**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 |  |

**General Guidance**:

* Please ensure you have selected the correct template.
* 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.**

**Overview**:

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.

**Project documentation**:

You will be supplied with the full project folder to undertake your review – please ensure you check the project folder matches the project reference outlined in your commissioning letter before starting your review.

The full application 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 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 folder 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 see the Terms of Reference for full details.

# 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:

* What were the project’s Outputs?
* Were the project’s Outputs achieved? Please provide an indication on whether each Output has been fully met, partially met, or not met.
* 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

**Outcome**: Please include the project’s intended Outcome here.

* 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.

This should be a full score – no A/B or 2/3 please. Do not delete or amend the score tables below.

**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

All projects are asked to report against a minimum of three Standard Indicators (see the [Darwin Initiative website](https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/resources/monitoring-evaluation-and-learning/) for details). Please consider the following questions.

* 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

Darwin Initiative projects are required to contribute to biodiversity conservation and multidimensional poverty reduction. Projects working in Upper Middle Income Countries must clearly demonstrate that they:

* 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.

All projects should be able to demonstrate direct and/or indirect poverty benefits.

* What evidence is there that the project is contributing to multidimensional poverty reduction?
* Has the project considered different types/dimensions of multidimensional poverty reduction?
* Are there any notable achievements?

# Contribution to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

All projects are asked to provide a self-assessment against the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) scale provided below. The scale goes from less ambitious to more ambitious moving top to bottom. All Biodiversity Challenge Funds (BCFs) project should be aiming for a GESI Sensitive approach at a minimum.

For further guidance, please see the [BCFs GESI Guidelines for Experts](https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/resources/expert-groups-resources/) and [GESI Analysis “How to Guide”](https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/resources/gender-equality-and-social-inclusion/).

Please provide an assessment of where you think the project sits on the scale by placing an X on the scale.

| **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 |  |

Please justify your assessment with explicit reference to the criteria outlined above. You should also comment on if you agree or disagree with the project’s assessment and provide an explanation for your reasoning.

* Does the project reference the GESI context in which it was working within? Has it referred to the GESI Analysis six core principles (rights, practice, environment, roles and responsibilities, representation and resources)?
* Is there evidence the project actively considered social inclusion and ensuring meaningful participation?
* Could the project have done anything differently (refine or adapt current activities) to improve how it addresses gender equality and social inclusion?
* Please comment on if the project has consistently scored the same on the GESI scale or if there has been movement throughout the lifetime of the project.

# 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?

# Scalability and Durability

* Is there clear evidence of how stakeholders are important to future scaling of the project (i.e. ‘adopters’) learn about the project or activity and why engagement might be attractive to them? For example, projects might have conducted workshops to co-develop the project to meet ‘adopters’ needs and interests, evidenced by a description of those needs and interests with supporting quotes.
* Is there clear evidence of how the project has sought to build or modify institutions (government policy, private-public sector collaborations, etc.) to incentivise initial and ongoing engagement with the project or activity? For example, through eco-certification programmes or government tax breaks.
* Is there clear evidence that the project has changed attitudes, social norms, knowledge, values and behaviours to support initial and ongoing engagement with the project or activity? For example, projects might have conducted a campaign to shift social norms related to a pro-conservation practice within a clearly defined target group, supported by attitudes surveys conducted before and following the campaign.
* Is there evidence that the project Outputs, Outcome and Impact are to be sustained after the project ends?
* What achievements are likely to endure and why?
* Does the project have a suitable exit strategy?
* Is there anything that could be done to improve the project’s durability?

# 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, MEL).

# 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

There is no specific need for you to comment here. However, please do flag any specific issues or concerns related to safeguarding for the attention of our Safeguarding Manager – including sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment and / or health, safety and security - as part of your review. If you have no specific comments, please respond “No specific comments”.

Please ensure no sensitive data is included within responses.

Standard wording fed back in all Final Report Reviews [do not delete wording in black]:

Please be aware that concerns or allegations of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, or sexual harassment (SEAH) linked with your project may surface after the project has concluded. Should this occur, please ensure you report via [ODA.Safeguarding@defra.gov.uk](mailto:ODA.Safeguarding@defra.gov.uk).

The Biodiversity Challenge Funds are committed to protecting people from SEAH within all UKAID projects. Future funding will depend on your organisation’s ability to prevent all stakeholders from SEAH. Please see the [Common Approach to Protection from SEAH](https://capseah.safeguardingsupporthub.org/) for further guidance.

If you have a specific concern that needs to be addressed, please email   
[BCF-Darwin@niras.com](mailto:BCF-Darwin@niras.com) for the attention of Safeguarding Manager.

# 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.*