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: 31st October 2025

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

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

Project reference	*DAREX004*
Project title	Partnering for a Biodiverse, Prosperous, and Resilient Tarangire Ecosystem Landscape
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Tanzania
Lead Organisation	The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
Partner(s)	Istituto Oikos (IO), Tanzania People & Wildlife (TPW), and Ujamaa Community Resource Team (UCRT)
Project Leader	*Alphonce Blass Mallya*
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	*HYR4*
Project website/blog/social media	*https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/africa/stories-in-africa/darwin-initiative-tanzania/*

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).

1.7 Establish a "Herders on the Tree School" and conduct trainings of herders in IRM techniques and related grazing practices.

HUTTS was thoughtfully designed to address the educational gap faced by pastoralists through delivery of flexible, context-relevant learning directly within communal grazing areas. Training sessions were conducted in 4 villages in Simanjiro District: Ruvu Remit, Lerumo, Endonyo Engijape, and Terrat, engaging a total of 44 herders (34 male, 10 female), with participants ranging in age from under 35 to over 35 years. The outdoor, under the tree-based learning environment provides a culturally resonant and practical setting for knowledge exchange, empowering herders of all ages and genders. Facilitators used tailored content to strengthen understanding of livestock management and IRM principles, while also reinforcing traditional practices. This grassroots initiative is helping build local, holistic planned grazing capacity for sustainable rangeland stewardship and contributing to broader project goals of climate resilience and improved pastoral livelihoods.

1.9 Support communities to develop long-term implementation plans and responsibilities for IRM plans

UCRT facilitated rangeland governance training in 3 wards Endoinyongijape, Ruvuremit, and Shambarai in Simanjiro District, engaging 216 participants from 4 villages. The training brought together joint grazing committees, CCRO representatives, village leaders, livestock officers, and district officials to strengthen sustainable land use, coordination, and grazing management. As a result, communities developed a five-year action plan addressing invasive species control, pasture restoration, water access, animal health, and grazing area protection. The Simanjiro District Council also shared its 2024 livestock sector plan, which aligns with IRM goals and supports improved breeds, water infrastructure, animal health services, and value addition. Institutional structures were reviewed and strengthened, with new committees formed and existing ones updated to meet IRM standards. In Longido District, UCRT conducted similar community-led training in 4 villages Nadaare, Ilorienito, Losirwa, and Oltepesi through a 2-phase process: joint planning in Longido town followed by village-level sessions. A total of 160 participants, including elders, youth, and women, gained practical skills in grazing area identification, protection, and formalization. This inclusive process led to a five-year action plan focused on invasive species removal, pasture reseeding, soil conservation, and livestock off-take planning. To address land conflicts, drought impacts, and pasture depletion, UCRT facilitated participatory village land use planning (VLUP) in 6 villages across Simanjiro, Monduli, and Longido districts, covering 39,494 hectares of designated grazing land. Boundary disputes were resolved in all villages, enabling smooth implementation of land use plans. In Naepo village, the plan was certified, land registry equipment issued, and 25 CCROs handed over prioritizing women and people with disabilities. Naepo's natural resource bylaws were approved, and three other villages had their bylaws endorsed, with the remaining awaiting district-level approval. Institutional structures were also strengthened to support implementation (Annex 1.9 c).

2.1 Scale up the livestock marketing and sales opportunity that adds value for local producers but ties access to market and service opportunities to local conservation and management measures, including rangeland health and wildlife protection.

11 livestock fattening groups were supported across Monduli, Longido, and Simanjiro district, groups include Salama-Engiteng', Tumaini, Engine Supat (Lemooti village); Naleku, Loosip, Noorkineji (Lesingita village), Meei, Elong'o (Ranch village), Enyuata, Enyoro (Londerkes village), Enaboishu, Enaboishu neeng'olon (Kitiangare village), Eramatare and Embuan groups (Terrat village) with a total of 213 registered members, 25.3% of whom are women. These groups received entrepreneurship training and were linked with buyers, while data collection on livestock sales was initiated to track progress and market engagement. To further enhance drought resilience and feed security, pilot hay harvesting and improved feed processing were introduced in 3 villages: Ranch, Lemooti, and Terrat. Communities were trained in forage curing techniques and supported with grass mowers and choppers to produce and store improved, nutritious feeds. This initiative promotes sustainable livestock feeding practices and seed bank development, helping pastoralists mitigate the impacts of seasonal droughts while maintaining livestock health and productivity.

