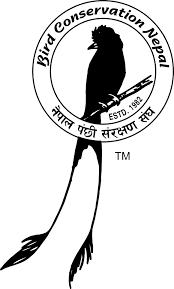
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1. INTRODUCTION

**1.1. PROGRAM OBJECTIVE AND KEY STRATEGIC APPROACHES**

The Program **People Partner with Nature for Sustainable Living** – in short **PPN** – is a conservation Program building strong civil societies taking active part in sustainable management and conservation of tropical forest ecosystems and improvement of livelihoods in forest adjacent communities in Kenya and Uganda and Nepal. The program was launched in 2015 with funding from CISU and has so far completed two phases successfully according to external reviews, appraisals, capacity assessments and regular annual status meetings with CISU.

The Participatory Forest Management (PFM) methodology continues to be the overall approach of the PPN Program and is based on the recognition that forest resources are still important for the livelihoods of the forest adjacent communities, and that previous century strict ‘policing’ of forest reserves didn’t lead to sustainable forest conservation and resource use.

By using conducive forest legislation, involving communities in sustainable management and use of resources from six protected forest areas in Nepal, Uganda, and Kenya in cooperation with national/local authorities and based on a solid partnership, a strong shared vision to save biodiversity and mitigate climate change and not the least significant progress, learnings and results achieved in previous program phases the PPN Program thus continues in a third phase to work towards securing long-term conservation of nature and long-term supply of forest resources and ecosystem benefits to forest adjacent communities with a view to reducing the necessity for strict law enforcement by the authorities with time.

*1.1.1. Development of the Program document*

The approved PPN III Program concept note, and this Program document has been developed in close cooperation between DOF BirdLife and the three Program partners. The process was kick-started at a one-week online/virtual workshop in November focusing on an internal evaluation of the PPN II, preparing the 2021 review, and discussing the upcoming phase III and followed up by a long series of individual and digital group and bilateral meetings.

DOF BirdLife has coordinated the formulation of the Program document and all the necessary input from partners through frequent communication regarding all Program and country-level inputs to proposal text, budget, TOC, Results Framework and Annexes. All partners have agreed to the final draft of this document, which was also shared with DOF BirdLife’s international committee (INTUD) and approved by the Head of DOF’s Nature Department and the Head of DOF’s Finance & Administration following internal procedures.   
  
The proposal builds on learnings from the previous phases and the partnerships’ total volume of experiences with similar projects on engaging local communities in forest management and as concluded in the 2021 review report, the PPN II Program rationale and approach:

“[…] demonstrate a good understanding of the local context and the challenges and potential vis-à-vis promoting PFM. The planned change in approach for a possible phase 3 is firmly rooted in the results and lessons of PPN II. The partnership between the four BirdLife organisations has with DOF facilitation evolved into a community of practice”.  
  
The recommendations of the review 2021 have been addressed where relevant in the proposal text but we have placed particular emphasis on describing how the interventions are building on a human rights-based approach (HRBA), cf. section 4.5. In addition, several appendices requested by the Assessment Committee are attached (e.g., results framework, final ToC, M&E-formats, DOF BirdLife’s Behavioral and Values Policy and Guidelines, containing among other things; Code of Conduct Policy, Safeguarding Policy (PSHEA Policy), Complaints Policy & Procedures and Anti-Corruption Policy).

DOF BirdLife’s Behavioral and Values ​​Policy and Guidelines has been approved by DOF BirdLife's Executive Board and was prepared as part of the work leading up to this PPN III application. The Code of Conduct Policy, Safeguarding Policy (PSHEA Policy) and Complaints Policy & Procedures are already being rolled out internally in DOF BirdLife and will be rolled out in phase 3 in partner countries overseen by the Program Management Committee (PMC), which at the beginning of phase 3 lays down a plan for the implementation of the policies.

DOF BirdLife is responsible for technical solutions in relation to complaints and whistle blower mechanisms. The Anti-Corruption Policy has been an integral part of DOF BirdLife and the PPN Partnership's work for several years now.

