

**Scottish Government International Development Programme
Mid-Year Report**

Notes for Completion:

- Please note, with the exception of the cover page, this report will be published.
- To ensure compliance with GDPR, refrain from using any personal or identifying information unless you have obtained consent from the data subject and are content for this to be made public.
- Answer all questions in the template provided, noting the word limits.
- Include all relevant information in the reporting template – hyperlinks and annexes will not be accepted as part of the report.
- Ensure answers are clear, concise and in plain English. Explain acronyms and avoid using jargon.

<p>Supporting Documentation</p> <p><i>Check box to confirm key documents have been submitted with this report</i></p>	<p>Logical Framework, which reflects any changes in this reporting period.</p> <p>Budget</p> <p>Case study</p> <p>Risk register</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> ✓</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ✓</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ✓</p>
<p>As the project manager responsible for the completion of this report, I hereby confirm the information included is accurate and complies with the notes for completion.</p>		
<p>Scotland-based Project Manager:</p> <p>[redacted]</p>	<p>Signature:</p> <p>[redacted]</p>	

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1. General project information		
1.1	Project reference Number	MAL/18/0-UoS
1.2	Name of organisation	University of Strathclyde
1.3	Lead partner(s) organisation	United Purpose and Community Energy Malawi
1.4	Project title	Rural Energy Access through Social Enterprise and Decentralisation (EASE)
1.5	Reporting period	From: 1/04/2019 To: 30/09/2019
1.6	Reporting year	Year 2
1.7	Project start date	01/10/2018
1.8	Project end date	31/03/2023
1.9	Total project budget*	£1,332,533
1.10	Total funding from Scottish Government*	£1,332,533
1.11	Provide a brief description of the project's aims, highlighting which of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) your project is working towards? (200 words)	<p>The EASE project works to address energy poverty in marginalised communities in Dedza and Balaka through the deployment of appropriate renewable energy infrastructure and service provision, developing sustainable social business models and supporting the delivery of national policy regarding energy access and decentralisation.</p> <p>Specifically, EASE aims to support SDG7 and SE4All targets by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deploying 2 solar PV microgrids with linked 'satellite' kiosks - Deploying 3 solar PV energy hubs - Placing Malawi's first District Energy Officers in Dedza and Balaka to undertake a range of capacity building and support activities to improve the enabling environment for energy projects.
2. Project progress and results		
<p>Please use this section to give an update on the progress the project has made during this reporting period.</p>		

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2.1

Provide an update on the progress your project has made during this reporting period. Use this space to update us on what has gone well and any challenges you have experienced, detailing how you have overcome these. (Max 350 words)

Microgrids

The deployment of the first microgrid in Mthembanji has progressed well on numerous fronts.

From a technical perspective, procurement was completed in May and contracts are in place with all suppliers. Down payments have been made on the majority of the equipment and imported components are all on-route. Preparations have been made for smooth transit through customs. MEGA (Mulanje) were engaged with our procurement process and added a wealth of experience regarding mini-grid deployment. We also actively communicated with the regulatory authority MERA to ensure all our work has the appropriate authorisation.

Community engagement has also progressed well. We have kept up regular engagement with the VDC and have formed an energy committee focussed on this project. Staff to manage the microgrid have been recruited locally. These stakeholders have also received initial sensitisation training on renewable energy. Customer interest surveys were completed following community wide sensitization events and a total of 60 customers have signed up for a connection (max planned capacity).

In addition to completing our general baseline, a MEL process to track 'customer journeys' for all households that take a microgrid connection has been initiated.

The Group Village Head has been actively involved and all land rights issues regarding deploying the microgrid have been addressed.

District Energy Officers:

In addition to completing a full energy access baseline for both districts (totalling 250 VDCs), the DEOs have continued their capacity building activities:

- District Development Plan Reviews
- Back stopping monthly Area Development Committee meetings
- NGO/CSO capacity building
- Extension worker (frontline officer) training

The profile of the DEOs continues to grow and good relationships are building with stakeholders from VDC, through ADC/TA and up to DEC. The DEOs are now supporting several extension workers and NGO representatives to develop proposals for energy initiatives.

