

In YR 3, the project delivered a revised label proposal and outline for standards. Legal registration for the Harvest label will be established in YR 4. The proposal outlines the operational model for the label, financial model, and legal registration pathway (see Annex 2.1)

Activity 2.2: Development of label standards in consultation with relevant stakeholders

Label standards development is ongoing. The standards have been outlined in 4 parts: biodiversity conservation, social impact, production management, and governance. As each section is delivered, focus groups are planned to review feasibility of proposed standards and ensure they are informed by local realities. Consultation with cooperative partners to review proposed standards is done on a cascading timeline to ensure feedback is incorporated during the drafting process. See **Annex 2.2** for sample draft of biodiversity standards.

Activity 2.3: Establish participatory guarantee system (PGS) for cooperatives

This activity is linked to the pilot programming for the label (Activity 2.6) when the proposed model for an adapted participatory guarantee system will be tested. Guidance on implementation of the PGS system is included in the label manual, expected to be delivered by EOYR4.

Activity 2.4: Deliver training on food safety certification to 100 cooperatives

In addition to the proposed Harvest label to support collective marketing of cooperative products, the project works towards supporting food safety certification. Food safety certification granted by ONSSA, Moroccan National Food Safety Office, is a major market entry barrier. Without this certification, cooperatives cannot commercialize their products formally.

In year 3, 18 cooperatives from the Imilchil hub, 11 women-led, benefited from a dedicated workshop on food safety and ONSSA procedures. The training details the entire process required to obtain both the ONSSA agreement and certification. It included detailed guidance on the necessary documentation for each phase, emphasized the importance of team competencies, and addressed the specific conditions related to the cooperatives' local facilities. This workshop was tailored to the unique backgrounds of the Imilchil cooperatives to ensure they can effectively navigate and complete the ONSSA authorization procedures.

Activity 2.5: Improve visual identity and packaging for 200 cooperatives

At the end of the training series (Activity 3.1), that includes a module on Branding & Positioning (see Annex 2.5a for this year's training materials), the project provides visual identity services to renew cooperative branding to cooperative beneficiaries. This activity includes establishing a branding toolkit, renewal of logo, and development packaging materials using the branding guidelines. Renewal of visual identity and packaging was finalised for the 2nd cohort, comprising 24 cooperatives from Imintanout and Idaoutanane. We have initiated this activity for the 3rd cohort of 22 cooperatives as well and it is expected to be complete in June 2025.

While there is a strong demand for enhanced packaging and branding, the renewal of visual identity presents several challenges. This process requires the adoption of new materials and alignment of the cooperative's vision with that of graphic designers. Implementing this activity

with each cohort allows the project to integrate lessons learned in communication and relationship management.

Evaluation of this activity shows positive feedback from cooperative members about modernised branding that effectively preserves cultural heritage and leads to improved sales.

Activity 2.6: Implement Harvest label pilot program

The implementation of this activity is scheduled to begin in years 4 & 5.

- **Output 3: Skills of rural entrepreneurs built to enable High Atlas cooperative to commercialize local biodiversity friendly products from sustainable cultural landscapes**

Activity 3.1: Provide business boot-camp training to 200 cooperative members

In year 3, we continued our comprehensive series of training sessions aimed at enhancing the business skills of rural cooperatives. A capacity-building program was delivered in collaboration with Le Centre Draa Tafilalet Pour le Développement Durable to 18 cooperatives in the Imilchil region, including 11 women-led 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 program was conducted between the months of August 2024 and January 2025.

The training modules covered diverse topics including administrative and financial management, sales techniques & market analysis, visual identity & brand positioning, food safety & ONSSA certification, grant writing & management, food innovation & new product development, and advocacy & communication. They were developed and executed by expert Tamazight-speaking facilitators, ensuring a comfortable and inclusive learning environment. At the end of each training session, evaluations were conducted to gather feedback and recommendations from the cooperatives, providing insights for future improvements

We are currently in the process of selecting a new cohort of cooperatives to participate in the next round of training sessions. The selection is being guided by updated needs assessments and field consultations, with a focus on reaching under-supported cooperatives, particularly women-led groups. The upcoming cohort will build on the lessons learned from the previous sessions and is scheduled to begin training in mid-2025.

Activity 3.2: Establish a mentorship program for cooperative leaders of 200 cooperatives

Through the connections built in our programme, we've seen peer-to-peer mentorship naturally emerge across our four cohorts, comprising a total of 104 cooperatives, 70% of them women-led. By bringing together cooperatives from different backgrounds, we've been able to organise exchange visits where members not only learned from each other but also started collaborating in meaningful ways. Some cooperatives have begun sourcing raw materials from one another, while others have hosted informal workshops to share their expertise. All continue to share opportunities, celebrate achievements, and support each other in exhibitions and trade fairs.

An example of this collaboration is the Aswik cooperative, from our 1st cohort, launched a sales point in Imilil. They invited other cooperatives from our project network to sell their products, to showcase a variety of local products from the High Atlas. This growing sense of community and mutual support is exactly what we hoped to foster through peer-to-peer mentorship.

The emergence of this cooperative network has strengthened the sustainability of our work by creating lasting bonds and collaboration mechanisms beyond the project's direct support. Building on this momentum, we aim in Years 4 and 5 to further structure and formalize the mentorship programme, while continuing to encourage peer-led initiatives.

Activity 3.3: Organize High Atlas direct trade markets in Marrakech

This year, the project successfully continued to promote local cooperatives by organizing two new editions of the High Atlas Food Market. Fifteen cooperatives were featured in each market,

benefiting from increased visibility, direct sales, and valuable connections with potential buyers, partners, and stakeholders, helping to strengthen their market access and long-term resilience.

The 8th edition of the HAFM was held in May 2024 at Noujoum Jamaa El Fna in collaboration with the Ali Zaoua Foundation. This edition was held during The International Society of Ethnobotany ISE (*more details on our contribution to the ISE can be found in section 15, and Annex 7c*) and showcased the role of local plants and traditional knowledge in the cosmetics and agro-food sectors, and attracted over 300 visitors.

The 9th edition took place in October 2024 at the Culinary Arts Museum, in partnership with M Avenue, and focused on supporting earthquake-affected cooperatives. Although a smaller, two-day event, it still welcomed over 100 visitors and provided targeted networking opportunities.

Across both editions, visitors were invited to participate in live demonstrations such as argan oil extraction, herbal infusion preparation, and couscous crafting, offering an immersive experience into the High Atlas' artisanal and culinary heritage. Total sales across the two editions reached 31000 MAD (~2450 GBP).

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

Activity 4.1: Provide training and guidance on product innovation for 200 rural cooperatives

18 cooperatives from the Imilchil hub took part in a workshop series on food innovation and new product development. The session introduced them to key concepts in food innovation and guided them through practical exercises tailored to each cooperative's sector. Rather than taking a one-size-fits-all approach, we worked closely with each group to start shaping new product ideas that reflect their local identity and available resources. By the end of the workshop, each group of cooperatives develops a proposal for a new product with a pathway to development.

Activity 4.2: Train 200 new digital ambassadors

18 cooperatives from the Imilchil hub participated in a training on e-commerce and digital presence. The session highlighted the importance of showcasing local products online and using social media to reach wider audiences. The cooperatives also benefited from training on visual identity and brand positioning, learning how to communicate the story behind their products and their brand visually, even from remote rural areas. These tools are supporting them in building a stronger online presence and positioning themselves as ambassadors of their local heritage in digital spaces. The training lays the foundation for their visual identity renewal in activity 2.5.

Activity 4.3: Support increased access to digital marketing in 7 regional hubs

The project's training for cooperatives includes digital marketing approaches. Due to the diversity of cooperative experience and engagement online, the workshops provided guidance for implementing a digital marketing strategy at two expertise levels. The initial level introduced participants to strategic actions feasible with limited resources. Topics ranged from product commercialization, pricing strategies, and marketing techniques to negotiation tactics, product positioning, cooperative growth monitoring, branding, customer experience, and after-sales service. Strategic concepts such as lead product creation, upselling, cross-selling, targeting, and retention were also discussed. Transitioning to the second level, discussions delved into product classification, tailored strategies for diverse product types, and market analysis.

As part of sustaining the acquired knowledge and skills, the project is developing digital directories in each of the seven hubs. These directories will feature profiles of young people with digital marketing skills in each hub to increase awareness of available services.

Activity 4.4: Increase awareness of mobile and other payment service provider options.

Based on feedback from the dedicated training on mobile and other payment service provider options in YR 1, this topic has been integrated into the digital training for cooperative. Previous feedback from cooperative and insights from our partner Emerging Business Factory, showed that integration on mobile and online payment options have slow uptake by Moroccan consumers. But it remains a valuable tool for cooperative development as they explore ecommerce options.

Activity 4.5: Support coordination of distribution and transport services in each of the 7 regional hubs

The project approach to this activity parallels our work in activity 4.3. The project team knows first-hand the challenges of logistics for cooperatives through the experience of running solidarity markets and in our Harvest Festival programming that connects cooperatives to chefs and restaurants. The goal of this activity is to determine options for alleviating the difficulty of distribution and transport from rural zones and identify and support services for cooperatives. The project is currently developing directories of distribution and transport services for each of the seven hubs, which will be disseminated by the end of project.

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

Activity 5.1: Create and support existing social media accounts for at least 150 cooperatives

Throughout Year 3, we continued to provide support to cooperatives across all cohorts, helping them strengthen their online presence. They benefited from ongoing opportunities to increase their visibility, including being featured at major events such as the Harvest Festivals and High Atlas Food Markets. These platforms allowed cooperatives to promote their products and connect with broader audiences both online and offline.