2.2 Evaluate and put in place targeted actions for eco-tourism in Lake Natron area

UCRT in collaboration with TNC conducted monitoring and follow-up of ongoing activities implemented by the Engaresero Community-Based Organization (CBO). The monitoring effort focused on exploring the Eramatare Women's Cultural Boma and the Engaresero Tour Guide Association, which together represent 240 community members. Key achievements monitored included capacity building in governance and management, diversification of tourism services involving the construction of 2 rest houses at the Women's Cultural Boma. Although the rest houses are not yet complete, construction is actively underway, with the intention of enabling income generation through cultural tourism. These initiatives reflect the community's commitment to sustainable development, cultural preservation, and women's empowerment. To further scale up eco-tourism and conservation impact, the CBO has outlined a set of strategic actions. These include improving communication and security for tourists by acquiring 10 computers and 10 radio call devices, enhancing internet connectivity at the CBO office for better coordination, and encouraging tour guides to learn additional foreign languages to improve service quality and foster cultural exchange.

2.3 Develop and support small enterprises for women and youth that have basic business skills. The target groups will specifically engage in beekeeping and the production of beeswax and honey.

During the past half-year, TPW's Women's Enterprise Officer represented rural beekeeping groups at the 11th Annual Agricultural Policy Conference in Dodoma, contributing to national discussions on promoting traditional foods like honey and integrating nutrition, culture, and economic development. On the ground, the Queen Bees monitored 80 hives across 3 villages, with 100% in good condition and 78% colonized. Since January, 468 hives have been harvested by 31 women's groups, yielding over 2,830 kg of crude honey. In 5 villages, Lemooti, Lengolwa, Loibor Siret, Naitolia, and Ngoley groups began reporting sales using ArcGIS Survey123, with crude honey as the most sold item at an average price of 75,000 TZS (~USD 30/Gallon). Additional products include filtered honey, skincare items, candles, and soap, generating over USD 5,500 in revenue so far. Enhancement grants have been approved for several groups, with handover details to be reported next period. Overall, 1,944 individuals (97% women) are benefiting from beekeeping group membership, with over 500 trained in beekeeping, entrepreneurship, and product development (Annex 2.3).

2.4 Evaluate, design, and establish a soil carbon activity for communities practicing IRM

The project team met in July 2025 to make critical progress in the design, implementation, and third-party validation of the project. In accomplishing this, the team reviewed and agreed on the project plan and budget necessary to update the community consultation plan, implement the project activities, and monitor and validate the project. Furthermore, the project has started implementing the agreement phase of the soil carbon project: to date, 16 villages have already been consulted for carbon agreements. The consultations are ongoing and are expected to be completed by December 2025. As per the plan, the whole agreement phase will be completed by February 2026. The validation of the soil carbon project is expected to be completed by 31st December 2026 and the first verification by 31st December 2027, with the first issuance of carbon credits by 31st August 2028. Based on these timings for validation and verification, the project will share a change request on the same.

3.2 Implement improved grazing actions

Through careful seasonal planning, the holistic rangeland management approach helps stabilize fodder availability and livestock health, enabling pastoralists to sell animals when market prices are favourable and restoring degraded rangelands. To date, UCRT has introduced holistic rangeland management to over 40 villages across Simanjiro, Monduli, and Longido districts, covering more than 650,000 hectares. Specifically, during this reporting period, holistic training sessions were initiated using the holistic training manual in 7 new villages: Nanja, Esilalei, and Emurwa in Monduli, and Nadaare, Losirwa, Iltepesi, and Ilorionto in Longido district, adding over 24,000 Ha under improved management. This strengthens traditional governance structures to sustainably manage rangeland health (Annex 3.2.a). In parallel, TPW continues its monthly pasture monitoring in over 74,600 hectares, facilitating the successful implementation of IRM, contributing 10%+ toward Indicator 0.1 (Annex 3.2.b).

