**Darwin Initiative Capability & Capacity: Final Report Review**

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

**Darwin Initiative Project Information**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Project reference |  |
| Project title |  |
| Country(ies) |  |
| Lead Organisation |  |
| Partner partner(s) |  |
| Darwin Initiative grant value |  |
| Start/end dates of project |  |
| Project Leader name |  |
| Project website/blog/social media |  |
| Review date |  |

The notes in blue are guidance for reviewers and not all guiding questions need to be answered – only those that are relevant to this project. **Please remove the guidance notes from all sections before submission.**

This review should provide an independently verified viewpoint of the project. This should include the impact, challenges and lessons learned. Please therefore document how the project achieved its results with clear reference to evidence submitted. It is important to ensure this is a fair and balanced review. Please ensure all comments (positive and negative) can be substantiated by reference to material submitted with the Final Report.

This review will be shared with the project and relevant UK Government Departments. It may also be shared with organisations asked by the UK Government to review the effectiveness of the Darwin Initiative. There is no plan to share the review publicly. However, you should be aware that all information held by HMG can be subject to a freedom of information request.

You will be supplied with the full project file to undertake your review. The application document forms part of the contract between Defra and the project. Please ensure you read the application first. It may also be helpful to read the full Final Report template as this includes similar guidance that will help you understand what the project was asked to report on.

The Final Report should be a stand-alone report. It should not be necessary to read previous Annual Reports.

Some projects may have made changes to their project since its start. Projects are required to seek approval for changes at the Impact, Outcome or Outputs levels (activity level changes do not require approval), in addition to budget and staff changes. These changes, if approved, should be documented in Change Request Forms which will be in the file you receive.

If you have a project that has made unapproved changes to its design please check with the Biodiversity Challenge Funds Administrator before proceeding any further   
([BCF-Reports@niras.com](mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com)).

It is expected that this report review will be 5-8 pages in length. Please do not exceed this limit excessively.

# Project Summary

Please use maximum of half a page (ideally less) on this section.

* Give a brief summary of the project, its main activities and Outputs.
* This section should only contain facts about the project based on information contained in the Final Report.
* Feel free to copy and paste from the report for this section if it is suitable, but do ensure the language makes sense.

# Project Outputs

Please provide evidence when answering the following:

* Were the project’s Outputs achieved?
* Were there any challenges achieving these?
* Were these challenges due to circumstances outside of the control of the project (but outlined in the assumptions?) or were they within the control of the project?
* Was the project well managed?

# Project Outcome

* What was the project’s Outcome?
* Was it achieved? Please include any comments to qualify this. Please substantiate any claims with reference to evidence provided.

What grade would you give the project for how well it achieved its Outcome? Please only use the grades available below and leave the table in the review.

Please also provide a score on the overall reporting quality and the provision of evidence.

**Achievement of Outputs/Outcomes Grade:**

**Reporting Quality and Evidence Provision Score:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Grade** | **Outcome description** |
| A++ | Outcome substantially exceeded |
| A+ | Outcome moderately exceeded |
| A | Outcome met expectation |
| B | Outcome moderately did not meet expectation |
| C | Outcome substantially did not meet expectation |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Score** | **Description** | **Comment on Reporting Quality and Evidence Provision** |
| 1 | Good | The report is well-written and is clear throughout. There is good provision of evidence (i.e. not too much or too little) to substantiate claims made, including achievement of indicators. Evidence is clearly sign-posted where relevant. |
| 2 | Acceptable | The report is complete and evidence is provided to support claims made, but there is room for improvement. Please provide specific feedback comments for the project on how reporting and provision of evidence could be improved, |
| 3 | Poor | There are some gaps in the project reporting and/or it is poorly written and confusing or hard to understand in places. The provision of evidence is poor (i.e. there isn’t enough evidence provided to substantiate the claims made in reporting and/or evidence is not clearly labelled / cross referenced which makes it hard to navigate – particularly where there are a lot of annexes). |
| X | Unacceptable | There are significant issues with project reporting and evidence provision which makes it challenging to complete the report review. |

# Project achievements

Please use a maximum of two pages on this section. This section should be based on analysis and evaluation of how any achievements were made.

Has the project reviewed its assumptions to ensure they still hold true?

Comments made here must be substantiated through reference to at least one (ideally two) sources of evidence. Where evidence has not been submitted and the comments are unsubstantiated please make this clear e.g., the project says this to be the case but no evidence was submitted to substantiate this.

Please highlight any interesting points, over-achievements, or especially poor points or outputs that were achieved.

# Contribution to Darwin Initiative Standard Indicators

We have recently developed a list of Standard Indicators against which new projects are required to report (see the [Darwin Initiative](https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/resources/monitoring-evaluation-and-learning/) website for details). While projects which have recently closed may not have reported against these indicators, we asked projects to try to align their originally chosen indicators with the list of recently developed Standard Indicators.

* Have the Darwin Initiative Standard Indicators been selected and reported against appropriately?
* Are there other Standard Indicators you think the project could have reported against but they haven’t? If yes, please provide details.

# Project support for multidimensional poverty reduction

All Darwin Initiative projects are required to contribute to a reduction in poverty. Projects working in Upper Middle Income Countries must clearly demonstrate:

* advance knowledge, evidence and impact in Least Developed or Low-Income Countries, or
* contribute to the global public good, for example by advancing understanding and/or strengthening the knowledge base related to biodiversity conservation/sustainable use and poverty reduction, or
* contribute to serious and unique advancements on a critical issue as a result of specific circumstances of the upper-middle income country that could not be made elsewhere.