The new cohort—Cohort 4—was composed of cooperatives from a very remote area, Imilchil, with limited infrastructure and minimal cell reception. Only 4 out of the 18 cooperatives had existing social media accounts prior to the training. As such, they required significant support and benefited greatly from the targeted sessions on digital tools and digital commerce. We plan to conduct a follow-up six months after the training, in June 2025, to assess progress made in applying the digital tools covered. This year, we also followed up on the online presence of Cohorts 2 and 3 from the previous year, and 68% of the cooperatives have been able to enhance their online presence.

Activity 5.2: Create a model for collective online marketplace

Activity completed in Year 2

Activity 5.3: Organize 10 editions of Harvest Festival Marrakech

This year, two vibrant editions of the Harvest Festival Marrakech were successfully organized, each deepening engagement with local cooperatives, cultural practitioners, and broader community audiences.

The Spring 2024 edition was the most visible and dynamic to date, featuring 21 events, including the 8th edition of the High Atlas Food Market, over three weeks. Highlights included the co-organization of five "out of the academy" sessions during the 18th International Society of Ethnobiology Congress, where we also coordinated the Bio-cultural forum and showcased our cooperatives' products and stories. Through the Harvest Residency program, participant Amanny Ahmad worked alongside two cooperatives and community members to promote exchanges on medicinal herbalism and health sovereignty. In collaboration with Um Mami Culinary School, cooperative members participated in a two-day culinary exchange culminating in a public meal event attended by around 50 people, highlighting cooperative products and

biodiversity. The demand to attend demonstrated strong community interest and an opportunity to share the impact of our work in more intimate formats.

The Autumn 2025 edition continued to spotlight cooperative products, which were woven into recipes made by the culinary trainees at Um Mami Melting Pot Morocco, and served as part of a Replanting the Rooftop Garden day and a pop-up market at Dar Bellarj. Creative collaborations flourished, including workshops on ancestral recipes, storytelling, walnut production as well as cookie making class with local partner Amal women's centre. A strong focus on community exchange emerged, exemplified by a culinary collaboration between cooperative members and Um Mami trainees. In total, the festival hosted 18 events, including the 9th edition of the High Atlas Food Market, reaching an estimated audience of over 600 participants.

In late January 2025, the team strengthened its network by supporting an exhibition on water politics and poetics at our regular partner cultural venue LE18 during the 1:54 African Art Fair, enhancing the project's visibility and opening pathways for future collaborations.

Activity 5.4: Establish a social media and communications campaign to promote local products and Harvest Festival Marrakech

This year, we continued to use the Harvest Festival Marrakech [social media platforms](#) as a key channel to promote our partner cooperatives and their local products. Through regular posts, storytelling, and highlights around major events such as the Harvest Festival and the High Atlas Food Markets, we successfully expanded our online community, growing by 600 followers over the year.

Building on this momentum, the next step of the campaign is to extend the visibility of partner cooperatives through the Harvest Festival's website. It will feature detailed profiles of each cooperative, including pictures, key information, and their main products. The data for these profiles will be compiled from our internal database of cooperatives (see Annex 5.4a for detailed information on our partner cooperatives and their products). An interactive map is also under development to visually display the location of each cooperative. A preview of the map can be found in Annex 5.4b.

■ Output 6: EQ support

In response to the September 8th 2023 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. In the emergency phase spanning from September 2023 to March 2024, the program also accompanied High Atlas communities across the axes of education, WASH, shelter, and coalition building with other post-disaster response initiatives. See Annex 6 for a map illustrating the geographic reach of our earthquake relief program

Activity 6.1: Coordinate volunteers and staff to provide direct assistance; distribute emergency food aid and essential non-food items to affected households

This activity was completed during Year 2, immediately following the September 2023 earthquake. For more details, please see the detailed Earthquake Response Report.

Activity 6.2: Coordinate emergency period support and needs assessment during the emergency period, including medical caravans, distributions, and coordination among peer organizations

Coordination and needs assessment activities were initiated in Year 2, immediately following the September 2023 earthquake, and have continued into Year 3. GDF has remained an active participant in NGO coordination clusters, leading the livelihoods and food security group, contributing to both immediate relief efforts and longer-term recovery initiatives for the affected communities. There were 5 clusters established: health, shelter, WASH, protection, and livelihoods.

As part of our ongoing efforts to foster collaboration and coalition-building among organizations involved in the earthquake response, we partnered with Emerging Business Factory and UM6P to launch Atlas Recovery Connect (ARC) in Year 2. ARC was designed as a digital platform to consolidate, map, and analyze the data generated by actors involved in the earthquake response.

In Year 3, work on ARC has continued, with ongoing efforts to compile data from various sources and integrate them into a centralized dashboard, as a central hub for information sharing and enabling more effective collaboration across organizations involved in the recovery process (see Annex 6.2b).

Activity 6.3: Coordinate distribution of tents & support access to temporary shelters

This activity was completed during Year 2, immediately following the September 2023 earthquake. For more details, please see the detailed Earthquake Response Report.

Activity 6.4: Implement a mid-term livelihoods-centric relief and recovery programming to strengthen High Atlas agricultural livelihoods

During Year 2, the project supported earthquake-affected farmers, pastoralists, livestock keepers and cooperatives through two rounds of seed distributions, veterinary caravans, livestock shelter construction, fodder distribution, and a business readiness and mental health training program for 10 women cooperative leaders.

(For full details of Year 2 activities, please refer to the Earthquake Response Report)

In Year 3, the project continued its mid-term livelihoods support to local farmers by carrying out two additional rounds of seed distributions in partnership with the ReBuild program of Mohammed VI Polytechnic University (UM6P) in October 2024 and April 2025 – with a focus on barley, peas, beans, carrots, turnips, and other subsistence crops – in the earthquake-affected communes of Ighil, Talat N'Yaacoub, Ijoukak, and Imegdale. Seeds were sourced from the local wholesale market and directly from farmers and seed producers in Midelt and Imilchil regions. 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 111 villages in the first round and 113 villages in the second round. In total, 3423 farmers were reached: 3114 farmers in October 2024, and 3423 in April 2025. The April distribution included all farmers from October, plus an additional 309 new recipients. The distributions supported agricultural productivity and food security, aligning with community agricultural calendars and are expected to cover approximately 1,500 hectares of land.

In parallel, the project continued its support to pastoralists and livestock keepers. Between April and June 2024, 38 additional livestock shelters were constructed in collaboration with Wind Peace Japan (see Annex 6.4e). And a second round of fodder distribution was organized with our local partner MBLA benefiting 53 pastoralists and 120 livestock keepers in the earthquake-affected communes.

Activity 6.5: Establish 10 primary school classrooms for affected communities, including WASH facilities

As part of the earthquake relief programme, GDF completed the construction of temporary primary school classrooms with WASH facilities during Year 2, immediately following the September 2023 earthquake. These classrooms, which have benefited over 410 students, were established to restore access to education in the most severely affected areas (see Annex 6.1).

In Year 3, to mark one year since the earthquake, GDF reinforced its commitment to education by distributing school supplies to six school hubs in Imegdale, Ijoukak, and Ighil—communities where we maintain long-term partnerships. The initiative benefited 949 students and included textbooks, workbooks, notebooks, and writing instruments. The distribution aimed to ease the

financial burden on families, support students' return to routine, and strengthen ties with local educational institutions (see Annex 6.5).

3.2 Progress towards project Outputs

- **Output 1: Community based regenerative approaches achieve biodiversity conservation and cultural landscape restoration while increasing agro-ecological productivity**

We are confident that we will be able to achieve the regenerative goals identified in Output 1 by the end of the grant period. The goals of output 1 were integrated into post-earthquake relief activities due to community needs. YR 1 - 3 set a strong foundation for the project despite the interruption of originally planned activities. Some activities extended beyond the originally planned scope of the project, supporting exchange and access to local seed, supporting agro ecological producers, pastoralists, and livestock keepers. Activities related to evaluating soil fertility and agroecological and livestock training are being reintegrated into the project plan in Years 4 and 5.

In YR 3, two community plant nurseries are at different stages of implementation: one fully operational in Tiliouguite (see Annex 1.1b) and another in Demnat (see Annex 1.1a) with construction beginning in April 2025. The four existing nurseries continue to be strengthened, with efforts focused on seedlings production – with 40222 seedlings produced this year (see Annex 1.2a), and enhancing community engagement through improved accessibility, the installation of sitting areas, and the addition of educational elements such as printed informational signs and plant labels (Indicator 1.1). The yearly plant distribution met its annual target, as in previous years, with over 25,000 native species distributed (Indicator 1.2) (see Annex 1.1c). Seed sovereignty efforts are advancing, and while participation in the 2024 seed fair reached 50 farmers (Indicator 1.3) (see Annex 1.3), the broader initiative was reinforced through complementary actions, including seed distributions carried out under the earthquake response program (Activity 6.4) and the piloting of local seed multiplication with six farmers. Project efforts to implement sustainable management practices across agroecosystem parcels have continued, including farmer training, and the introduction of new species to enhance agro-biodiversity and soil fertility, reaching a total of 52 parcels this year, and a total of 84 to date (Indicator 1.4). Through a range of capacity building and awareness-raising activities for transhumant pastoralists, 140 pastoralists and 421 livestock keepers, 45% of them women, have been reached this year (see Annex 1.5a), for a total of 211 pastoralists and 805 livestock keepers to date, 51% of whom are women (Indicator 1.5).