3.3 Plan and implement landscape restoration actions, with a focus on recruitment of women participants

A total of 178 hectares of degraded rangelands are under active restoration, managed by 21 trained Rangeland Guardian (RG) groups. Oikos led efforts to remove invasive species across 174 hectares, targeting persistent plants like *Nicotiana glauca* and *Vachellia nubica*. Restoration-focused meetings in Mfereji, Noondoto, and Engusero engaged local governance structures, shifting from site-based collaboration to inclusive dialogue that strengthened community ownership and decision-making. Monitoring was conducted by 100 trained Resource Assessors (35% women) across 49 village grazing areas covering 17,685 hectares. In August, Oikos carried out biannual vegetation assessments at 21 sites, evaluating ground cover, species diversity, and restoration progress, with results to be shared in the Y4Q4 report. TPW contributed by facilitating invasive species removal across 1,747 hectares in Mwada, Ngoley, and Olasiti villages. They mobilized over 1,060 community members, 24% of whom were women, and 45% youth, supporting restoration activities aligned with key program indicators. UCRT launched a pilot initiative to reseed palatable indigenous grasses across 180,000 hectares of degraded dispersal areas. In 4 Simanjiro villages, one-acre demonstration farms were established to train grazing coordinators and herders in reseeding techniques during the upcoming rainy seasons. The approach integrates rotational grazing, bunched herding, HUTTS, and native seed collection. UCRT collected and stored 30 kg of native grass seeds, including *Panicum maximum, Eragrostis superba, Sporobolus airoides*, and African fox tail, with plans to scale up to Monduli and Longido districts. TNC supported invasive species management by conducting reconnaissance surveys

in 4 new villages to identify hotspots. Village councils received training on Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR), and local teams were tasked with clearing 40 Ha each. This strategy combines environmental restoration with short-term employment and community empowerment, laying the groundwork for sustained invasive species control and healthier rangelands (Annex 3.3).

Activity 3.4 Develop integrated landscape monitoring system and implement landscape monitoring plan

During the last 6 months, project implementing partners through Project Rangeland Working Group met to discuss about the update required in the IRM Handbook. This IRM Handbook integrates three distinct but complementary methodologies: TPW's Sustainable Rangeland Initiative (SRI), UCRT's Holistic Rangeland Management (HRM), and Oikos's Community-led Interventions for Rangeland Restoration (CIRR). During the meeting, partners managed to update the IRM handbook and added two chapters on integrated challenges and lessons learned as well as chapter on the unified landscape monitoring system for northern Tanzania. Despite differences in sampling design, monitoring frequency, and technical support, all approaches share a foundation in participatory data collection, seasonal grazing management, and ecological resilience. The integration process emphasized the strengths of each method: SRI's real-time community feedback, HRM's structured recovery and traditional enforcement, and CIRR's scientific rigor. Key milestones include the development of a shared indicator framework, centralized data platforms, harmonized monitoring schedules, and joint learning forums. Harmonization of these methodologies lay the groundwork for a robust, adaptive monitoring and management framework for IRM that supports evidence-based decision-making, enhances ecological resilience, and promotes sustainable grazing practices. This integrated system is central to identifying and scaling best practices for IRM across diverse ecological and community contexts within the landscape. This activity is a continuation or an integral to activity 1.3.

Activity 3.5 Conduct field survey campaign

TNC engaged an independent consultant to evaluate project effectiveness using both "before and after" and "with and without" intervention approaches, targeting the same households surveyed during the 2022/23 baseline. By the end of September 2025, the consultant had completed aligning the survey design, updating data collection tools, and successfully collecting household-level field data. The next phase, scheduled for October to December 2025, will involve preliminary socioeconomic data analysis to assess progress toward poverty reduction and livelihood improvement indicators. Additionally, foundational work is laid for remote sensing and geospatial analysis using Sentinel-2 and Landsat imagery to generate spatial evidence on grazing land use, vegetation dynamics, and the effectiveness of Integrated Rangeland Management (IRM) practices. This analysis will inform key outcome indicators, including Indicator 0.1, Indicator 0.2, and Indicator 0.3.

