



## Monitoring Report

**Monitoring reference** MR-113482.02  
**Report date** 19/02/2010  
**Project title** Fuel Wood Efficiency and Forestry Nutrition and Enterprise Development for Food Deficit and Impoverished Communities In Anseba and Gash Barka Regions in Eritrea

### I. Intervention data

Status	FINAL
Monitoring Report Type	Ongoing
Aid Modality	Project approach
Project	Single Country / National Project
Project Management	Project managed by HQ (Brussels)
Financed via a thematic budget line	Yes
CRIS Number	C-114379
Project Title according to Financing Agreement/Financing Decision	Fuel Wood Efficiency and Forestry Nutrition and Enterprise Development for Food Deficit and Impoverished Communities in Anseba and Gash Barka Regions in Eritrea
Domain	Environment
DAC - CRS Sector	31200 - FORESTRY
Additional DAC - CRS code	31200 - FORESTRY
Geographical zone	Eritrea
Keyword (for innovative interventions)	Environment Mainstreaming
Date Financing Agreement/Financing Decision/Contract signed	29/06/2006
Person responsible at HQ	LAZAREWICZ Natalia
Person responsible at Delegation	KAHSAY Yosief
Monitor	Nigel NICHOLSON
Project Authority	Refugee Trust International (VITA)
Type of implementing partner	International NGO/CSOs/Universities (at EU and international level)
Start date - planned	01/10/2006
End date - planned	30/09/2010
Start date - actual	01/10/2006
End date - likely	30/09/2010
Monitoring visit date	from 18/01/2010 to 29/01/2010

### II. Financial data

Primary commitment (EC funding)	1,000,000
Budget allocated for TA	Not Available
Secondary commitment (funds contracted of EC contribution)	1,000,000
Other funding (government and/or other donors)	400,000
Total budget of operation	1,400,000
Total EC funds disbursed	900,000
Financial data on	18/01/2010

### III. Grading

Relevance and quality of design	B
Efficiency of Implementation to date	B
Effectiveness to date	B
Impact prospects	A
Potential sustainability	B

### IV. Summary of conclusions

#### Relevance and quality of design

The project is in line with the EC Country Strategy Paper (CSP) 2009-13, the Government of the State of Eritrea's (GSE) Food Security Strategy (2004) and the current Agricultural Development Policy and Strategy. The logical framework (LFM) is well structured and concise linking the forestry, energy, nutrition and income-generation components. It addresses key cross-cutting issues especially environment, gender and governance. However, the project was not informed by a baseline survey (until mid-2008) and does not have the means to collect some of the Objectively Verifiable Indicators (OVI), including child malnutrition rates, nutrition related diseases, child consumption of moringa which should have been apparent at the outset. Furthermore, the activities for the fourth result "Development of local and regional forestry planning and management systems" are not well defined and lack appropriate resources in the budget. The overall project target of 85,000 households (an investment of €15 per household) is certainly over-ambitious. Ownership is very well instilled in local actors with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) Anseba and Gash Barka branches assuming responsibility for implementation and reporting on all project activities. The MoA operates in close partnership with the National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW) and local government (the Zoba Administration). Refugee Trust International (RTI) undertakes regular monitoring with MoA and assumes overall reporting responsibility to the European Commission (EC). This relationship and understanding works well.

#### Efficiency of Implementation to date

Most of the targets with respect to achieving the outputs in the two zobas of Anseba and Gash Barka will be met to a significant degree. The number of the fuel efficient (Adhanet) stoves installed has reached 12,177, already exceeding the target of 10,000. Some of these stoves critically lack chimneys because of cost and access to cement. Nearly 4 million moringa seedlings have been raised in five MoA tree nurseries and distributed to beneficiary households, schools, health centres and other institutions, but indications are that at household level the survival rate is only about 30% because of insufficient awareness/commitment at the outset of the project. Only 20,000 women have received direct training on the use/cooking of moringa and other nutritious forest products compared with the target of 70,000 women (these 20,000 are now being supported to train a further 40,000 women). Only 1,570 of the target 5,000 women have been trained and supported in palm weaving and sisal forestry enterprise. The establishment and activities of the women's groups have been slow and are hindered by difficult market conditions. "Green Clubs" have been established in 12 schools of the two regions, each with as many as 700 members (not in the original LFM). Limited water supply at schools has however hindered tree and horticultural projects. 92 MoA staff (at Zoba and Sub-zoba level) have been trained to support the implementation of the project and appropriate transport and office equipment provided. Project implementation depends considerably upon the capacity of Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) at zoba and sub-zobal levels as well as its partnership with the National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW). Generally, this works well, although the two regional baseline surveys were delayed until 2008 because of such capacity constraints. Coordination of the project is well structured and administered at zoba level (including representation from MoA, NUEW, RTI and communities). A national oversight committee (chaired by the MoA) reviews and approves annual work plans and budgets. As of December 2009, project expenditure was at 58% of the revised budget (reviewed and amended in May 2009) for four years with nine months remaining.