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

In the aftermath of the earthquake, the timeline for activities under output 2 was reevaluated to ensure the project focused on the most needed interventions in the post disaster context. Training on food safety certification (see Annex 2.4) continues to be a core need for cooperative partners and we have reached 18 cooperatives in YR3, and a total of 87 cooperatives in this area of training, more than 70% women-led, exceeding the planned goal of 60 cooperatives by end of YR3 (Indicator 2.4). In addition, renewal of visual identity and packaging was finalized for 24 cooperatives (see Annex 2.5b) and is ongoing for 22 more cooperatives, reaching a total of 57 cooperatives receiving branding and packaging support from the start of the project, 78% women-led (Indicator 2.5). Based on the ongoing development of label standards (Indicator 2.2) and revised timeline for label implementation (Indicator 2.1), the project is set to deliver the PGS and label pilot program (Indicators 2.3 and 2.6), with the intermediate milestones of legal registration, standards development, and cooperative selection in YR 4-5.

- **Output 3: Skills of rural entrepreneurs built to enable High Atlas cooperative to commercialize local biodiversity friendly products from sustainable cultural landscapes**

Progress under Output 3 continues to reflect our commitment to rural economic empowerment, with strong results despite delays in onboarding new cooperative partners. This year, we delivered a tailored business bootcamp training series (see Annex 3.1 for the bootcamp report, and Annexes 3.1b, 3.1c, 4.1, 4.2, 2.4 and 2.5a for more details on the modules included in the bootcamp) in the Imilchil region, engaging 18 cooperatives (11 women-led), who also joined the mentorship program. This brings the cumulative total to 104 cooperatives, 70% of which are women-led. While this is below our goal of 120 cooperatives by Year 3 (Indicator 3.1 and Indicator 3.2), we are confident that we will reach our goal of 200 cooperatives by project end with targeted outreach in Years 4 and 5. To assess the impact of our trainings, we conducted follow-up surveys for Cohorts 2 and 3 (cohorts that have received training in Year 2). All the participating cooperatives reported improved business planning skills (Indicator 3.1, target: 70%), and increased confidence in business operations (Indicator 3.2, target: 60%). A follow-up survey for Cohort 4 is planned for July 2025. We also sustained momentum with the High Atlas Food Markets (HAFM), a cornerstone of our work to connect rural producers with urban markets to commercialize local biodiversity friendly products from sustainable cultural landscapes. This year, two editions of HAFM were successfully executed, meeting our annual goal (Indicator 3.3). Each event hosted an average of 15 cooperatives, slightly below the 20-cooperative target (see Annex 3.3). Over the course of the project, we have now implemented five of the ten planned markets, with an average of 18 cooperatives per edition, maintaining strong performance across this indicator. Despite the lower-than-anticipated number of new cooperatives onboarded this year, our adaptive planning and targeted support are positioning the program to deliver fully on its goals. The groundwork laid this year—particularly in hard-to-reach regions—reinforces our inclusive approach to entrepreneurship.

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

The work under output 4 is steadily progressing. The organising of multiple markets, training of digital ambassadors, and initial discussions on digital directories development indicated progress in marketing, digital skills, effectively aligning the project with its objectives.

The 4th cohort of 18 cooperatives benefited from the training module on product innovation (see Annex 4.1), including the development of a new product proposal guided by an expert. A follow-up survey will be conducted in June 2025 to assess changes in the range of goods and products they commercialize. Across all cohorts, at least 198 new products have been introduced by partner cooperatives since joining the program—78 by the 1st cohort, 47 by the 2nd, and 73 by the 3rd—reaching the planned goal under Indicator 4.1 of 200 products by project end.

In parallel, the 4th cohort also received training on e-commerce, digital tools and mobile payment options (see Annex 4.2). To date, 104 digital ambassadors (70% women) completed the training, and 100% of the surveyed ambassadors reported applying the skills acquired (Indicators 4.2 and 4.4). In addition, 104 cooperatives, of which 70% are women-led, have increased access to digital marketing services, including support on digital tools, branding, and visual identity (Indicator 4.3).

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

Progress under Output 5 has continued steadily during year 3, with ongoing support for social media accounts of our partner cooperatives. This year's cohort was composed of cooperatives from a very remote area, Imilchil, with limited infrastructure and digital access, resulting in only 4 new social media accounts supported this year, for a total of 58 to date / 90 planned

(Indicator 5.1). A follow-up survey will be conducted for cohort 4 in June 2025 to assess any changes in their online presence following the different trainings received. Findings will be included in the next annual report. Among cooperatives from old cohorts, –Cohorts 1, 2, and 3, 68% have shown an increase in online presence (Indicator 5.1), tracked by measuring growth in followers, using the baseline recorded when each cooperative joined the program and comparing it to follower counts as of April 2025 (see Annex 5.1).

In addition, both planned Harvest Festival editions were successfully executed this year (see Annex 5.3 for the festivals' program), bringing the cumulative total to 7 festivals delivered out of the 10 planned for the duration of the project—placing us ahead of schedule (Indicator 5.3). These events continue to serve as key platforms for cooperative visibility, product marketing, and community engagement. The online presence of the Harvest Festival brand itself continues to grow, with over 600 new followers in Year 3. Just between the end of Year 1 and the end of Year 3, the number of followers doubled, already exceeding the planned target of a 50% increase in engagement (Indicator 5.4). This reflects continued interest and engagement from both rural producers and urban consumers.

These activities collectively contribute to the project's broader goals of enhancing digital entrepreneurship, strengthening marketing skills, and increasing the visibility of rural goods and services across diverse platforms and audiences.

■ Output 6: EQ support

Progress has continued under Output 6.

Indicators 6.1 and 6.3—relating to emergency distributions, shelter, WASH interventions, and other direct relief activities—were achieved during Year 2. More than 400 students benefited this year from the temporary primary school classrooms established in YR2 (Indicator 6.5). For more details, please refer to the detailed Earthquake Response Report.

In Year 3, GDF has remained an active participant in NGO coordination clusters, leading the livelihoods and food security group, while maintaining ties with more than 100 affected communities to guide both immediate relief and long-term recovery efforts (Indicator 6.2) (see Annex 6.2a for the list of partner communities)

Significant progress was also made under Output 6 with livelihoods support for farmers, pastoralists, and livestock keepers. Activities included the distribution of seeds, tools, shelter materials, and fodder. This year alone, 3423 farmers benefited from seed distribution (see Annex 6.4a), and 53 pastoralists and 120 livestock keepers benefited from fodder distribution (see Annex 6.4b).

Cumulatively, a total of 3423 farmers, 217 pastoralists, 747 livestock keepers, and 10 cooperative members have been reached through livelihood interventions—well exceeding the initial target of 1,000 beneficiaries (Indicator 6.4). Progress was tracked using verified field data, including beneficiary lists for each distribution and dedicated implementation reports documenting each activity.

3.3 Progress towards the project Outcome

The project continues to make meaningful progress toward its intended outcome: enabling 200 High Atlas cooperatives—representing 5,000 households across seven regional hubs—to increase long-term revenues through improved commercialization of local products, while supporting agro-pastoral practices that regenerate cultural landscapes and conserve biodiversity.

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 20 indicator plant species and crop varieties by project end;

In YR 3, work under outputs 1 and 6 to support agricultural livelihoods in earthquake affected communities reached 1500 ha supported restored through agro-ecological cultivation and wild species replanting. This represents smallholder production of 3423 farmers, each representing a household. To date, the reach of activities under this indicator is 2267 ha. Conservation efforts are still ongoing for 39 plant species through the community nurseries.

0.2 High Atlas Harvest brand established by YR4, linked to established certification and labelling standards by YR4, and used in pilot label program by project end;

Based on the ongoing development of label standards and revised timeline for label implementation, the project is set to deliver the label pilot program with the intermediate milestones of legal registration, standards development, and cooperative selection in YR 4-5.

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;

To date, 104 cooperatives, representing more than 1800 households, have completed business skills training and joined the mentorship program, 70% of which are women-led. While slightly behind the Year 3 target of 120 cooperatives, this represents substantial momentum, particularly considering delays in Year 1 and post-earthquake adaptations. With expanded outreach planned in Years 4 and 5, the project remains on track to meet the final goal of 200 cooperatives. Follow-up surveys indicate improved business planning and marketing capacities among trained cooperatives, confirming the effectiveness of the training and mentorship model.

0.4 Novel goods and services innovated by High Atlas rural entrepreneurs and cooperatives, identifying 40 new products annually and 200 by project end, presented to domestic urban consumers by 200 digital ambassadors and original distribution and marketing services;

Significant strides have been made in fostering innovation and novel goods among High Atlas rural entrepreneurs and cooperatives. A total of 198 novel goods have been identified and developed to date—nearing the target of 200. These products have been commercialized through cooperative networks and featured in High Atlas Food Markets. To support visibility, 104 digital ambassadors (70% women) have been trained to assist cooperatives in promoting their products. 120 cooperatives total have benefited from the urban solidarity markets, showcasing product innovation and facilitating exchange between cooperative leaders.

0.5 An online marketplace model, 150 cooperative with online presence through social media and/or websites, 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 up to 50% by project end.

To improve commercialization of cooperatives' local products, the project has offered continued support to 58 cooperatives to establish or enhance their online presence through social media or websites so far. Five of the ten planned High Atlas Food Markets (HAFMs) have been delivered, showcasing cooperatives' products and strengthening urban-rural linkages. These events, along with improved branding and packaging for 57 cooperatives, are boosting cooperatives' exposure and readiness to access wider markets.

These efforts, along with the online marketplace model developed in Year 2 and the ongoing social media communication campaign resulted in 33,9% average increase in sales so far.