* + 1. *Building ‘regional clusters of intervention’*

Geographically, PPN III continues to focus on forest conservation, livelihoods and policy activities in East Africa and South Asia, just as the Program continues to be implemented within the framework of the global partnership for nature conservation, BirdLife International, i.e. the same four main implementing program partners, and national BirdLife organizations; **Nature Kenya (NK)**, **Nature Uganda (NU)**, **Bird Conservation Nepal (BCN)** and **Dansk Ornitologisk Forening / BirdLife Danmark (DOF BirdLife)**.

However, through an agreement with the national BirdLife-partner in Tanzania, **Nature Tanzania (NT)**, the PPN Program has decided to involve NT in PFM activities to strategically fit-in and fill a gap in BirdLife Africa's regional strategy for the protection of unique and important forest nature (cf. annex 3.2). The expansion into Tanzania will be led by NK and NU as a South-South partner driven activity with the purpose of knowledge/ information transfer and exchange with NT on aspects of and surrounding PFM. Nature Tanzania is slowly building capacity to respond to forest conservation challenges nationally and locally just as PFM is a legal and recognized method of forest management in Tanzania which gives the Program and NT a good starting point to develop local PFM activities. In Nepal, a stronger foundation needs to be built before upscaling PFM-learnings regionally in Asia can be considered.

The expansion and choice of country is based on consultations with the BirdLife regional office in Africa and BirdLife International’s Quality Assurance System - a performance tool to assess national BirdLife partners regularly. It also aligns with DOFs international strategy to focus and build ‘regional clusters of intervention’ to build on and benefit from cultural similarities and knowledge sharing among close partners and not least based on sustainability principles in terms of economy and climate (cf. annex 2.2 and 3.1). The decision is also based on the recommendations presented in the external 2021 program review report, where partners and the strategy to build ‘regional clusters of intervention’ in East Africa and South Asia was assessed. The regional building of clusters will be re-assessed at the end of phase III.

* + 1. *Changes to Program structure and new strategic and professional approaches*

The proposal builds on learnings from previous phases and the partnerships’ experiences with previous projects on engaging local communities in forest management as well as the recommendations in the review 2021. The review recommendation on enhancing synergies and skills transfer among the implementing partners, through peer visits, strengthening institutional partner capacities and developing and testing contextually appropriate approaches for sustainability, upscaling and replication through strategic partnerships has been addressed and incorporated in the design and logic of the ToC and Results Framework described in detail in chapter 4.

The review recommendations for strengthening Program design and framework, with a focus on: a) ensuring that the ToC, results framework, baseline, indicators, monitoring tools and reporting formats are coherent, results-oriented and implementable; and b) mainstreaming climate change adaptation and mitigation across results framework and all components has also been addressed in chapter 4, where the Programs' significantly adjusted ToC and Results Framework are presented, just as new monitoring tools and reporting formats have been developed, cf. annex 2.1, 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3.

In addition, the Program structure has been changed to further focus resources on achieving noticeable changes contributing to the desired program impact. E.g., are capacity building and policy no longer independent outcomes as in the two previous phases, but methods to achieve the Program's ambitions (*outcomes*) of (1) enhanced sustainability and climate change resilience of local community land-use and livelihoods, (2) maintained or improved conservation status of PPN forests, and (3) improved basis for sustainability and upscaling of PFM. It should lead the Program collaboration towards even clearer and more measurable changes in the third phase.

The restructuring of the Program further means, that the number of outcomes has been significantly reduced (to now 3) to focus efforts on achieving fewer key changes as also recommended in the review 2021, just as the program's relatively new focus on climate adaptation and mitigation added to the Program in 2020 as an independent and fourth component to the existing PPN II Program Results Framework will be fully integrated into the Programs' other three components and activities upscaled as also recommended in the 2021 review.

In practice, the mainstreaming of climate change mitigation and adaptation across the Results Framework and all outcomes means, that mitigation efforts in a third phase will be centered around establishing of Energy Saving Stoves (ESS) as a supplement to avoided deforestation, with associated targets for reducing fuelwood consumption and targets for maintenance/increase of canopy cover. Fuelwood consumption alone contributes to both forest degradation/removal of nutrients and CO2 -emissions and adds up to several thousand tons annually alone in the six program sites.

