



**BIODIVERSITY  
CHALLENGE FUNDS**



## **Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus Half Year Report**

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum of 2-3 pages** in length.

If there is any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website, please ensure you clearly highlight this.

**Submission Deadline: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025**

Please note all projects that were active before 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025 are required to complete a Half Year Report.0

Submit to: [BCF-Reports@niras.com](mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com) including your project ref in the subject line.

Project reference	DAREX003
Project title	Climate resilience, food, and livelihood security for agro-pastoralists in Somalia
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Somalia (Somaliland and Puntland)
Lead Organisation	The Development Fund of Norway
Partner(s)	ADO and KAALO
Project Leader	Elin Cecilie Ranum
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	HYR1, 31 October 2025
Project website/blog/social media	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/DevelopmentFundNorway/">https://www.facebook.com/DevelopmentFundNorway/</a>

**1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed project implementation timetable (if your project started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end of September).**

**Output 1: Two new Community Seed Banks CSBs established with full equipment and management structures; three existing CSBs enhanced to deliver high-quality seeds:**

Overall, this output greatly improved the efficiency of the targeted CSBs by strengthening the skills and competencies of both CSB Committee members and targeted agropastoral households. Despite the ongoing challenges faced by the target villages especially those related to recurrent droughts and other climate change impacts, significant progress within the CSBs over the last two quarters have been observed.

Progress under this output involved several key activities aimed at strengthening the management capacity of the community seedbank committees. Under **Activity 1.7**, a three-day CSB Management Practices Training was organized for the Midhisho CSB Committee, attended by 15 participants (11 men and 4 women). A similar training session was conducted in Dulcadale, where 10 Committee members (8 men and 2 women) participated. The training enhanced participants' practical skills in seed handling, including seed selection, cleaning, treatment, documentation, processing, storage, monitoring, and regeneration.

Under **Activity 1.8**, a weighing scale was provided to the Midhisho CSB to improve seed measurement, packaging, and record-keeping. This intervention was complemented by a training session on proper weighing procedures for 20 participants (15 men and 5 women), including farmers and CSB Committee members from Dulcadale.

**Activity 1.9** focused on strengthening transparency, accountability, and efficiency in seed revolving. A three-day Internal Control Training was delivered to 17 participants (14 women and 3 men) from the Beer CSB, which contributed to improved governance and management practices within the seedbank.

Finally, under **Activity 1.10**, a two-day Farm-Based Seed Identifying and Handling Training was conducted for 17 smallholder farmers (12 men and 5 women). In addition, an awareness session on similar topics was delivered to 25 smallholder farmers (15 men and 10 women) living in areas located far from the CSBs. These sessions addressed critical issues related to proper seed handling during harvest, contributing to better seed quality and post-harvest management.

**Output 2: Five CSBs (2 new, 3 existing) supported in selling seeds beyond local markets:**

During this reporting period, substantial progress was made to improve the market reach, business development, and financial sustainability of CSBs. Under **Activity 2.1**, a comprehensive market survey was conducted to assess seed demand, supply chains, pricing structures, and potential marketing opportunities, providing valuable insights to guide the strategic operations of the Midhisho CSB. Under **Activity 2.2** a four-day training focused on operation and marketing competencies, was delivered to the CSB Committees (40 participants (25 men, 15 women)), including CSB committee and staff, was provided. Under **Activity 2.3**, A three-day training of trainers (TOT) on Agriculture Extension Services was held for six (four men and two women) newly identified village-level lead farmers,. They will provide agricultural trainings and advisory services, with a focus on raising farmers' awareness of seed rights and improving access to quality seeds at the community level.

Under **Activity 2.5** a two-day Business Plan Development Workshop for 14 CSB members (ten men, four women), was held to strengthen their skills in business planning, financial management, and marketing which aims to promote long-term seed security and community resilience.

**Output 3: Improved access to water for agricultural use for 2,500 smallholder farmers**

Significant progress was made under Output 3 in terms of improving smallholder farmers' access to water resources for both household and agricultural use. Under **Activity 3.3**, fourteen households were supported to establish household-level water reservoirs made of high-density polyethylene (HDPE) materials. These reservoirs enable the efficient collection and storage of rainwater, providing a sustainable water source for domestic consumption and small-scale irrigation. This intervention not only strengthens agropastoral resilience to climate variability but also supports improved crop productivity and food security within the targeted communities.