To assess the impact of these interventions on cooperative revenues, we implement a structured tracking process:

- Baseline financial data is collected when each cooperative enters the program. This baseline reflects the total annual revenue for the previous calendar year.
- Annual financial updates are gathered each December, allowing us to track changes in revenue over time.
- We compute year-on-year revenue increases at the individual cooperative level by comparing the current year's sales to the previous year's.
- We then aggregate these results to calculate cohort-level averages, and overall average, allowing us to monitor average growth trends across different entry years.

The table below summarizes the results to date by cohort:

Cohort	Year of baseline data collection	Average increase in sales after one year	Average increase in sales after two years	Average increase in sales after three years
Cohort 1	2022	39,47% (2022-2023)	40,73% (2024-2023)	2025 financial data is due at the end of the calendar year
Cohort 2	2023	21,49% (2023-2024)	2025 financial data is due at the end of the calendar year	
Cohort 3	2024	2025 financial data is due at the end of the calendar year		
Cohort 4	2024	2025 financial data is due at the end of the calendar year		

Note: Financial data for 2025 will be collected at the end of the current calendar year, allowing a more robust analysis of Cohorts 2–4 in future reporting.
Further details on cooperative financial data are available in Annex 0.5.

3.4 Monitoring of assumptions

Our monitoring of assumptions reveals that almost all of them (23 out of 25) 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, 99 rural cooperatives have enthusiastically participated in skill-building opportunities.

Assumption: Effective communication and collaboration exist among peer organizations to facilitate coordinated assessments and support.

Comments: As noted in 3.1 Progress towards project Activities, under Activity 6.2, we've successfully collaborated with various actors involved in earthquake relief efforts.

For two assumptions, we have not had the opportunity to assess if they are valid:

- Rural enterprise coordinators are motivated and available to receive training

The project has structured cooperative relationship management through program officers and community researchers. While we don't use the title 'rural enterprise coordinator', team members acting as liaisons between cooperative partners and the project are motivated and available to receive training.

- Consumers and cooperatives embrace alternative payment, distribution and transport services

We have not had the opportunity to fully assess this assumption. While it is not the right time to focus on the online payment transition, cooperative partners identify distribution and payment services as areas for improvement.

3.5 Impact: achievement of positive impact on biodiversity and multidimensional 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 3 allowed the project to reach over 3400 households with direct livelihoods support. Households within this target group are participating in agricultural parcel enhancement seed replication. Additionally, thousands of plants were distributed in years 1,2 and 3 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.
- Our partner cooperatives have grown and diversified the products they commercialize. The project also aims to enhance their online and digital presence, 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. Looking ahead to Years 4 and 5, the project will amplify these efforts and cooperative visibility, by enhancing the Harvest Festival social media presence and website, with the goal of showcasing our cooperative partners and their work more widely on our platforms.

In the long-term, our project is the foundation of a large-scale regional programme that inextricably links 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 biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihood initiatives—such as maintaining community seed banks and nurseries, supporting cooperatives with environmentally friendly production practices, and aiding small farmers with agroecological training—align with Morocco’s national sustainable development policies and international commitments.

These efforts support Morocco’s National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) and the Green Generation (GG) Strategy. GDF’s community-based approach aims to enhance biodiversity and restore cultural landscapes while boosting agro-ecological productivity, contributing to NSDS conservation targets. Ongoing monitoring of local plant species is guided by the IUCN Red List.

Local product commercialization through rural cooperatives is vital for transitioning to a green economy, particularly benefiting women in rural areas. Recognized in the GG Strategy 2020-2030, cooperatives are key to sustainable livelihoods and economic development, helping to establish an agricultural middle class.

Our initiatives also support SDG 8 on economic growth, SDG 10 on reducing inequality, and SDG 5 on gender equality, with over 80% of our cooperatives led by women. Our approach bridges environmental and social sustainability, reinforcing international agreements like the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA). We integrate local knowledge and ensure equitable benefit-sharing from plant genetic resources.

Support for rural agroecological enterprises aligns with the Nagoya Protocol, promoting collective resource management. By scaling up our socio-ecological production landscapes, we aim to enhance biodiversity conservation and ensure sustainable livelihoods for thousands of rural households, overlapping with environmental policy targets.

5. Project support for multidimensional poverty reduction

Our program addresses poverty through the empowerment and improved resilience of local communities, as well as the enhancement of economic and social sectors. Developed in close collaboration with local communities, the project ensures that the benefits align with their needs and aspirations. From the start, we have engaged community members in a participatory approach, incorporating their input into the design and implementation of the project—whether in cooperatives, farmers and pastoralists training, or during the emergency response to the earthquake. Our efforts to support the livelihoods of local communities have already reached more than 3000 farmers, 1,176 pastoralists and livestock keepers, and 1800 households through cooperative activity.

For our partner cooperatives, we focus on building their capacities, ranging from administrative and financial governance to enhancing their visual identity and digital marketing through comprehensive training sessions. Additionally, we continue distributing plants and providing ongoing agroecological training, all aimed at improving food production quality and seed distribution while uplifting rural livelihoods.

By facilitating access to urban markets and consumers through initiatives like the High Atlas Food Markets and the Harvest Festival, we directly contribute to income generation and poverty reduction 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 their market share, fostering economic growth. Our emphasis on providing e-services capacity building for social entrepreneurs enables them to expand their online presence, creating fresh opportunities for income generation and contributing to sustainable poverty reduction.

Through the provision of comprehensive training sessions, we equip cooperative members with the necessary skills and knowledge to improve their productivity and efficiency. The positive impact is widespread: the turnover of our partner cooperatives has shown an overall increase since they integrated our program. These improvements underscore the significant contribution of our training programs toward fostering economic growth and sustainability within our cooperatives.

6. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

GESI Scale	Description	Put X where you think your project is on the scale
Not yet sensitive	The GESI context may have been considered but the project isn't quite meeting the requirements of a 'sensitive' approach	
Sensitive	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.	
Empowering	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
Transformative	The project has all the characteristics of an 'empowering' approach whilst also addressing unequal power relationships and seeking institutional and societal change	

Resource access varies by gender and social background, and influences engagement with biodiversity and management of natural resources. Often there is a mismatch between contribution to conservation and access to resources. Recognizing gender and social power dynamics reveals barriers to economic opportunities, particularly for women in rural areas with limited education backgrounds.

The project aims to support 200 rural cooperatives – mostly women-led –to improve livelihoods by innovative production and marketing of local agricultural, cosmetic, and craft goods while they conserve High Atlas biodiversity and cultural landscapes. Gender equality and social inclusion considerations are incorporated at different levels of program design: supporting women's leadership in rural entrepreneurship, ensuring community needs assessments are representative through the inclusion of women (particularly in the post-earthquake context), project team are able to communicate with community partners in Moroccan Arabic and Tachelhit (local indigenous dialect), and capacity building is informed by cooperative needs and tailored to each geographic area in the project. With cooperatives as beneficiaries, capacity building, participation in solidarity markets, and efforts to increase online visibility lead to increased access to livelihood benefits and resources in the rural economy.

Cooperatives play a unique role in the High Atlas region as one of the only institutions working against rural exodus by creating livelihood pathways, specifically for women in rural areas who have less access to formal work. They valorise local products that require sustainable management. The GESI context has been considered and project activities take this into account in the design and implementation but more importantly, the context of the High Atlas and cultural landscapes approach requires it of the project.

Multiple women leaders report the social stigma they encountered while establishing cooperatives with community members, misperceptions about women's groups, being underestimated by male leaders, among other tensions such as navigating members' ability to work outside the home. Most have shared that this attitude shifts at the household and community level once the cooperative becomes a source for community livelihoods.

The project is gender-empowering as it focuses on supporting community-led cooperatives capabilities and access to resources. Cooperatives are formed by representative networks from the High Atlas that have the double role of biodiversity custodians and rural enterprises, improving livelihoods for their communities. As such the project touches on attitudes towards gender, gendered environmental knowledge, roles and responsibilities, representation, and resources.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

We recognise that a robust Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) system is essential to ensuring that our project outputs and activities effectively contribute to the intended outcomes, respecting the planned timeline for implementation. This year, we continued to build on the foundation established in previous years while piloting improvements to strengthen responsiveness, learning, and internal coordination.

Our team continues to use an online M&E table, linked to all projects under the wider High Atlas Cultural Landscapes (HACL) programme, to track progress against both standard and project-specific indicators. Regular weekly team meetings and quarterly internal evaluations help us assess progress, identify challenges, and adjust plans as needed. We also hold bi-weekly coordination calls with our partner MBLA and 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 and is supporting the ongoing M&E of our project.

We have integrated our new data officer, Hiba Shaimed, to support centrally on M&E of the project. She is supporting the team to ensure continuous M&E, including monthly check-ins with team members to review progress on activities and indicators, give feedback, and identify where adaptations were needed. We also introduced a shared internal M&E framework (see Annex 7i) to formalise processes and clarify roles within the team from data collection, to analysis, reporting, and internal feedback. Initial results from this trial period have been promising, particularly in improving the team's ability to respond to implementation challenges in a timely manner.

8. Lessons learnt

Planning: On the programmatic side, we learned valuable lessons around resource management and budgeting. Over the year, we engaged in several discussions around ensuring value in programme expenditures. As a team, we reflected that value for money does not necessarily mean opting for the cheapest option but rather selecting the most feasible and impactful choice that aligns with the goals of the programme intervention. Another key lesson was the importance of accounting for additional team time.