#### Effectiveness to date

Evidence through household surveys and interviews suggest emphatically that there has been a decrease (by as much as 70%) in the unsustainable household demand for firewood through the introduction of over 12,000 Adhanet stoves. There is limited evidence of a substantial increase in household consumption of moringa by direct beneficiaries, since take-up of nutritious forest products has been cautious, although reportedly

increasing in the current project year. Despite the large-scale distribution of moringa seedlings, many have not survived at beneficiary household level because of poor rains over the past two years and lack of interest. Without measurable improvements in child nutrition and nutrition-related diseases in targeted households, the effectiveness of the intervention is only based on anecdotal evidence. There is no tangible evidence of the benefits arising from the moringa planted elsewhere (schools, health centres and other institutions), although these initiatives have undoubtedly raised awareness. Whilst the number of women engaged in the production of forestry products falls well short of the target, there is evidence that the average monthly income of each of the 1,570 group members is Nakfa 600 (about €30) which represents a higher than expected income per household (as per LFM), but only to a relatively small number of households. No specific achievements have been made in the development of local and regional forestry planning and management systems. Overall therefore, it can be concluded that the project has certainly improved the livelihood status (and most likely the nutritional status) for nearly 34,000 households directly supported by the project so far. This falls well short of the 85,000 intended direct beneficiaries and may only reach 50% by the project end (but remains a significant achievement).

### **Impact prospects**

The spin-off effects of the project must be taken into account. More households in Eritrea are being made aware of the Adhanet stove through this (and other) intervention(s). It is a popular and preferred form of stove being more economical, time-saving (from collecting wood) and conducive to respiratory health (advantages that the project needs to demonstrate more effectively). The Government's intention to have all households using such stoves in areas where forestry is at threat looks achievable. The private investment into 100 hectares (and increasing) of moringa plantation near Tesenay for the purpose of producing moringa tea, oil and fodder is a direct spin-off of the project and attracting considerable interest in Eritrea. It is hoped that the promotion of household production and consumption will also be stimulated by the commercial interest as well as the publications on moringa that the project has produced. The potential impact of the women's groups engaged in forestry products will depend upon diversification of existing skills and business plans based upon a better market analysis.

### **Potential sustainability**

There is a very high level of ownership of the intervention by the target communities, the local administration, the MoA and NUEW, because it is embedded in local structures. This is a very positive aspect of the project. There is a strong national commitment to the fuel-efficient stove and there are clear indications that this will remain a policy priority in Eritrea. However, the cost of the stove (€1) is not affordable by poor households (and requires shelter from rain), so other alternatives need to be explored. Early indications are that private investment in moringa production will bolster local commitment to the product and make it more widely acceptable. Once there is a "demand" for moringa, the MoA tree nurseries (which have been a costly component of the project) should become more sustainable as they can charge a nominal price for seedlings (as they currently do for citrus trees). The women groups have received significant inputs from the project, they now need to develop other skills informed by better market analysis before their sustainability can be assured.

### **Key observations and recommendations**

ECDEL/RTI: i) consider a three month no cost extension with emphasis on training/awareness of additional beneficiaries on the preparation/consumption of moringa; strengthening the skills base of the women's groups (e.g. tailoring, food processing, oil production); and developing business plans based upon market analysis.

RTI/MoA: i) strengthen the monitoring of indicators reflecting achievements against project results and purpose culminating in a final impact assessment; ii) ensure that Adhanet stoves are increasingly introduced in rural and poor households and that all stoves are fitted with chimneys; iii) promote other tree varieties with nutritional properties (eg citrus) in addition to moringa (subject to suitable environment); iv) develop a strategy to ensure self-sustainability of the tree nurseries; and v) only establish "Green Clubs" where water resources are sufficient to effectively sustain forestry activities.

MoE&M: i) explore other forms of energy to wood for cooking (solar and biogas) as proposed in last ROM.

RTI: i) develop document lessons learned from the project proposed in last ROM; ii) formulate separate project proposal to develop rainwater harvesting facilities at schools, health centres, other institutions