Adaptation efforts are centered around tree planting in the agricultural land outside the forests and training in and implementation of Climate Smart Agriculture Practices as an improvement/alternative to current agriculture practices aiming at increasing yields and improving food security and nutrition levels with associated targets for number of trees to planted and reduction of the incentives to land encroachment. Tree planting has an added value for both biodiversity and agriculture as well as the local community livelihoods as some of the selected tree species are nitrogen fixing, provide shade and reduce temperatures in their immediate surroundings, retain moisture, provide crops in the form of fruit, and will serve as a habitat for insects, birds, mammals, and other animal groups, just as some of the trees can be used for building materials and fuelwood. However, we only measure the livelihood effects of tree planting, as we, as described, measure the effects of our conservation efforts in other ways. Together, it will provide a picture of expected progress on sustainable forest conservation and improvement in local living standards.

The intervention is still balanced according to the CISU Development Triangle with a clear and prioritized focus on policy and advocacy (output 1.3, 2.3 and partly also output 2.2, 3.2 and 3.3) and partner capacity building (output 1.4, 2.4 and 3.4.) as important efforts to achieve sustainable changes, while service delivery and organizational capacity building are cross-cutting, supportive, and strategic activities in all three components, just as the PPN Program has a strong civil society orientation and building strong civil societies to conserve forest ecosystems and improve livelihoods in forest adjacent communities continues to be the focal point of the Program as also highlighted in the 2021 external review:

*“[..] civil society strengthening, especially at the local level, is a central element across the components of PPN II, enhancing the organisational capacities of BCN, NKand NU, as well as enabling community forest associations (CFA) to manage their forests and CSOs and CBOs to advocate and engage in local planning processes. As a result of PPN II, the engagement of local civil society in forest management, biodiversity protection and cooperation with local authorities has increased, thereby contributing to the achievement of SDG 15 (Life on Land), target 15.2 (forests) and other SDGs.”*

In addition, the PMC has decided to upscale the Programs’ efforts on developing site-wide, sustainable enterprises informed by and based on previous IGA experiences and successes, and the dissemination of the Programs’ learnings with PFM-based forest conservation to Tanzania and new sites in Kenya and Uganda. This decision is also in line with recommendations in the 2021 review and from consultations with CISU.

The assumption and rationale behind the increased Program focus on developing site-wide, sustainable enterprises are that a sufficient increase in household and community income will make it unnecessary to encroach on more forest land and other natural areas to obtain better livelihoods. In the third phase, the Program thus moves away from training in IGAs to organizing communities in cooperatives and exploring options for private sector engagement in financing and market linkages by carrying out/implementing market analysis, value addition/improving product processing, quality improvement and bulking to strengthen market access and increase income, aiming at ensuring better profitability and more long-term sustainability.

The new strategic and professional approaches are clearly reflected in the ToC, Results Framework, and the explanatory texts in Chapter 4.

*1.1.4. Minor continued Program presence in the Echuya forest in Uganda*

A major achievement during the second phase of the PPN Program has been to ensure a sustainable phasing out of Echuya Forest in 2021 after seven years of PPN presence. NU has developed a phasing-out strategy mainly focusing on strengthening the capacity of stakeholders and partners especially at the Local Government level, building strong governance structures in CSOs and sharing of knowledge through demonstration sites. Lasting progress has been made in Echuya since the Program was initiated in 2014, which supports a phasing out: The local communities' cooperation with local authorities on forest management works well and the village communities have the capacity to jointly manage the forest and monitor the state of the forest/biodiversity as well as exerting influence on district forest management plans. The role of Community Forest Groups (CFGs) in forest conservation has been well articulated and communities now have the capacity to identify and report or act accordingly in case of any threat to the forest especially regarding forest/bush fires and illegal bamboo harvesting. In addition, there has been a general economic boost in the communities because of NU’s successful support for the development of income-generating activities and climate smart agriculture.

However, it has been deemed due diligence to continue with some activities in Echuya to ensure that NFA assumes its role of continuous monitoring of the forest with support from stakeholders (Local communities and local government). In PPN III, NU continues to phase-out of the Echuya Landscape but maintain some forest focused activities in support of NFA to sustain monitoring of the forest.