M&E: We realised that integrating learning loops more systematically could help us respond more proactively throughout the year. In Years 4 and 5, we plan to establish more regular internal review touchpoints, bringing together team members to review progress against

indicators, surface implementation challenges earlier, and allow time for corrective action. Our aim is to make the M&E process more continuous and embedded in day-to-day implementation rather than concentrated around reporting deadlines. This shift will help ensure that data collection, reflection, and adaptation happen in real time, strengthening the project's responsiveness and overall effectiveness.

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is unclear which progress the project has made regarding the planned certification of an additional 100 cooperatives by Office National de Sécurité Sanitaire des Produits Alimentaires (Output indicator 2.3). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With BCF's approval, the project's logframe was revised and this output indicator was updated. Rather than focusing on direct certification numbers, the project now emphasizes preparatory food safety training for cooperatives (Indicator 2.4) as a more realistic and impactful pathway toward eventual certification. Progress on this front has been made, as detailed in Section 3.2.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project plans the "creation of rural digital marketing agencies promoted in the 7 regional hubs by project end" (Output indicator 4.3). The progress of this activity is unclear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With BCF's approval, the project's logframe was revised and this output indicator was updated to reflect a more context-appropriate approach. The focus has shifted from establishing standalone agencies to providing access to digital marketing services in each regional hub (Indicator 4.3). Progress on this front has been made, as detailed in Section 3.2.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The section Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against logframe, needs more attention. The project is not always reporting against the indicators and some part of the information is linked to Year 1. It would be recommendable to strengthen the reporting using the proposed indicators and add evidence to the report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have improved the section – Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements– by systematically reporting against the updated logframe indicators, and providing up-to-date information and evidence from Year 3. Throughout the report, more attention has been paid to using the indicators when reporting progress towards the outputs and outcome, and to referencing the relevant annexes where applicable.

10. Risk Management

This year, we have continued refining our risk management strategies and identified several new risks that were previously unaccounted for. These include:

1. **Cybersecurity Risks:** In light of escalating geopolitical tensions and the rise in global data security breaches, we have recognised cybersecurity as an emerging risk. This is especially relevant as our finances, transactions, and bookkeeping are managed online, increasing our vulnerability to potential cyberattacks. We already have systems in place, such as two-factor authentication, transaction approvals, and close monitoring of financial transactions. This year, we also plan to develop a comprehensive

- cybersecurity policy, which will include a detailed plan and procedures to guide us in maintaining a secure and vigilant approach to safeguarding our data and systems.
2. **Team Burnout and Mental Health:** This has been identified as a potential risk. While we have not yet observed significant instances of burnout or mental health challenges within the team, we recognise that such issues could arise and affect the overall performance and productivity of the project. To proactively address this, we are working on support strategies to ensure the well-being of our team and mitigate any future risks.
 3. **Data Loss Risk:** A potential risk of data loss due to file corruption or cloud storage issues has been raised. While the specifics of this risk are not fully known, the risk of losing critical program files, reports, and data due to a system malfunction or cloud failure is significant. As a first step, we have moved our data to Google Workspace to enhance security and ensure better protection for our files, and are developing a backup plan to further mitigate this risk.
 4. **Climatic and Environmental Changes:** The High Atlas region has experienced low rainfall this year, which has affected water availability and may impact seed germination and survival. Limited water availability and unpredictable weather patterns could delay or reduce the effectiveness of restoration activities and complicate access to remote sites, particularly in areas still recovering from the earthquake. To address this, we are developing flexible timelines that allow field teams to adjust activities during extreme weather conditions and integrating contingency plans into our annual work plans.
 5. **Political and Regulatory Changes:** Shifts in government policies, administrative leadership, or development priorities, particularly around biodiversity, decentralisation, or NGO operations, could restrict project activities or delay approvals. We are actively engaging with local and national authorities, to make sure we have an oversight on the policy changes and other developments.
 6. In terms of project design, and in response to the risk assessment from the AR2 following the earthquake, one of the most significant adaptations this year was a revision to the project's log frame. Following the evaluation visit and the feedback received, we adjusted the framework to better align with the evolving challenges and opportunities identified during the earthquake response. These changes were essential to ensure that our activities remain relevant and responsive to the needs on the ground. The updated log frame, which was approved, now more effectively captures the adjusted priorities.

11. Scalability and durability

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.

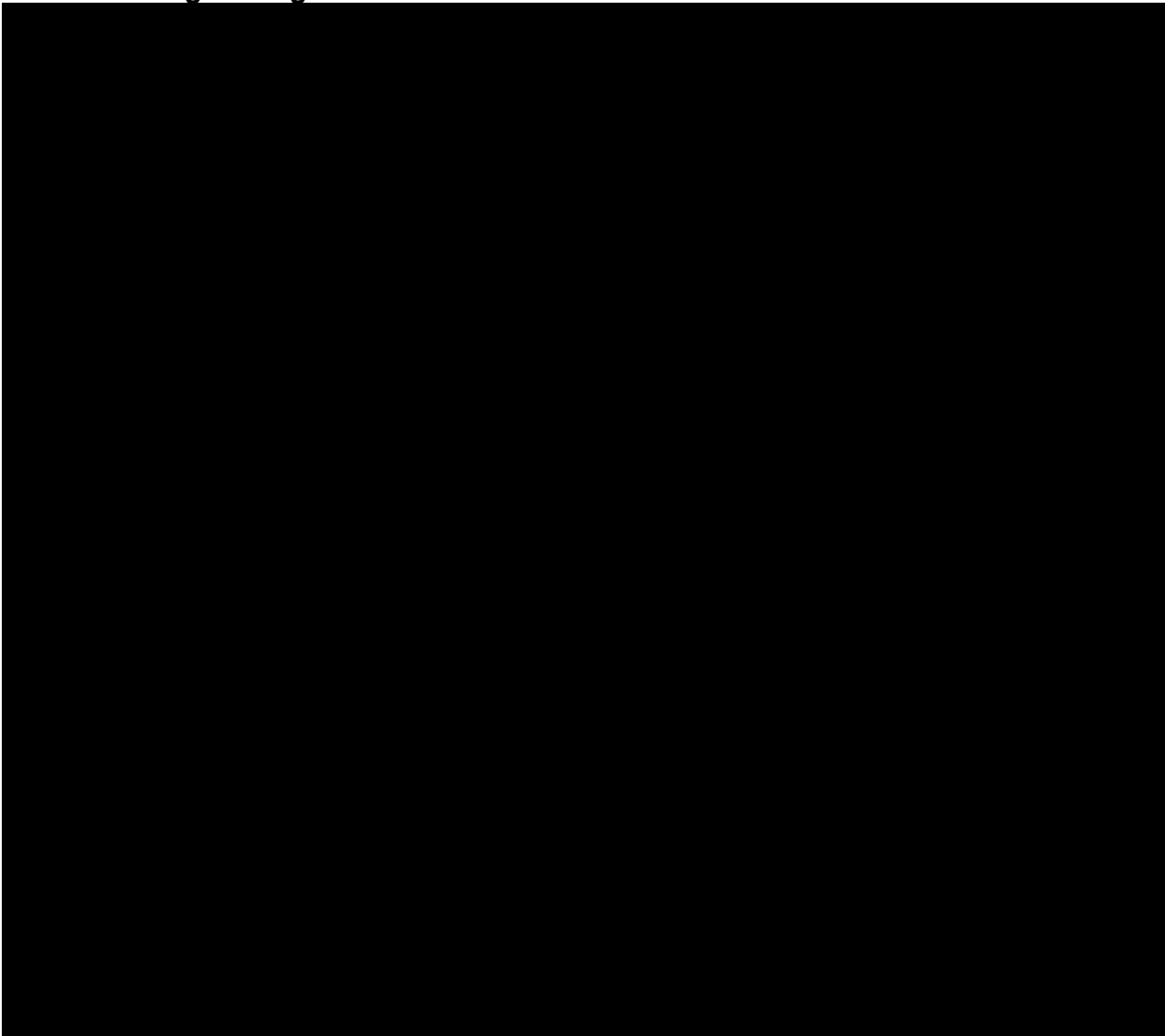
We've been cultivating strong relationships with other NGOs in the wake of the September earthquake. We continue to be involved in coordination efforts including knowledge capitalization. This includes sharing and exchanging livelihood- centric relief support and how

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. In year 3, we finalize relief programming and continue scaling up. 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 (4,600+ Facebook, 3100+ Instagram and 3,500+ LinkedIn followers), and in GDF’s Annual Reports.

13. Safeguarding



14. Project expenditure

Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025)

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2024/25 Grant (£)	2024/25 Total Darwin Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs (see below)				
Consultancy costs				
Overhead Costs				
Travel and subsistence				
Operating Costs				
Capital items (see below)				
Others (see below)				
TOTAL	£ 424,111	£ 424,111	0%	

In this particular reporting period, we moved all capital items to the operational expenditure line, which has resulted in a 117% variance under operational costs and a corresponding -100% under capital expenditure. All of these capital items were part of our earthquake response efforts and fall under Shelter, WASH, and Livelihoods Support including tents, pallets, temporary homes, heaters, toilets, construction materials, water management materials, livestock shelters, and agricultural support. These were not retained by GDF but rather distributed directly to affected communities as part of the response. We understand from Darwin's guidelines that capital costs should be treated as assets. However, as these items were not procured for GDF's use or retention but rather provided to communities, they do not constitute assets on our books. We have raised this with BCF finance team so we can finalize the financial reporting for YR3.