Energy Hubs:

The DEOs have also begun preparing for Energy Hub deployments in Year 3. A detailed design and business modelling tool has been developed by UoS and adopted by the DEOs. The numerous data sources and expert advice available through the DEO engagement in Dedza and Balaka has helped refine our view of

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	<p>the maximum impact that energy hubs can deliver. Detailed feasibility studies are now being commenced for a shortlist of possible deployment locations.</p>
2.2	<p>Have you experienced any delays to planned activities? Provide full details including what action is being taken to bring activities back on track.(Max 350 words)</p> <p>Many small delays at each stage of the Mthembanji microgrid procurement process has meant an accumulated delay to installation of about 3 months (planned for August 19, expected November 19). However, the networks and expert support we have positioned around this project have enabled these delays to be minimised and current projections are positive for remaining on track with our overall targets for this year. During the delay period, the team have been able to focus on other aspects of the community engagement and business model: forming the energy committee, recruiting staff, preparing and conducting community training, designing and sense checking tariff structures as well as progressing business model planning for scale up and sustainability of the wider microgrid programme through UP.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the DEOs were involved in a serious road accident during the early part of this reporting period, resulting in the write-off of a CEM vehicle. Thankfully, no serious injuries occurred. However, it took time to arrange alternative transport and, combined with the civic disruption arising from the election, the DEOs have spent much less time in the field than planned during this period. The main activity this has affected was energy hub planning and feasibility studies. With progress in other DEO activities ahead of planned milestones, energy hub preparation is now the priority task for the next period. This activity has been boosted by additional support from Strathclyde in the form of a summer MSc project that further developed the feasibility approach and produced a comprehensive design tool in collaboration with the DEOs. In addition, the ongoing DEO engagement with agriculture extension workers has provided a rich data source of communities with crop diversification and market development initiatives. This has allowed the DEOs to rapidly refine their baseline list of potential energy hub locations and produce a short list of locations for detailed feasibility study and design over the next 6 months.</p>
2.3	<p>Are you on track to meet your year-end milestones? Give details of any areas that are behind, and how you plan to overcome this. (Max 350 words)</p> <p>We are generally on track to meet our goals for this year. Microgrids: Our target was for a first microgrid deployment along with a complementary Kiosk. With installation due to commence this month, we are confident of meeting this target by year-end even if further slippage occurs during the installation process. This will impact on several of our Logframe milestones related to establishing energy access businesses and improving energy access for rural communities.</p>

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Energy Hubs: The focus for the remainder of the year is to complete all preparatory feasibility, community engagement and design work in advance of procurement and deployment in Year 3. There are no current concerns to achieving this.

DEOs: The DEO work has over achieved in regards to the capacity building elements of their work, allowing the above-mentioned focus on energy hubs for the rest of the year. This focus is necessary as there is significant budget attached to this energy hub preparatory work and several of the logframe milestones related to entrepreneurs and business are to be delivered via this work. In parallel, the data that is now arising from the DEO engagement will be synthesised and ‘mapped’ to deliver our milestones on identifying community energy points of interest, then supporting the planning and initiation of projects arising from these.

As we approached our first full year of operation and fully implemented our MEL strategies we took some time to reflect on our logframe indicators and milestones. We felt that some of them could be adjusted to better reflect our work and hence we have included some proposed changes in our attached logframe. The changes do not reduce our scope and our activities remain the same, the intention is to capture the impact of our activities more completely and accurately.

3. Partnerships and collaboration

This section allows you to discuss how partnership working is progressing on the project, as well as wider collaboration and sharing of learning.

3.1

Provide an update on how partnership working has gone during this reporting period. Let us know about any highlights, challenges or changes to roles and responsibilities. (Max 350 words)

The EASE partnerships remain strong with Strathclyde staff working closely with our Malawian partners on a daily basis.

The external funding for [redacted] to work exclusively with the United Purpose EASE team has been invaluable as we progress the first microgrid in Mthembanji. Communication and collaboration between Aran and the UP team has been regular, productive and efficient. Without this real sense of teamwork, it is likely the challenges around procuring and deploying this first of its kind solution for Malawi would have been much more significant. The UP EASE team in Malawi ([redacted]) have gone from strength to strength, overseen by UP’s Sustainable Energy Unit programme manager [redacted]. As project coordinator, [redacted] has shown strong leadership, leveraging her experience from prior projects and expertise in community engagement to progress our EASE objectives.

