



**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: 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	<i>DARNV026</i>
Project title	'Diversifying Tanzania's Native Tree Species portfolio for people and biodiversity'
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Tanzania
Lead Organisation	Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI)
Partner(s)	Tanzania Forest Service Agency (TFS); ECHO East Africa Impact Center; Tanzania Tree growers Association Union (TTGAU); Migombani Botanic Garden
Project Leader	<i>Cristina Coletto</i>
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	<i>HYR2</i>
Project website/blog/social media	https://www.bgci.org/our-work/projects-and-case-studies/tanzanias-native-tree-species/

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: Assessment of current NTS portfolio and of conservation opportunities/priorities carried out, and constraints identified.

1.1. Establishment of and consultation with Seed/seedling Suppliers Consultation Group (SSCG) by Y1, Q2. (DI-C19)

During the past six months, the SSCG has been active in: finalising the species prioritisation process, collecting materials for the NTS web-based hub, continuing with the policy engagement, developing species survey to provide information for the seed sources mapping and the potential vegetational maps, identify topics for the technical talks webinar series.

The 28th of August the SSCG met online, with the participation of 9 members, to review the progress of the project to date, discuss about the establishment of the nursery directory; steps forward for the policy work; contents of the web hub and the technical talks; planning the development of the seed zone and potential vegetational maps. One key result of this meeting was the selection of the topics for technical talk webinars over the remaining 6 months of the project that will ensure continuous learning, foster collaboration among NTS practitioners and

built the self-learning portal with richer content from experts. The topics that were selected include domestication of threatened tree species, scientific publications on NTS, Youth in NTS conservation, phenology monitoring and propagation protocols development, and sustainable financing models for NTS.

Output 2: Data and tools for NTS collection, processing, storage and propagation developed and shared with seed/seedling suppliers.

2.2. NTS web-based hub resources available to users by Y1, Q4. (DI-C01)

The [web-based hub](#) is online and some resources are already available for consultation and download. Short practical video tutorials and guidelines are under preparation, and they will be shared through the web-based hub during the next semester.

2.3. Seed Zone Maps for at least 100 useful and ecologically important NTS, seed storage, germination and propagation protocols for at least 30 NTS and Potential Vegetation Maps available by Y2, Q2. (DI B02; DI-C01 DI-A01; DI-A03; DI-A04)

A knowledgeable and experienced team from the University of Dar es Salaam is carrying out the activity. All project's partners were involved in botanical field surveys to provide ground-truth data to support the preparation of Seed Zone and Potential Vegetation Maps.

BGCI organised an online training, with the participation of the mapping's consultant team and the other project's partners, to familiarise participants with the methodology, structure of the survey questionnaire, and practical use of the digital data collection tool. This capacity-building step was essential in ensuring standardised and high-quality data collection. Also, the 100 prioritised species were associated to the 8 ecological zones in Tanzania and they were all successfully surveyed and mapped.

Output 3: National Tree Seed Centre, NGOs/CBOs and private sector seed/seedling suppliers trained in NTS collection, processing, storage, propagation and planting.

3.1. 20 seed collectors/technicians from the National Tree Seed Centres, laboratories and NGOs/CBOs (Trainer of trainers) and 100 people from NGOs/CBOs and private sector enterprises, trained in NTS seed collection, processing, and storage. (Milestone: 20 trainers by Y1, Q4; Project target: 120 people trained by Y2, Q2) (DI-A01; DI-A03; DI-A04)

TTGAU has replicated the ToT training to farmers from Kiwalamo village, involving farmers who participated in the ToT training, to leverage their new skills to lead a coordinated seed collection campaign targeting priority native tree species. Major achievement was the collection and preservation of over 8 kg. of *Uapaca kirkiana* seeds, a high-value indigenous fruit tree known for its nutritional, ecological and economic benefits. The practical training involved 30 farmers, 16 men and 14 women, which are planning to raise approximately 1,000 seedlings and distribute them to both restoration projects and farmers interested in agroforestry.

3.2. 20 government and NGOs/CBOs nursery managers (Trainer of Trainers), and 100 people from NGOs/CBOs and private nurseries, trained in climate resilient NTS selection, propagation and marketing. (Milestone: 20 trainers by Y1, Q4; Project target: 120 people trained by Y2, Q3) (DI-A01; DI-A03; DI-A04)

The Juhudi Tree Growers Association (TGA) in Ipalamwa Village applied the acquired knowledge during the ToT training and established a well-managed native tree nursery. They have successfully raised over 500 *Szygium guineense* seedlings. A total of 15 farmers, 9 men and 6 women participated to the practical training.