Table 2: Project mobilised or matched funding during the reporting period (1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025)

	Secured to date	Expected by end of project - YRS 3-5	Sources
Matched funding leveraged by the partners to deliver the project (£)			MAVA Foundation, Hans Wilsdorf Foundation, Chancemaker Foundation, Cartier for Nature
Total additional finance mobilised for new activities occurring outside of the project, building on evidence, best practices and the project (£)			Choose Love Foundation, Sir Horace Kadoorie International Foundation

15. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

- Marketing manager, Andrea Worthoff, based in the US, supported with an internship on argan entrepreneurship during one month in the field (Agadir region) and 4 months of deskwork (December 2024-April 2025), in order to elaborate a best practices document to support cooperative's regeneration and resilience in the argan national and international markets. An executive summary of Andrea's fieldwork findings during the month of February 2025 can be found in Annex 7a. A more comprehensive report, titled "Guardians of the Argan Forest: A Regenerative Roadmap and Practical Guide for Cooperative Legacy", is currently under review and will be finalized in June 2025; a draft is included in Annex 7b.
- In 2024, GDF hosted the 18th International Society of Ethnobiology (ISE) Congress. The Congress was held at Cadi Ayyad University in Marrakech from 15–19 May 2024, bringing together nearly 400 participants from over 70 countries. Academics, activists, practitioners, and Indigenous leaders explored the theme Biodiversity and Cultural Landscapes: Scientific, Indigenous, and Local Perspectives. Co-organised by ISE, Cadi Ayyad University, the Moroccan Biodiversity and Livelihoods Association (MBLA), the Centre for Development and Environment (Switzerland), and the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (France), the Congress was supported by local partners including LE 18, Dar Bellarj Foundation, Les étoiles de Jemaa El Fna, Um Mami – Melting Pot, and a team of 30 volunteers. The programme featured 56 sessions, 230 contributions, and field trips to Oukaimeden and Sidi Bou Othmane. The Biocultural Forum offered art installations, ethnobotany breaks, and seed exchanges, including GDF's Patchwork of Belonging. At its core was the Indigenous, Local and Community Knowledge Forum, where traditional knowledge holders led discussions on biocultural diversity, food sovereignty, and Indigenous conservation strategies including multiple cooperative partners. Detailed report of our contribution to the congress can be found in **Annex 7c**.
- A series of publications in peer-reviewed journals have been elaborated by the HACL team. These include:
 - No atlas for the High Atlas: Academic publication available [here](#)
 - Maps of the High Atlas: 9 maps produced for the "No atlas for the High Atlas" publication, as supplementary materials accompanying the written publication. These have been published [here](#) and the shapefiles can be downloaded from **Annex 7e**
 - Conserving and regenerating the High Atlas cultural landscapes: gendered perspectives from the local Amazigh communities: Peer-reviewed article (recommendations article) under review by Environmental Development journal. Article can be found in **Annex 7f**

- Livestock health in the High Atlas: Literature review completed, can be found in Annex 7g
- Community evaluation of local varieties of cereals and legumes in the High Atlas: Academic publication in preparation, abstract can be found in Annex 7h

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).

In February 2024, Global Diversity Foundation was awarded the Humanitarian Medal by HM King Charles III for contributing to the response following the Al Haouz earthquake. The recognition reflects the work carried out through the High Atlas Cultural Landscapes Programme, in coordination with Moroccan Biodiversity & Livelihoods Association and community partners. Local communities shaped every stage of the response from emergency support to recovery planning. This award acknowledges the role of community-led efforts and the value of long-term relationships, which enabled a grounded and coordinated response in a time of crisis.

Please see the annex folder for images of the ceremony.

● **Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against logframe for Financial Year 2024-2025**

Project summary	Progress and Achievements April 2024 - March 2025	Actions required/planned for next period
<p>Impact</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 nurseries to ensure local varieties are preserved and to encourage production of large variety of plants; cooperatives managing landscapes through sustainable wild harvesting while diversifying their products and increasing revenues; small producers integrating agroecological techniques for increased productivity and greater sustainability</p>	
<p>Outcome 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 km² region of the High Atlas, leading to quantifiable conservation of 20 indicator plant species and crop varieties by project end</p>	<p>1500 ha supported restored through agro-ecological cultivation and wild species replanting; conservation efforts for 39 plant species through the community nurseries.</p> <p>Evidence provided in section 3.2: Output 1, section 3.1: Activity 6.4, and Annex 6.4a, Annex 1.2a</p>	<p>Activities related to evaluating soil fertility and agroecological training are being reintegrated into the project plan; 2 new community plant nurseries producing the indicator plant species</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.2</p> <p>High Atlas Harvest brand established by YR4, linked to established certification and labelling standards by YR4, and used in pilot label program by project end</p>	<p>Delivered a revised label proposal and outline for standards.</p> <p>Evidence provided in section 3.1: Output 2 and Annex 2.1, Annex 2.2</p>	<p>Legal registration of High Atlas Harvest brand by EOYR4</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>Cohort 4, comprising 18 cooperatives, 60% women-led, mentored and trained in business skills and marketing.</p> <p>Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 3.1 and Annex 3.1a</p>	<p>New cohort selection is ongoing</p>

<p>Outcome indicator 0.4</p> <p>Novel goods and services innovated by High Atlas rural entrepreneurs and cooperatives, identifying 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>198 new products identified to date and commercialized by cooperatives and through the High Atlas Food Markets; training of 18 digital ambassadors, 60% women.</p> <p>Evidence provided in section 3.2: Output 4 and Annex 4.1, Annex 4.2</p>	<p>Continued development of novel products through training; initiation of label campaign after legal registration</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.5</p> <p>An online marketplace model, 150 cooperative with online presence through social media and/or websites, 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 up to 50% by project end</p>	<p>Support 18 cooperatives' online presence (only 4 of them had social media accounts prior to the training); 2 Harvest Festivals organized; improved branding and packaging for 57 cooperatives; resulting in an average increase in sales of 33,9%</p> <p>Evidence provided in section 3.2: Output 5, section 3.2: Output 2, section 3.3 and Annex 5.1, Annex 5.3, Annex 2.5b, Annex 0.5</p>	<p>Continue delivering support in line with previous years</p>
<p>Output 1.</p> <p>Community based regenerative approaches achieve biodiversity conservation and cultural landscape restoration while increasing agro-ecological productivity</p>		
<p>Output indicator 1.1</p> <p>Two fully operational new plant nurseries established in Years 3 and 4, each with a minimum of 10,000 seedlings annually. And 4 existing nurseries enhanced for community engagement and seed reproduction yearly</p>	<p>One operational new plant nursery and another in Demnat with construction beginning in April 2025; 4 existing nurseries enhanced and producing 40000+ seedlings</p> <p>Evidence provided in section 3.2: Output 1, section 3.1: Activity 1.1 and Annex 1.1a, Annex 1.1b, Annex 1.2a</p>	<p>Establish Demnat nursery; continue work in existing nurseries in line with previous years</p>
<p>Output indicator 1.2</p> <p>25,000 native species seedlings distributed annually for five years, with at least 80% survival rate after one year</p>	<p>25000+ seedlings distributed.</p> <p>Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 1.2 and Annex 1.2b</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>1000 households actively participating in seed exchange programs yearly, with of total of 5000 households by project end</p>	<p>50 farmers actively participated in a seed exchange fair, indicator reinforced through seed distribution to 3000+ farmers this year.</p> <p>Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 1.3 and Annex 1.3</p>	<p>Promote seed exchange opportunities and scale up the seed multiplication effort</p>
<p>Output indicator 1.4</p> <p>1.4. 500 agroecosystem parcels improved with sustainable water management and soil conservation techniques, reporting increased agrobiodiversity and soil fertility scores by project end</p>	<p>52 parcels improved with sustainable water management and soil conservation techniques.</p> <p>Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 1.4 and Annex 1.4a</p>	<p>Reintegrate activities related to evaluating soil fertility and agroecological training</p>

Output indicator 1.5 500 transhumant pastoralists and livestock keepers, at least 50% of them women, engaged in capacity-building programs and adopting improved practices	140 pastoralists and 421 livestock keepers, 45% of them women, engaged in capacity building and awareness-raising activities. Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 1.5 and Annex 1.5a	Focus more on capacity building and training Evidence provided in Annex 1.5c, Annex 1.5d
Output 2. Certification and labelling expanded for High Atlas cultural landscape products that meet established criteria and performance standards		
Output indicator 2.1. High Atlas Harvest brand legally registered and compliant with Moroccan certification and labeling standards by YR4	The project delivered a revised label proposal and outline for standards. Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 2.1 and Annex 2.1	Legal registration of High Atlas Harvest brand by EOYR4
Output indicator 2.2. Label standards on cooperative governance, biodiversity, production management, and social impact delivered in YR4	Label standards development is ongoing. Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 2.2 and Annex 2.2	Label standards delivered by EOYR4
Output indicator 2.3. PGS framework developed and piloted with at least 30 cooperatives by project end		Pilot programme to be launched after the label registration
Output indicator 2.4. 20 cooperatives, 80% women-led, trained yearly on Moroccan food safety certification processes, for a total of 100 cooperatives by project end	18 cooperatives, 60% women-led, received training on food safety certification processes in YR3. Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 2.4 and Annex 2.4	Continue training for new cohorts
Output indicator 2.5. At least 35 cooperatives per year, 80% women-led receive branding and packaging support, for a total of at least 175 cooperatives by project end	Renewal of visual identity and packaging finalized for 24 cooperatives (Cohort 2) and ongoing for 22 cooperatives (Cohort 3), 76% women-led Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 2.5 and Annex 2.5b	Complete branding and packaging support for Cohort 3 by June 2025. Support Cohort 4, and new cohorts.
Output indicator 2.6. 30 cooperatives participate in Harvest label pilot program by project end		Pilot programme to be launched after the label registration
Output 3. Skills of rural entrepreneurs built to enable High Atlas cooperative to commercialise local biodiversity friendly products from sustainable cultural landscapes		
Output indicator 3.1.	Cohort 4 comprising 18 cooperatives, 60% women-led, received training in financial management, marketing, and	Conduct Cohort 4 follow-up survey in July 2025.