These include:

1. Locally Based Monitoring (LBM). We propose to continue this activity to build the capacity of NFA and Local Government staff for continuous biodiversity monitoring. This will be critical as a mechanism to inform government of the recovery of the forest
2. Joint Forest Patrols (JFP). The project built a team from NFA, Local Government and local communities to participate in monitoring of illegal activities in the forest. Whereas this team has made tremendous achievements in reporting and reducing illegal activities, two factors require that the project continue to support this activity for a couple of more years. 1) That COVID-19 lockdowns may increase illegal activities in the forest (as was seen in 2020), and 2) that Rubanda and Kisoro Districts have just received new administrators. The project will mentor the teams and jointly formulate an exit strategy.
3. Bamboo domestication. Bamboo is one of the main materials sought from the forest. To reduce the pressure of encroachment, the project has run a bamboo domestication activity to ensure households plant their own bamboo. However, the forest did not provide enough planting materials and the program established a ‘mother garden’ with support from NFA with a view to increase availability of planting materials and reach more HHs. This nucleus bamboo garden has now grown to provide potting materials. We propose that the Program sustains this activity to consolidate soil and water conservation, and climate change adaptation in the landscape by distributing planting material to the wider community. We shall target at least 25 HH per CFM group (four in total) who will act as pilot HH (therefore 100 HH) with a view to expand and increase by over 50% in each CFM-area by the end of the project.

**1.2. LESSONS LEARNED AND RESULTS FROM PREVIOUS INTERVENTIONS**

During the current PPN II, good progress has been made on all four components, and good results have been achieved vis-à-vis enhancing the capacities of BCN, NK and NU, improving the management of the targeted forests, improving livelihoods, reducing the pressure on forests, and strengthening the capacities and engagement of local civil society in forest management. It is too early to assess climate change results; however, it is evident that the environmental status of the targeted forests has improved. This is supported in the 2021 review where it is emphasized by the consultant that the DOF BirdLife, BCN, NK and NU partnership has proven its capacity to manage and implement PPN II and deliver tangible results. Tangible improvements have also been achieved regarding livelihoods and the conservation of forests and biodiversity, just as the Program has effectively included women and vulnerable groups and enhanced their voice and influence in forest governance.

More specifically, the program has in phase 2 been successful in enhancing equality & equity with high participation of women in e.g., IGAs like beekeeping, which is quite popular and bring considerable income when processed and marketed well, introduction of new vegetables that make them easily accessible for the local population or enhancing existing practices of extracting forest resources like Chiuri or bamboo, that makes these activities more sustainable.

In addition, the program partners have in phase 1 and 2 supported and facilitated processes involving local stakeholders in jointly reviewing and revising existing forest management plans with forest authorities. This has enhanced real participation and equity in the process and integrating and mainstreaming biodiversity in the efforts to manage forests sustainably for the benefit of both forests, local communities, and forest authorities, showcasing that the PFM approach is working well. All partners have established good relationships with government stakeholders but also encounter challenges, mainly because of the frequent change of officers meaning that good relationships and training efforts can easily be lost in local settings but lasts institutionally at the national level. In the ideal situation all stakeholders would work cooperatively to secure forest ecosystems for the benefit of all and all would recognize that they have both duties and rights in that process. In the real-world, government stakeholders and local communities are faced with forest fires, illegal extraction of forest resources, unsustainable management practices, outside pressures etc. and have scant resources to deal with such challenges.

These observations are in line with the partnership's own conclusions based on e.g., focus groups interviews with the target groups, progress reports and Locally Based Monitoring (LBM), where conclusions are clear: Despite the national trend of deforestation in Kenya, Uganda, and Nepal, all six program forests have shown signs of recovery in terms of regrowth of indigenous canopy tree species, and the rate at which forest disappears is also slowing down as a result of program efforts. Furthermore, the three local partners have documented maintained or even increasing populations of some endangered and endemic bird and tree species and an increase in canopy cover. The progress on forest conservation can be attributed to the Program's persistent efforts to improve local living conditions and reduce local people's forest dependency, in combination with targeted advocacy and policy work locally and nationally. Additionally, this has contributed to strengthening sustainability in forest management on aspects of over-exploitation, benefit sharing, strengthening of Community Forest Groups (CFGs) organization and influence, forest law enforcement, and the perceived overall value of the forests to all involved stakeholders. In Uganda, these efforts have led to an increased buy-in of local authorities, who are now hoping to upgrade the status of Echuya forest to a National Park.