Activity 3.6. Co-develop plan for post-project application and analysis of landscape-wide monitoring system with project partners, communities, and stakeholders

Project implementing partners TPW, UCRT, Oikos, and TNC have collaboratively reflected on integrated challenges and lessons learned to inform post-project planning. The discussions emphasized the importance of community-led, ecologically informed, and socially embedded approaches to rangeland management. The co-development process underscored the value of blending traditional knowledge with scientific monitoring, aligning governance structures, and fostering social transformation to restore degraded ecosystems and improve pastoralist livelihoods. Partners agreed that future efforts must prioritize community ownership, education, adaptive management, and multi-stakeholder collaboration to ensure long-term sustainability. These integrated strategies are expected to enhance climate change adaptation and resilience by empowering communities to manage rangelands sustainably. To support this vision, the partners have finalized an Integrated Rangeland Management (IRM) Handbook, which outlines strategic plans for applying and analyzing 3 complementary rangeland management approaches beyond the project's lifespan.

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 first half of Year 4, progress toward establishing the soil carbon project was temporarily disrupted due to internal concerns raised by a key stakeholder group, MISA and also for paving the way for the concerns which were raised by UCRT. In response, a strategic pause was initiated for soil carbon activities to allow for thorough internal consultations and alignment on the project's objectives and implementation approach. While this pause was essential to ensure stakeholder buy-in and promote long-term sustainability, it led to delays in executing critical activities. As a result, the project experienced setbacks in meeting its planned timelines, particularly impacting progress toward Outcome Indicator 0.5 (Soil carbon stocks protected and soil sequestering 1.4 t CO_2e per hectare per year by 2026) and Outcome Indicator 0.7 [redacted]

Following constructive dialogue and resolution of the concerns raised, the situation has been addressed. Project activities have now resumed with renewed commitment from key stakeholders. The project team is actively working to accelerate implementation and recover lost time, with a focus on achieving the intended outcomes to the greatest extent possible.

3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with NIRAS:	Yes
Formal Change Request submitted:	Yes
Received confirmation of change acceptance:	No

Change Request reference if known: *If you submitted a financial Change Request, you can find the reference in the email from NIRAS confirming the outcome*

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.

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2025 – 30 September 2025)

Actual spend: £ [redacted]

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)?

Yes ☐ **No** X Estimated underspend: £

4c. If you expect an underspend, then you should consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a re-budget Change Request as soon as possible, and not later than 31st 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. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.

NB: if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.

5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCFs management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

Suspicions or allegations related to fraud and error concerns should be reported to fraudanderror@Defra.gov.uk

6. Project risk management

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.