40 cooperatives, 80% women-led, trained yearly in financial management, marketing, and product development for a total of 200 by project end, with 70% reporting improved business planning skills	product development in YR3. 100% of cooperatives from previous cohorts report improved business planning skills. Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 3 and Annex 3.1a	New cohort selection is ongoing
Output indicator 3.2. 40 cooperatives, 80% women-led, engaged yearly in a structured mentorship program for a total of 200 by project end, with at least 60% reporting increased confidence in business operations	Cohort 4 comprising 18 cooperatives, 60% women-led, joined the mentorship programme in YR3. 100% of cooperatives from previous cohorts report increased confidence in business operations. Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 3.2	Structure and formalize the mentorship programme, while continuing to encourage peer-led initiatives
Output indicator 3.3. At least 2 High Atlas direct trade markets organised in Marrakech annually YRS 1-5 for a total of 10 markets with an average of 20 cooperatives engaged in each market	2 High Atlas direct trade markets organised in Marrakech with an average of 15 cooperatives engaged in each market Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 3.3 and Annex 3.3	
Output 4. Innovation of novel goods and services by rural entrepreneurs and cooperatives operating in High Atlas cultural landscapes incubated		
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	198 new products identified to date. Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 4.1	Continue product innovation training and follow up on implementation
Output indicator 4.2. 40 new digital ambassadors, 80% of whom are women, trained annually YRS 1-5 for a total of 200 by project end and reporting applying the skills learned	Cohort 4 comprising 18 cooperatives, 60% women-led, received training as digital ambassadors in YR3. 100% of cooperatives from previous cohorts report applying the skills learned. Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 4.2 and Annex 3.1a, Annex 4.2	Conduct Cohort 4 follow-up survey in July 2025. New cohort selection is ongoing
Output indicator 4.3. Providing access to digital marketing services in each regional hub, for 40 cooperatives annually, 80% women-led, YRS 1-5 for a total of 200 coops by project end	Cohort 4 comprising 18 cooperatives, 60% women-led, have increased access to digital marketing services in YR3. Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 4.3 and Annex 3.1a, Annex 4.2	Develop digital directories in each of the seven hubs, featuring profiles of young people with digital marketing skills in each hub to increase awareness of available services

Output indicator 4.4. Training on mobile and other payment service options provided to 200 cooperative representatives, 80% of whom are women	Cohort 4 comprising 18 cooperatives, 60% women-led, receive training on mobile and other payment service options in YR3. Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 4.4 and Annex 3.1a	New cohort selection is ongoing
Output indicator 4.5. Distribution and transport services guide produced for each regional hub		Develop directories of available services for the seven hubs to be distributed by project end
Output 5. Digital entrepreneurship and platforms promoted to increase revenues from High Atlas cultural landscape goods and services		
Output indicator 5.1. Social media accounts created and supported for 30 cooperatives annually YRS 1-5 for a total of 150 by project end, with 50% successfully increasing their online presence	Support 4 social media accounts for cohort 4, 14 cooperatives had no online presence prior to joining the program. 68% of cooperatives from previous cohorts successfully increased their online presence. Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 5.1 and Annex 5.1	Follow-up with cohort 4 to assess changes in online presence. Continued support for past and future cohorts.
Output indicator 5.2. "Digital Tiwizi marketplace" online model for e-commerce developed by Year 2	Indicator relating to activities completed in YR2	
Output indicator 5.3. Two Harvest Festival Marrakech editions per year successfully executed, for a total of ten by project end	Two Harvest Festival Marrakech in May 2024 and November 2024 Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 5.3 and Annex 5.3	Organise 2 Harvest Festivals in YR4
Output indicator 5.4. Social media communication campaign launched in Year 1 and maintained throughout, increasing social media engagement by 50% over the project period	23% increase in engagement during YR3, already exceeded the overall goal of 50% increase over the project period Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 5.4	Scale up social media campaign and increase visibility of partner cooperatives; Mapping of cooperatives in Harvest Festival's website
Output 6. Earthquake response		
Output indicator 6.1.	Indicator relating to activities completed in YR2	

At least 1,000 households in 40 affected communities receive emergency food aid and NFIs (clothing, baby products, hygiene kits, solar projects, flashlights)		
<p>Output indicator 6.2.</p> <p>Develop response strategy during emergency period in consultation with community members and peer organizations; connect with village associations in at least 40 communities for needs assessment and monitoring</p>	<p>Active participation in NGO coordination clusters, leading the livelihoods and food security group, while maintaining ties with more than 100 affected communities.</p> <p>Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 6.2 and Annex 6.2a</p>	Maintain collaboration beyond the emergency phase, despite the formal end of our earthquake response programme
<p>Output indicator 6.3.</p> <p>At least 1,000 beneficiaries with temporary shelter (tents, mattresses, blankets, solar lighting, cooking facilities) by Spring 2024</p>	Indicator relating to activities completed in YR2	
<p>Output indicator 6.4.</p> <p>At least 1,000 affected community members benefit from livelihoods support including agricultural seed, fodder and livestock shelters, veterinary caravans, and cooperative support</p>	<p>Conducted 2 rounds of seed distribution benefiting 3423 farmers.</p> <p>53 pastoralists and 120 livestock keepers benefited from fodder distribution and temporary shelters for their animals.</p> <p>Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 6.4 and Annex 6.4a, Annex 6.4c, Annex 6.4e</p>	In Years 4 and 5, the focus will shift from direct livelihoods support to our usual activities under Output 1 (regenerative approaches, capacity building)
<p>Output indicator 6.5.</p> <p>At least 400 students able to access primary school classrooms</p>	<p>413 students able to access the primary school classrooms established in YR2</p> <p>Evidence provided in section 3.1: Activity 6.5 and Annex 6.1</p>	Continued use by the communities under the supervision of local principals and teachers

● **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
Impact: 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.			
Outcome: 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.	0.1 At least 1000 hectares of cultural landscapes restored through wild species replanting, agroecological cultivation and seasonal grazing within a 30,000 km ² region of the High Atlas, leading to quantifiable conservation of 20 indicator plant species and crop varieties by project end 0.2 High Atlas Harvest brand established by YR4, linked to established certification and labelling standards by YR4, and used in pilot label program by project end 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 0.4 Novel goods and services innovated by High Atlas rural entrepreneurs and cooperatives, identifying 40 new products annually and 200 by project end, presented to domestic urban consumers by 200 digital ambassadors and original distribution and marketing services 0.5 An online marketplace model, 150 cooperative with online presence through social media and/or websites,	0.1 Baseline data of indicator species and crop varieties, datasets and results from annual ecological monitoring records, photo essays 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 0.3 Capacity building training reports, training programmes and materials, participant lists, blog posts 0.4 Product lists and descriptions, marketing materials, product distribution records, photo essays 0.5 Operational website for online marketplace, links of e commerce websites, press articles on urban harvest festivals, financial records of cooperatives annual sales with sources of revenue (website, social media, urban market)	0.1 Community members are motivated and willing to participate in restoring their cultural landscapes and maintaining agroecological practices 0.2 Cooperatives are interested in using the High Atlas Harvest label and engaging in associated certification 0.3 Rural entrepreneurs are eager and available to receive and participate in training, mentoring and capacity building programmes 0.4 Cooperatives are motivated to enhance their branding, marketing and packaging 0.5 E-commerce websites, online marketplace and urban harvest festivals significantly increase local product sales and cooperatives annual revenues

	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 up to 50% by project end		
Output 1 Community based regenerative approaches achieve biodiversity conservation and cultural landscape restoration while increasing agro-ecological productivity	1.1 Two fully operational new plant nurseries established in Years 3 and 4, each with a minimum of 10,000 seedlings annually. And 4 existing nurseries enhanced for community engagement and seed reproduction yearly 1.2 25,000 native species seedlings distributed annually for five years, with at least 80% survival rate after one year 1.3 1000 households actively participating in seed exchange programs yearly, with of total of 5000 households by project end 1.4 500 agroecosystem parcels improved with sustainable water management and soil conservation techniques, reporting increased agrobiodiversity and soil fertility scores by project end 1.5 500 transhumant pastoralists and livestock keepers, at least 50% of them women, engaged in capacity-building programs and adopting improved practices	1.1 Plant nursery design plans, plant lists, cultivation records, photo essays, blog posts 1.2 Plant distribution records, beneficiaries lists, blog posts, local press articles, post-distribution surveys 1.3 Seed lists, records of seed exchanges, participant lists 1.4 Records of ecological monitoring results, training reports, post-training surveys, crop seeds distribution records 1.5 List of supplies, educational services, veterinary care and transport assistance provided; photo essays, post-training surveys	Community members are eager to establish rural plant nurseries and understand these offer an effective approach for biodiversity conservation Rural plant nurseries will produce sufficient plants for annual plant distributions 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 brand legally registered and compliant with Moroccan certification and labeling standards by YR4 2.2 Label standards on cooperative governance, biodiversity, production	2.1 Official documentation confirming establishment of High Atlas Harvest brand and label 2.2 Label standards documentation	Cooperatives are eager to use the High Atlas Harvest Label, to be certified and willing to improve their visual identity and packaging