Building on the prior Strathclyde/CEM partnership work, the DEOs ([redacted]) have been an effective team under the management of country director [redacted]. [redacted] is in regular communication with Edgar and the DEOs,

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	<p>collaborating on project planning, MEL, developing training materials and energy hub feasibility. [redacted] has provided a high degree of leadership to the DEO workstream, using his prior experience in Balaka to support the introduction of the DEO role to Dedza.</p> <p>After a slow start WASHTED are now fully engaged in the project and have facilitated joint meetings with UP and CEM. WASTHED are now working closely with Damien Frame to finalise their strategy for extracting learning from the project. Two PhD students at the University of Malawi have been aligned with the project for this purpose.</p> <p>A challenge for the project to address is the siloed nature of the respective workstreams. At present, the majority of knowledge sharing is ‘hubbing’ through Strathclyde and there is not sufficient awareness of each other’s activities across the whole team. This has no direct implications for our core objectives, but limits the opportunity for synergy, complementarity and collaboration. This will be the focus of a team workshop in Malawi in November 19.</p>	
3.2	<p>Have any international visits to the project taken place in this period? Give details including key activities and outputs of these visits.</p> <p>No visits in this period. Damien Frame has visits booked for late November 19 and early Feb 20. The November visit will focus on gathering the full EASE team for knowledge sharing and activity planning workshops. Briefings with key stakeholders (DoEA and MERA) will also be prioritised.</p> <p>Aran Eales will be visiting during December 19 to supervise Mthembanji microgrid installation.</p>	
Date of visit	Key achievements / outputs of visit	Follow-up actions
<p>4. Safeguarding and fraud</p> <p>Please ensure you complete questions 4.1 and 4.2 even if you have no incidents to report.</p>		
4.1	<p>Have there been any incidents, relating to the Grant or the Project, in the last reporting period which contravene your safeguarding policy?</p>	

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	None		
4.2	Have there been any incidents in the last reporting period of financial mismanagement or fraud, relating to the Grant or the Project?		
	None		
4.3	Have these incidents been reported to relevant authorities, and if so, to whom?		
	N/A		
4.4	Describe what action has been taken, and highlight any lessons learned.		
	N/A		
5. Risk assessment			
5.1	Have any issues materialised during this reporting period? If so, how were they addressed? <i>Please refer to risk assessment provided at application stage.</i>		
Assumption	Risk	Action taken	Was this included in the Risk Assessment Table in your application?
Travel around country remains practical and safe	Civic disruption due to elections	Awareness, planning and rescheduling of activities by Lilongwe based team	Yes
Continuing health of all team members	Key team members are incapacitated for either short or long term due to accident or illness: in this case car accident	Hospital check-ups and appropriate rest period. No serious injuries. Accident fault of 3 rd party.	No – but had been added during Year 1 review.
Microgrids and energy hubs are deployed on schedule	Delays to supply and construction of components, materials.	All available channels and networks utilised to expedite supply. Additional project management resource deployed to ensure construction planning is realigned with supply dates	No. We run specific risk registers for each deployment.
6. Financial information			
This section will be reviewed alongside your mid-year budget spreadsheet, which must be included with this report.			

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6.1	<p>Explain any variances to planned expenditure in this period. (Max 350 words)</p> <p>Varying allocation and profile of capital spend amongst microgrids, energy hubs and kiosks. All within planned top line capital budget as previously explained and agreed.</p>
6.2	<p>At this stage, does your projected expenditure look to be on track? If not, outline the reasons why, and what plans are in place to bring spending back on track. If you are requesting changes to your budget at this stage, outline them below. (Max 350 words)</p> <p style="color: red;">To be completed when CEM financial reporting is available.</p> <p style="color: red;">The information provided in the financial template is up to date; with the exception of the Implementation budget lines (particularly Outputs 2 and 4).</p>
6.3	<p>Do you have a proposal for how you would like to utilise any of your ring-fenced underspend, excluding any currency gains? (Max 350 words)</p> <p>N/A. All underspend from Year 1 was reprofiled.</p>
<p>7. Any other information</p> <p>Use this section to tell us any other relevant information regarding your project. (Max 350 words)</p>	