TFS has conducted a comprehensive theoretical training, covering activity 3.1 and 3.2, and a practical capacity building session, involving 15 staff members from the Tanzania Forest Services Agency, to strengthen technical competence in the entire seed value chain, from collection to propagation. Participants were divided into two teams focusing on different ecological zones. The first team conducted field seed collection demonstrations in Morogoro, Iringa, Lindi, and Coast Region, while the second team carried out similar exercises in Dodoma, Manyara, Arusha, Kilimanjaro, and Tanga regions. Following the fieldwork, both teams engaged in seed extraction, cleaning, and germination trials, applying theoretical knowledge gained during the training. These activities were instrumental in equipping participants with hands-on experience and technical

know-how in seed technology a critical step toward ensuring that Native Tree Species (NTS) are effectively mainstreamed into national restoration and afforestation practices (to ensure NTS is better mainstreamed into practice).

Strong evidence of the training's impact was demonstrated during a visit by the Head of the Climate and Environment Department of the British High Commission - Tanzania. During the visit to our partner organization, ECHO, beneficiaries of the training showcased how they are already applying the knowledge gained. Nursery workers shared insights on what they had learned regarding phenology, seed collection, propagation, and nursery management. They also expressed pride in their new appreciation for threatened tree species, highlighting how they are now linking indigenous trees to tourism, and using this knowledge to raise awareness and educate their communities.

Output 4: A National NTS Policy developed for Tanzania and creation of complementary tools for implementation.

4.1. National NTS Policy developed with TFS and SSCG, that provides mechanisms for direct livelihood benefits of communities, by end of Y1, available for consultation during Y2, and finalised by end of Y2. **(DI-C04; DI-C19; DI-D03)**

On the 4th and 5th of September, a follow up multi-stakeholders' workshop was held in Dodoma to review the preliminary draft of the Tree Seed Regulations. 25 participants were involved from government agencies and different NGOs, who are key actors in the tree seed and seedling value chain.

Key outcomes of the workshop included: identification of critical regulatory gaps hindering the promotion and use of native tree species; recommendations for harmonizing the draft regulations with project objectives and international commitments; consensus on proposed amendments to improve the effectiveness of the Tree Seed Regulations in supporting restoration and reforestation efforts using native species.

The inputs and feedback gathered during the workshop are being consolidated to inform the next version of the draft regulation, which will be circulated for broader consultation prior to finalization. TFS, leading the policy development process, will ensure that the ongoing Tree Seed Regulation integrates the themes, issues, and recommendations from NTS stakeholders.

4.2. 'What to plant where' tools available, promoted and widely used by seed/seedling end users and businesses (Project target: at least 1,000 people by end of project). **(DI-A01; DI-A03; DI-A04; DI-D05)**

Tools are under development and will support the NTS Strategy, to optimize successful planting and management and define a roadmap for diversifying NTS portfolios across Tanzania and ensuring provision of livelihood benefits.

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.

N/A

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/ No

Formal Change Request submitted:

Yes/ No

Received confirmation of change acceptance:

Yes/ 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*

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 ☒ 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?

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

N/A

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

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: There was a fairly clear steer in the approval letter to consider strengthening the Outcome indicators (and perhaps some of the Output indicators). While this is addressed in Section 9 of AR1, I suggest that this is tackled soon so that there can then be meaningful assessment against them at the end of the project.

Outcome indicators reviewed:

0.1 Availability of NTS in National Tree Seed Centre, NGOs/CBOs and private suppliers increased [REDACTED]

0.2 Seed/seedling end users and businesses use 'What to plant where' tools (Project target: at least 130 people by end of project)

0.3 Enhanced capacity of tree growers to use and provide NTS [REDACTED]

0.4 National NTS Policy developed by end of project. [REDACTED]

The capacity of tree growers has been already evaluated during the visits to the partner (ECHO and TTGAU), demonstrating how the knowledge of the first ToT has been passed to other stakeholders and how new practices have been adopted, as reported above. However, during the next semester a new survey and training assessment will be implemented to quantify the impact compared to the baseline data.

Feedback: Please ensure you include SEAH risk in your project risk register and submit with your half year report (HYR).

The risk register has been updated and attached to the report.

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.	X
Have you reported against the most up to date information for your project ?	X
Have you clearly highlighted any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	X
Include your project reference in the subject line of submission email.	X
Submit to BCF-Reports@niras.com	X
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	X