*1.2.1. Documenting results*

LBM is an approach to develop a simple and self-sustainable monitoring system targeting carefully selected variables like e.g., components of biodiversity, human natural resource use, ecosystem services and other issues that are integral parts of sustainable management of natural resources. The approach is informed by DOF BirdLife’s experiences of involving citizens in data collection in Denmark. These experiences form part of the concept of ‘citizen science’ in which volunteers play a decisive role in biodiversity, forest, wetland, and coastal area management. It helps build capacity in resource management, awareness of sustainable development, local ownership of the area, resolve conflicts, and strengthen civil society. LBM is context-and site-specific and is developed in a participatory process with local community members and those authorities that are responsible for managing the areas. It is simple, easily managed, and cost-effective and is designed to be long-term and self-sustainable beyond the lifetime of externally supported programs. It is based on standardized collection of selected data at regular intervals using the same approaches e.g., well-defined routes/transects surveyed jointly by community members and authorities at regular intervals.

LBM will continue to be a crucial tool for documenting and monitoring results (cf. annex 2.6), just as the Program, in phase 3, introduces new technologies for forest monitoring, including access to satellite monitoring and the use of drones, cameras and GPS to document possible illegal activities that may be included as evidence in forest authority enforcement or evidence-based reporting/advocacy by partners and Local Community Groups (LCGs) in case of laxity in forest authority enforcement.

1. PARTNERSHIP & CAPACITY

**2.1. PROGRAM PARTNERS**

The Programs’ third phase continues to be implemented within the framework of the global partnership for nature conservation, BirdLife International, i.e., the same four main implementing program partners, and national BirdLife organizations: **Nature Kenya (NK)**, **NatureUganda (NU)**, **Bird Conservation Nepal (BCN)** and **Dansk Ornitologisk Forening / BirdLife Danmark (DOF BirdLife)**. According to BirdLife International supporting partners (such as DOF BirdLife) must work together for implementation of interventions with a national BirdLife Partner. Partnership is obtained based on several criteria and Partners are subject to a regular quality assurance system (QAS) process. By agreement with the national BirdLife partner in Tanzania, **Nature Tanzania (NT)**, the PPN Program will from 2022 include Participatory Forest Management (PFM) activities in Tanzania as previously described in section 1.1.2.

There is already a strong Program partnership collaboration based on recognition, experience and a shared willingness to create change for the benefit of people and nature which has *“evolved into a community of practice*”, as stated in the external review report 2021, where it also is emphasized that: *"[...] program partners have the capacity to work strategically with sustainable forest management and upscale learning and have proven themselves capable of promoting PFM and integrating sustainability and biodiversity considerations in forest management [...] The three partners have a clear niche and unique role vis-à-vis bird conservation and are recognized by national government stakeholders for their contribution to PFM [...].*

*2.1.1. Core partners*

NK, NU and BCN all have a long history and track records as national membership-based CSOs/NGOs implementing activities in the field of biodiversity and nature conservation/management, advocacy, and policy work at different levels and within the social area of improving community livelihoods. The work is done in partnership with CBOs, NGOs, INGOs and local/national governments and all three partners are recognized by national government stakeholders for their contribution to PFM (external review report 2021, p. 3).

Nature Kenya[[1]](#footnote-1) is Africa’s oldest science and conservation society founded in 1909 and based in Nairobi. It is a legally constituted membership-based NGO with a membership of over 1000. It has 43 employees, 22 full-time and 21 project contract employees. The mission of Nature Kenyais connecting nature and people for a sustainable future. The organisation is actively supporting and encouraging community participation in conservation through promotion of sustainable benefits, building a strong constituency for conservation across the country, enhancing knowledge of Kenya’s biodiversity sites, advocating policies favorable to biodiversity conservation, and promoting conservation of key species, sites, and habitats. Main activities are capacity building of grass root organizations and local communities to take charge of conservation activities at 67 IBAs of global conservation importance. The LCGs are site based civil society groups with whom Nature Kenya works collaboratively with a wide array of Government agencies and conservation and development organisations. Nature Kenya connects LCGs with Government and other site actors including Community Forest Associations and Water Resource Users Associations to enhance their effectiveness in conservation and development. Nature Kenya has developed resource centers that deliver environmental education to youth taking advantage of LCGs’ presence at focus sites and has implemented more than 35 projects in the past 5 years. These have focused on nature conservation through participatory and sustainable management of resources, thereby integrating development and environmental concerns. NK became a full partner of BirdLife in 1993. DOF BirdLife has worked with Nature Kenya since 2003.