	<p>management, and social impact delivered in YR4</p> <p>2.3 PGS framework developed and piloted with at least 30 cooperatives by project end</p> <p>2.4 20 cooperatives, 80% women-led, trained yearly on Moroccan food safety certification processes, for a total of 100 cooperatives by project end</p> <p>2.5 At least 35 cooperatives per year, 80% women-led receive branding and packaging support, for a total of at least 175 cooperatives by project end</p> <p>2.6 30 cooperatives participate in Harvest label pilot program by project end</p>	<p>2.3 Framework documentation, list of cooperatives, pilot activity documentation</p> <p>2.4 Training reports, list of cooperatives</p> <p>2.5 Branding and packaging materials, list of cooperatives</p> <p>2.6 List of cooperatives</p>	
<p>Output 3</p> <p>Skills of rural entrepreneurs built to enable High Atlas cooperative to commercialise local biodiversity friendly products from sustainable cultural landscapes</p>	<p>3.1 40 cooperatives, 80% women-led, trained yearly in financial management, marketing, and product development for a total of 200 by project end with 70% reporting improved business planning skills</p> <p>3.2 40 cooperatives, 80% women-led, engaged yearly in a structured mentorship program for a total of 200 by project end with at least 60% reporting increased confidence in business operations</p> <p>3.3 At least 2 High Atlas direct trade markets organised in Marrakech annually YRS 1-5 for a total of 10 markets with an average of 20 cooperatives engaged in each market</p>	<p>3.1 Training reports, blogs, participant lists, post-training surveys</p> <p>3.2 Programme documentation, photo essay, participant lists, post-program survey</p> <p>3.3 Market reports, blogs, social media posts, local press articles, list of cooperatives</p>	<p>Cooperatives are motivated and available to participate in business skills trainings and mentorship programmes</p> <p>Urban consumers in Marrakech are interested in participating in High Atlas product markets</p> <p>Rural enterprise coordinators are motivated and available to receive training</p>

<p>Output 4</p> <p>Innovation of novel goods and services by rural entrepreneurs and cooperatives operating in High Atlas cultural landscapes incubated</p>	<p>4.1 40 novel goods or services identified, marketed and promoted annually YRS 1-5 for a total of 200 by project end</p> <p>4.2 40 new digital ambassadors, 80% of whom are women, trained annually YRS 1-5 for a total of 200 by project end and reporting applying the skills learned</p> <p>4.3 Providing access to digital marketing services in each regional hub, for 40 cooperatives annually, 80% women-led, YRS 1-5 for a total of 200 coops by project end</p> <p>4.4 Training on mobile and other payment service options provided to 200 cooperative representatives, 80% of whom are women</p> <p>4.5 Distribution and transport services guide produced for each regional hub</p>	<p>4.1 Product and services lists, marketing materials</p> <p>4.2 Training programme, workshop reports, list of digital ambassadors, post-training surveys</p> <p>4.3 Activity reports, participant list</p> <p>4.4 Training reports, participant list</p> <p>4.5 Guide documentation for each hub</p>	<p>Cooperatives understand the importance of digital marketing</p> <p>7 regional hubs need digital ambassadors and marketing agencies to promote novel goods and/or services</p> <p>Consumers and cooperatives embrace alternative payment, distribution and transport services</p>
<p>Output 5</p> <p>Digital entrepreneurship and platforms promoted to increase revenues from High Atlas cultural landscape goods and services</p>	<p>5.1 Social media accounts created and supported for 30 cooperatives annually YRS 1-5 for a total of 150 by project end, with 50% successfully increasing their online presence</p> <p>5.2 "Digital Tiwizi marketplace" online model for e-commerce developed by Year 2</p> <p>5.3 Two Harvest Festival Marrakech editions per year successfully executed, for a total of ten by project end</p> <p>5.4 Social media communication campaign launched in Year 1 and maintained throughout, increasing social media engagement by 50% over the project period</p>	<p>5.1 List and direct links to websites and/or social media accounts, activity reports, monitoring reports on online presence</p> <p>5.2 Documentation of ecommerce model, activity reports</p> <p>5.3 Festival programme, social media posts, videos, press releases and articles, blogs</p> <p>5.4 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>

Output 6 Earthquake response	6.1 At least 1,000 households in 40 affected communities receive emergency food aid and NFIs (clothing, baby products, hygiene kits, solar projects, flashlights) 6.2 Develop response strategy during emergency period in consultation with community members and peer organizations; connect with village associations in at least 40 communities for needs assessment and monitoring 6.3 At least 1,000 beneficiaries with temporary shelter (tents, mattresses, blankets, solar lighting, cooking facilities) by Spring 2024 6.4 At least 1,000 affected community members benefit from livelihoods support including agricultural seed, fodder and livestock shelters, veterinary caravans, and cooperative support 6.5 At least 400 students able to access primary school classrooms	6.1 Distribution and beneficiaries records 6.2 Response strategy documentation, list of partners, list of partner communities 6.3 Distribution and beneficiaries records 6.4 Activities and beneficiaries records 6.5 Classrooms establishment records by community	Sufficient numbers of volunteers and staff are available to effectively coordinate and deliver assistance. There is access to reliable supply chains for timely procurement and distribution of food and non-food items. Effective communication and collaboration exist among peer organizations to facilitate coordinated assessments and support. The needs assessments accurately reflect the priorities and requirements of affected communities. Local authorities are cooperative and provide the necessary permissions and support for all areas of support.
Activities (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) 1.1 Establish 2 new community plant nurseries and enhance 4 existing nurseries 1.2 Implement annual plant distribution of 25,000 plants of wild-harvested native species 1.3 Organize seed fairs and annual exchanges of seeds among High Atlas farmers 1.4 Enhance agroecosystem parcels through soil fertility interventions, local seed distributions, and capacity building for farming communities 1.5 Support sustainable practices of 500 pastoralists and livestock keepers, 50% of them women 2.1 Register High Atlas Harvest as an official brand and label with associated Moroccan national authorities 2.2 Development of label standards in consultation with relevant stakeholders 2.3 Establish participatory guarantee system (PGS) for cooperatives 2.4 Deliver training on food safety certification to 100 cooperatives			

- 2.5 Improve visual identity and packaging for 200 cooperatives
- 2.6 Implement Harvest label pilot program

- 3.1 Provide business boot-camp training to 200 cooperative members
- 3.2 Establish a mentorship program for cooperative leaders of 200 cooperatives
- 3.3 Organize High Atlas direct trade markets in Marrakech

- 4.1 Provide training and guidance on product innovation for 200 rural cooperatives
- 4.2 Train 200 new digital ambassadors
- 4.3 Support increased access to digital marketing in 7 regional hubs
- 4.4 Increase awareness of mobile and other payment service provider options.
- 4.5 Support coordination of distribution and transport services in each of the 7 regional hubs

- 5.1 Create and support existing social media accounts for at least 150 cooperatives
- 5.2 Create a model for collective online marketplace
- 5.3 Organize 10 editions of Harvest Festival Marrakech
- 5.4 Establish a social media and communications campaign to promote local products and Harvest Festival Marrakech

- 6.1 Coordinate volunteers and staff to provide direct assistance; distribute emergency food aid and essential non-food items to affected households
- 6.2 Coordinate emergency period support and needs assessment during the emergency period, including medical caravans, distributions, and coordination among peer organizations
- 6.3 Coordinate distribution of tents & support access to temporary shelters
- 6.4 Implement a mid-term livelihoods-centric relief and recovery programming to strengthen High Atlas agricultural livelihoods
- 6.5 Establish 10 primary school classrooms for affected communities, including WASH facilities

■ **Table 1 Project Standard Indicators**

Please see the Standard Indicator guidance for more information on how to report in this section, including appropriate disaggregation.

DI Indicator number	Name of indicator	If this links directly to a project indicator(s), please note the indicator number here	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
DI-A01	Number of people from key national and local stakeholders completing structured and relevant training	3.1	People	Men	13	11	7	31	40
DI-A01	Number of people from key national and local stakeholders completing structured and relevant training	3.1	People	Women	24	38	11	73	160
DI-A04	Number of people reporting that they are applying new capabilities (skills and knowledge) 6 (or more) months after training]	3.1	People	Men		13	11	24	28
DI-A04	Number of people reporting that they are applying new capabilities (skills and knowledge) 6 (or more) months after training]	3.1	People	Women		24	38	62	112
DI-D01a	Area under Sustainable Management Practices	1.4 + 6.4	Number of hectares		0	2267	1500	2267	1000
DI-D05b	Number of people with improved resilience	3.1 + 6.4	Number of households		415	3820	3726	5230	5000

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■ **Table 2 Publications**

Title	Type (e.g. journals, best practice manual, blog post, online videos, podcasts, CDs)	Detail (authors, year)	Gender of Lead Author	Nationality of Lead Author	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. weblink or publisher if not available online)
No Atlas for the High Atlas	Academic publication	Authors : Ugo D'Ambrosio, Giandaniele Castangia Date: August 2024	Man	Spanish		No atlas for the High Atlas? Supplementary materials
Conserving and regenerating the High Atlas cultural landscapes: gendered perspectives from the local Amazigh communities	Research paper	Under review Authors: Ugo D'Ambrosio Omar Saadani Hassani Rachid Ait Babahmad Abdellah Aghraz Meryem Aakairi Soufiane M'Sou Fadma Ait Iligh Touda Atyah Hamid Ait Baskad Mohamed Ait Boujamaa Pommelien da Silva Cosme Irene Teixidor-Toneu	Man	Spanish	Environmental Development	Annex 7f