**Output 4: Improved agricultural skills and access to higher-quality soil for 2,500 smallholders**

Progress under this output focused on enhancing smallholder productivity and resilience through improved irrigation and soil management. Under **(Activity 4.3)**, twelve 2-inch, 100-metre plastic pipes were distributed to twelve Agropastoral households in Dulcadale, improving irrigation efficiency and ensuring reliable water access during dry seasons. This intervention supports sustainable crop production, better soil utilisation, and strengthened household food security.

*"The MEL system remains relevant and continues to collect data using designated registers and site monitoring. Indicators for CSB sustainability and household water access are proving measurable and appropriate."*

**2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.**

During the reporting period, the project faced several challenges.

delayed activities from May to early August due to local conflict. Community elders have now mediated the situation, restoring safe access. This experience highlighted the importance of local ownership and the role of traditional structures in maintaining stability.

Recurrent drought, erratic rainfall, and soil erosion continued to affect productivity in Dulcadale, and Beer villages. These environmental pressures reinforced the need to strengthen climate adaptation measures, such as water harvesting, drought-tolerant seeds, and improved coordination with local authorities on drought preparedness.

Limited market access, particularly in remote areas like Midhisho, restricted seed distribution and increased transport costs. In response, the project recognised the need to enhance CSB business skills, strengthen market linkages, and explore alternative marketing channels.

Overall, these experiences emphasised the value of flexible planning, locally driven problem-solving, and continuous learning to sustain progress under challenging field conditions.

<b>3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?</b>	
Discussed with NIRAS:	No
Formal Change Request submitted:	No
Received confirmation of change acceptance:	No
Change Request reference if known: <i>If you submitted a financial Change Request, you can find the reference in the email from NIRAS confirming the outcome</i>	

**Guidance for Section 4:** The information you provide in this section will be used by Defra to review the financial status of projects. This review will identify projects at random for spot checks on financial management and will include requests for evidence of the actual spend information provided below. Please ensure the figures you provide are as accurate as possible and that you have the evidence to support it. You do not need to provide it now.

<p><b>4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2025 – 30 September 2025)</b></p> <p>Actual spend: £ <span style="background-color: black; color: black;">[REDACTED]</span></p>	
<p><b>4b. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this financial year (ending 31 March 2026)?</b></p> <p><span style="background-color: black; color: black;">[REDACTED]</span></p> <p><span style="background-color: black; color: black;">[REDACTED]</span></p> <p><span style="background-color: black; color: black;">[REDACTED]</span></p>	
<p><b>4c. If you expect an underspend, then you should consider your project budget needs carefully.</b> Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.</p> <p>If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a re-budget Change Request as soon as possible, and not later than 31<sup>st</sup> December. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a re-budget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes to your project if necessary. <b>Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.</b></p> <p>NB: if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.</p>	
<p><b>5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCFs management, monitoring, or financial procedures?</b></p> <p>Suspicious or allegations related to fraud and error concerns should be reported to <a href="mailto:fraudanderror@Defra.gov.uk">fraudanderror@Defra.gov.uk</a></p> <p><span style="background-color: black; color: black;">[REDACTED]</span></p>	
<p><b>6. Project risk management</b></p> <p><b>6a. If your project has an Overseas Security and Justice assessment, please provide an update on any related risks, and any special conditions in your award paperwork if relevant for your project.</b></p>	

**6b. Have any concerns or allegations relating to sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment been reported in the past 6 months?**

Suspicious or allegations related to safeguarding concerns should be reported to [ODA.Safeguarding@defra.gov.uk](mailto:ODA.Safeguarding@defra.gov.uk)

**7. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent Annual Report. As a reminder, all projects that were scored as 'Not Yet Sensitive' in the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) assessment of their latest Annual Report should demonstrate how they are meeting the minimum GESI-Sensitive standard.**

### Checklist for submission

Have you responded to <b>feedback from your latest Annual Report Review?</b> You should respond in section 6, and annexe other requested materials as appropriate.	X
Have you reported against the most <b>up to date information for your project?</b>	X
Have you <b>clearly highlighted any confidential information</b> within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	X
Include your <b>project reference</b> in the subject line of submission email.	X
Submit to <a href="mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com">BCF-Reports@niras.com</a>	X
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	X