Is there evidence that the project contributed to poverty reduction? Has the project provided information on whether or how they supported the most vulnerable communities?

# Contribution to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

All projects are required to promote equality between persons of different gender and social characteristics.

* Is there evidence that the project contributed to ensuring individuals achieve equitable outcomes and engaged participants in a meaningful way?
* Does the project reference the GESI context in which it is working within?
* Has the project provided information on whether or how they supported the most vulnerable communities?
* Has the project made any particularly notable achievements to gender equality and social inclusion?
* Please provide comment on the proportion of women on the Project Board and the proportion of project partners that are led by women.
* We asked projects to assess themselves on where they sit on the GESI scale provided below. Do you agree with their assessment? Why or why not?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **GESI Scale** | **Description** | **Put X where you think the 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 |  |
| **Transformative** | The project has all the characteristics of an ‘empowering’ approach whilst also addressing unequal power relationships and seeking institutional and societal change |  |

# Transfer of knowledge and capacity building

The project should be able to demonstrate how knowledge was shared and applied and demonstrate how the project impacted developing country partners.

* Did the project result in any formal qualifications and how many people achieved them?
* Were the individuals that obtained qualifications from in-country?
* Did any staff from in-country see an increase in their status nationally, regionally or internationally?

# What is the sustainability and legacy of the project?

What achievements are likely to endure and why?

# Early indicators of transformational change

Defra is eager to understand key success factors of Darwin Initiative projects, in particular considering their potential to catalyse transformational change. Projects are likely to be more transformational if several of the following criteria are met. Please indicate whether you believe this project meets these criteria. If so, which ones and how, and do you believe this project has the potential to be transformational?

Please select the criteria you think apply in the case of this project and write a short narrative in support of your assessment. Feel free to cross reference other sections of the review if appropriate.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | Put X if this applies |
| **Political will and local ownership:** Where the need for change is agreed locally, and the process is locally owned. Where high-level political buy-in and broad support from across societies, cultures, and interest groups enable widespread changes to patterns of development. |  |
| **Capacity and capability is increased**: Where a target country and target communities have the capacities and capabilities necessary to bring about the change. |  |
| **Increased innovation:** Where wider and sustained change comes from innovation, such as new technologies, with the potential to demonstrate new ways of doing things. |  |
| **Evidence of effectiveness is shared:** Where approaches which have proven successful in one location are disseminated widely, and lessons on their usefulness are **credible.** |  |
| **Leverage / create incentives for others to act:** Where the costs of action are reduced to the point that acting on identified risks and challenges is a sensible decision for public agencies, commercial firms, and private individuals. These cost reductions may need to be steep enough to overcome behavioural inertia. |  |
| **Replicability:** Where good ideas piloted by the projects are replicated by others in the same country, and more widely. |  |
| **Scalability:** Where interventions have sufficient reach to achieve progressive institutional and policy reform, or drive down the costs of technology deployment. |  |
| **Sustainability:** Where activities are likely to be sustained once project support ends. |  |
| **Critical Mass:** Ultimately, many truly transformational changes will require a critical mass, to overcome political, market and other sources of inertia. Many of the points above relate to achieving this critical mass and the more of the above an intervention can promote, the greater the likelihood that it will lead to transformational change. **Indicate whether you think this project has the potential to achieve critical mass.** |  |

# What lessons learned/failures/challenges from this project could be used to improve/inform future Darwin Initiative projects or the wider Darwin Initiative programme and community?

Please consider the following:

* What worked well, and what didn't work well?
* What would the project do differently next time?
* What recommendations would you make to others doing similar projects?
* What key lessons have been learnt as a result of this project? (including administrative, management, technical, M&E).

# Risk management

* Did the project have an appropriate approach to risk management?
* Did any significant risks arise over the lifetime of the project that were not previously accounted for?
* Have any significant adaptions been made to the project design to address changes to risk?

# Safeguarding

Biodiversity Challenge Funds are committed to supporting projects develop and strengthen their safeguarding capabilities and capacity to prevent, listen, respond and learn.

Please provide a comment on the project’s approach to safeguarding within the last 12 months. You should consider the following:

* Has the project updated its safeguarding policy within the last 12 months?
* Have any concerns been investigated within the last 12 months?
* Has there been any training conducted and/ or are there any developments or activities planned around safeguarding in the coming year?
* Has there been any lessons learnt or challenges on safeguarding?
* Have projects actively engaged with communities to inform them of their rights and how to make a complaint should the need arise?
* Have projects continued to ensure the Health, Safety and Security of staff and stakeholders. Were any breaches reported and effectively responded to?

Please ensure no sensitive data is included within responses.

# Project expenditure

The Final Report should tabulate grant expenditure and explain any variations from the original application. The report is only accounting for the funds in the last active period of the project, not for the full project so you should comment accordingly. If this section is incomplete, please still carry out your review as we can deal with the finances separately if necessary.

* Are stated changes in the budget clear, sensible and justified and is the level of detail on expenditure adequate?
* How were changes managed by the project?
* Does the project appear to be good value for money? If not, what could have improved this?

# Key Facts for Defra Publicity

Please use maximum of half a page (ideally less) on this section. Think about what could be quickly synthesised and used by Defra to highlight a project’s success, but remember that some projects will not lend themselves to publicity. Think about items that Defra might be interested in that tell a story or make it different/new/exciting from other projects.

For example:

* *The project has established the first fully participatory protected area in Sierra Leone.*
* *The project has supported local poor people to become involved in the governance of natural resources that are vital to their wellbeing.*
* *The protected area was designed to support the conservation of the lesser pink parakeet, a critically endangered species. Without this work the parakeet is in serious danger of becoming extinct.*