Nature Uganda[[2]](#footnote-2) is the East Africa Natural History Society in Uganda. It primarily works in priority biodiversity areas such as IBAs with different stakeholders ranging from local people to local governments and central governments. The activities of the organisation have diversified over the years to include sustainable community based natural resource management, management of species, sites and habitats, identification of areas important for conservation, biodiversity monitoring and development of site- or species-specific action plans to focused conservation work. It is a membership organisation with over 3000 registered members, the biggest membership organization in Uganda. The organisation operates four branches across Uganda to better service its members. Members are engaged in various activities including public awareness through nature-walks and public-talks depending on their interests and expertise and participate in research and conservation through established specialised Working Groups focusing on various taxonomic groups, and a children’s education Program called Young Explorers Club. The main goal of NU is to support biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management while contributing to improvement of livelihoods in communities in and around IBAs. The mission is to promote the understanding, appreciation, and conservation of nature. It is a registered NGO with 30 employees, based at the Secretariat in Kampala and in the field offices. The engagement in projects and Programs together with DOF has helpedNU work closely with District Local Governments, the National Forest Authority and Collaborative Forest Management Associations. This has resulted in improved working relationships leading to improved adherence to the rules and regulations of CFM plans and agreements. DOF has worked with NU since 2010. NU became a full partner of BirdLife in 1995. DOF BirdLife has worked with NU since 2010.

Bird Conservation Nepal (BCN)[[3]](#footnote-3) was established in 1982. It is the leading organisation in Nepal, focusing on the conservation of birds, their habitats, and sites, while benefiting people. BCN started its Program implementation fully in 1996 and is legally registered with the Social Welfare Council and District Civil Administration. BCN, being a membership-based organisation, currently has around 1000 plus members and employs around 25 staff. There are around 60 Local Conservation Groups supporting the organisations’ various activities around IBAs. It has as its guiding principles conservation of birds, their habitats and biodiversity, people’s participation in conservation and benefiting the people themselves, institutional learning and building national and international networks to increase effectiveness in bird and biodiversity conservation. BCN implements several projects with several donors, for example in cooperation with BirdLife Norway and funded by the Norwegian development agency NORAD a project at three IBA sites with focus on sustainable management of natural resources and a Darwin Initiative, UK, funded project on Mainstreaming Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Community Forestry. BCN became a full partner of BirdLife in 2017. DOF BirdLife has worked with BCN since 2014.

*2.1.2. BirdLife International*

BirdLife International is a global Partnership of conservation organizations (NGOs) that strives to conserve birds, their habitats and global biodiversity, working with people towards sustainability in the use of natural resources. Together the Partnership is defined by 117 BirdLife Partners worldwide – one per country or territory – and growing. DOF BirdLife is the Danish partner of the global BirdLife Partnership. The BirdLife Global Secretariat is based in Cambridge, UK, and has 6 regional offices around the world, including in Singapore and Nairobi. BirdLife’s has a Board, a Global Council with elected representatives from all the six regions[[4]](#footnote-4), an Executive Team and Regional Directors in addition to qualified technical staff. It has nine Programs, including the IBA, Climate, Local Engagement and Empowerment and Forests of Hope Programs which are implemented with Partners around the World. The BirdLife HQ in Cambridge collects and provides data on bird species, IBAs and other thematic areas, case studies and other resources.

BirdLife was reorganized in the 1980s as a response to the need for a more efficient organization for international bird protection. DOF BirdLife was one of the architects behind the modernization of the BirdLife we know today, but the roots of the organization dates back to 1914, where it was founded under the name International Council for Bird Preservation as a reaction to the threat of extinction of the Little Egret (Egretta garzetta). DOF BirdLife has been a full member of BirdLife International since the 1980s.