N/A

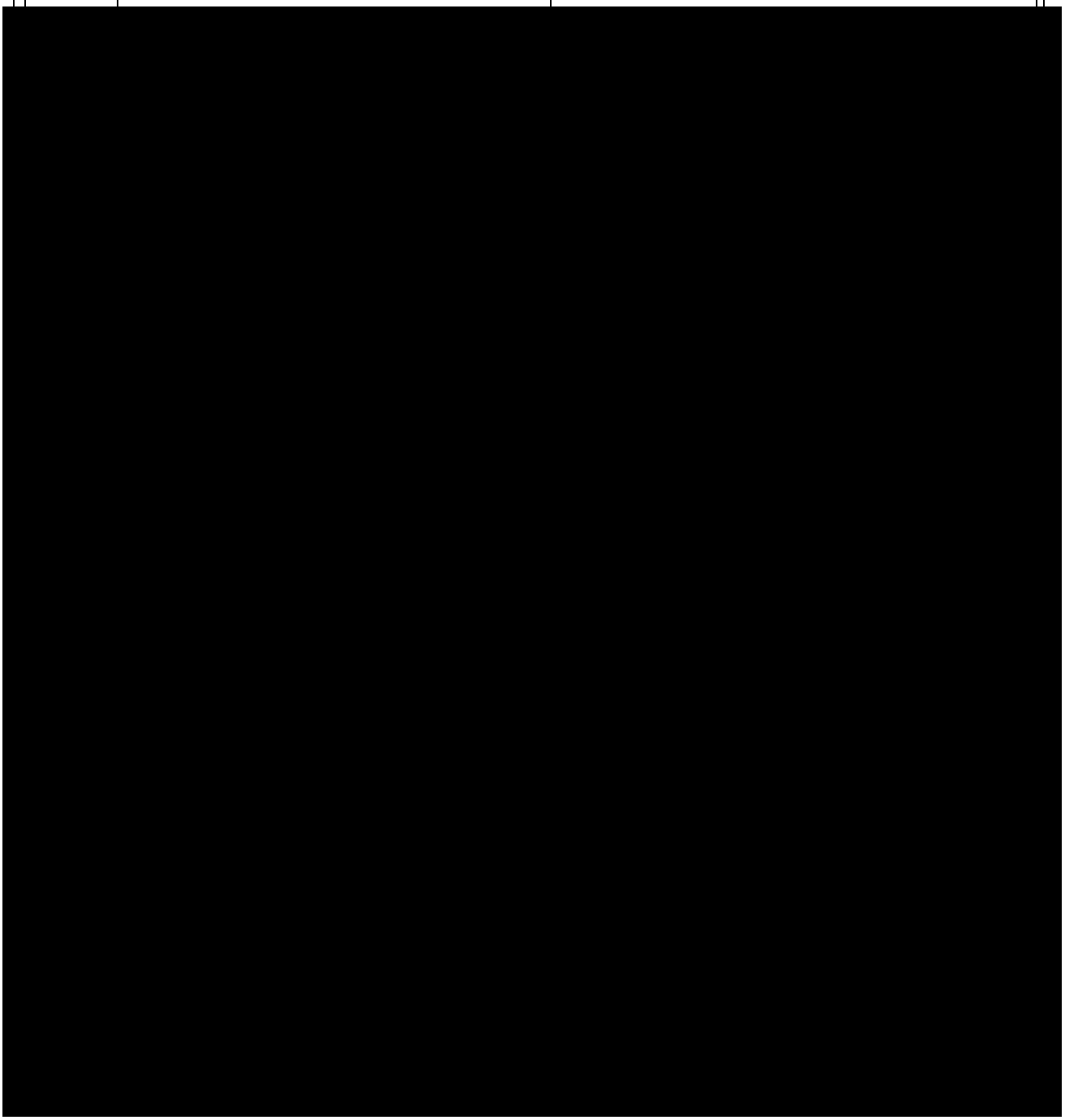
[redacted]

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.

Feedback on the AR3R:

S No	Comment	Update
1	The Soil Organic Carbon (SOC) project is partially on hold. While the project report states that TNC is working with partners to develop an Action Plan which seeks to address misunderstandings with MISA and other carbon developers, and that this may result in some extension of community engagement and planning, the detailed information note on this process has not been shared with the reviewer (it is apparently included in Annex 2.7 but the reviewer has been unable to locate this file). This	This has been addressed and shared with the NIRAS. TNC is dedicated to resolving misunderstandings with MISA and advancing a high-integrity carbon project that benefits local communities while delivering climate results. Key actions include (also shared with NIRAS): - An agreement with other carbon developers, like Soils for the Future

	issue has been live for at least two reporting periods, and it is unclear what adaptive management the project plans to put in place to strengthen the project's sustainability once BCF funding ends. Please provide narrative on this.	Tanzania, on clarifying the project development in the area. - A plan to enhance community-led interventions. - A sustainability plan to ensure the project's longevity after BCF funding ends.
2	While the project reports that is has updated indicators 0.7 and 3.5, these updates are not reflected in the logframe progress report.	This has been addressed and shared with NIRAS. The project revised the indicators according to the recommendations from the Mid-Term Review (MTR). In this regard, the project would like to submit a change request in November 2025 on these which have been incorporated in the logframe.



Checklist for submission

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