The partnership has identified several focal areas of work that form the framework of the cooperation. These areas are:

* Sustainable management, recovery, and protection of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA). KBAs are sites that contribute to the global conservation of biodiversity, including vital habitats for threatened plant and animal species in terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems
* Protection of marine, migratory, and endangered birds
* Local engagement and empowerment
* All our work is underpinned by scientific research. It is science, which is used to set priorities, inform action on the ground, and shape policy and advocacy

The BirdLife Partnership jointly and cumulatively delivers high-impact and long-term conservation that benefits both nature and people and is widely recognized as the world leader in bird conservation. Rigorous science informed by practical feedback from projects/programs on the ground and data-gathering and analysis with help from thousands of volunteers ensure that scarce resources are used cleverly for maximum benefits and outputs. The global partnership has so far identified 13,000 important bird and biodiversity areas (IBAs) often with particularly high concentrations of endemic or endangered bird species, covering a total area of 26,000,000 km2. This corresponds to 7,4 percent of the World's total land area and 6,4 percent of the total ocean surface of the Earth. 129 of the World’s IBAs are in Denmark. With 6,5 million members and supporters, and c. 6 million staff the BirdLife Partnership plays a key role in the global struggle for the conservation of the World's birds and biodiversity and their habitats.

DOF BirdLife strives to ensure that the PPN Programs’ and BirdLife’s overall strategic approaches and policies are complementary and to build on the capacity and resources within BirdLife, e.g., through partners’ participation in regional BirdLife partnership meetings, Supporting Partners meetings, the World Congress, trainings, and other events[[5]](#footnote-5), cf. annex 2.2.

*2.1.3. Review recommendation to the PPN partnership capacities*

The CISU 2021 Review concluded that the three partners have a clear niche and unique in bird and nature conservation and are recognised by national government stakeholders for their contribution to PFM, as evidenced by invitation from the governments to participate in national policy and planning processes. The three partners have for several years been engaged in the promotion of PFM as a means to conserve the environment and improve livelihoods, which, in combination with a very good track record of retaining staff, has proven very conducive for continuity. The three partners generally have stronger staff capacity for conservation than livelihoods, but considerable experience has been gained over the last two phases of the PPN Program, and useful assistance has been received through collaboration with other NGOs and government technical staff in the implementation of livelihood activities.

The CISU external review consultant could not travel due to the travel restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Hence, the field visits were carried out by national consultants and interviews with implementing partners and stakeholders in Kathmandu, Nairobi and, to a lesser extent, Kampala were carried out as remote interviews using internet applications (VoIP).

However, the review also came up with two interesting recommendations to improve the partnership and support the Programs long-term sustainability approach, which the Program will work to strengthen in phase three. These are:

**Recommendation 1:** Enhance synergies and skills transfer among the implementing partners, through:

1. Implementing peer visits where BCN, NK and NU staff work together on replicating approaches, best practices and lessons to address specific issues and opportunities
2. Linking to other parts of DOF, in particular mobilize the DOF Climate & Biodiversity Fund to engage in protecting existing forests and community involvement for sustainability

**Recommendation 2:** Strengthen institutional capacities of BCN, NK and NU with a focus on addressing specific challenges, through:

1. Providing capacity development on: i) advocacy, lobbying, creating alliances and influencing policy and planning, ii) in-country fundraising, iii) nature-based climate change adaptation and mitigation solutions, and iv) research with a focus on informing policy
2. Enhancing the socio-economic engagement capacity through additional staffing or more structured/formalised partnerships with rural development NGOs

The recommendations regarding capacity have been converted to concrete actions in the ToC and the Results Framework, cf. cap. 4, where the Program at the output level prioritizes strengthening of institutional capacity to further support the program's long-term sustainability, including fundraising as the partners to a significant extent depend on funding mobilised by DOF BirdLife and other international partners. This is a potential threat to the long-term organisational and technical capacity of the partners, especially for BCN, which currently only has one other long-term project.

In cooperation with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB, BirdLife in United Kingdom), and as part of RSBP’s exit strategy from Nepal, DOF BirdLife has set up a fundraising working group under the auspices of the BirdLife partnership with the participation of the management from BirdLife's regional Asia office, BirdLife International's capacity development program and RSPB. Until 2019, RSPB provided core support to BCN, while also funding specific project activities in Nepal, but since then only the project funding has been continued due to strategic changes in priorities for the international work of RSPB. Since the Autumn of 2020, the fundraising working group has collaborated to pursue international funding to BCN as part of building their capacity in fundraising. The goal is to build BCN's institutional capacity and strengthen their organizational sustainability. In addition, BCN has been selected to receive support from BirdLife International's COVID-19 Fund, just as RSPB has decided to continue part of their core funding. All of this gives rise to expectations that BCN will make it through the covid-19 pandemic and immediate aftermath.

Recommendations regarding enhancing synergies and skills transfer among the implementing partners will take place on an ongoing basis as a new approach to the work. Linking the Program to other parts of DOF BirdLife, in particular to the work of the DOF BirdLife Climate & Biodiversity Fund, is a political process where the decision-making power lies with DOF BirdLife's political leadership. However, a working group has already been set up to investigate the possibilities of linking the PPN Program with the Climate & Biodiversity Fund. Danish PPN staff are involved in the process.

* 1. **THE DANISH ORGANISATION’S EXPERIENCE AND CAPACITY**

Founded in 1906, DOF BirdLife, is one of the oldest nature conservation organizations in Denmark with a more than 110-year history of bird data collection and protection. Birdwatching and citizen science has been focal activities of the organization – and still is with more than 600 annual birdwatching and nature events for members and the public. However, the audience has broadened and today DOF BirdLife embraces all bird and nature enthusiasts sharing DOF BirdLife's concern about the degeneration of nature and decline in bird populations. Engaging almost 2,000 volunteers in day-to-day fieldwork and collation of bird data and policy work, and with the support of 18,000+ members, DOF BirdLife has grown from a small club of birdwatchers to a vital player on the national scene for bird protection and nature conservation and a fully-fledged member of [BirdLife International](https://www.birdlife.org/) since 1984.  
DOF BirdLife is known for its reliability based on science and data and has had agreements on delivering data to the Ministry of Environment since 2004. It is represented in several Danish networks, including Det Grønne Kontaktudvalg operating at district level, Danish IUCN Committee, and the 92-Group for Sustainable Development. Organizationally, DOF BirdLife is an independent organization with 30 employees and strong traditions of the members' active participation and democratic influence. The General Meeting, taking place twice annually, is the highest governing body of the organization and is made up of 60 delegates from DOF BirdLife’s 13 local chapters, geographically covering the whole of Denmark. Among these, the Board, consisting of 13 members, is elected. Through DOF BirdLife's Climate & Biodiversity Fund and the Bird Protection Foundation - an economically independent entity of DOF BirdLife - money is raised to purchase and manage bird and nature reserves in Denmark and degenerated forest in (currently) Latin America.

* + 1. *DOF BirdLife’s international work*

Internationally, DOF has for the past 30 years worked in and around Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) in Africa and Asia with focus on involving local communities in sustainable management of natural resources, mainly forests.  Most of the projects were funded by Danida (MoFA, including the Sustainable and Integrated Management of Mbeliling (2007-2015) in Flores, Indonesia. In 2019 DOF BirdLife completed the project Strengthening Civil Society Capacity to Advocate for Mainstreaming Biodiversity Project (CAMB 2017-2018) funded by a CISU Climate & Environment grant.

At EU level, DOF BirdLife works to influence the development, implementation and enforcement of ambitious EU biodiversity policies and legislation to ensure the protection of endangered species and more space for wild and cohesive nature with a particular focus on EU Birds and Habitats Directives and The Natura 2000 network. The work is carried out in coordination with BirdLife Europe & Central Asia's regional office in Brussels and the region's 49 BirdLife partners.  
In Africa and Asia, DOF BirdLife works with forest conservation through the strengthening of civil society in the management, advocacy, and improvement of living conditions in close cooperation with local BirdLife partners and in coordination with the BirdLife Africa Regional Office. In Latin America, DOF BirdLife is acquiring degenerated tropical forest in coordination with the BirdLife Americas Regional Office and in areas managed by national BirdLife partners combining biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration in regenerating natural forest areas.  
  
DOF BirdLife’s international development and forest/nature conservation interventions are managed by two staff with a MSc in International Development and Communication, and in biology respectively, forming DOF's *international team* of the Nature Department with joint responsibility for managing DOFs international program, policy and advocacy work, project development and financing and both with long experience in development cooperation from different positions in NGOs/development institutions, multilateral organizations and private consulting companies in Denmark and abroad. In addition, the international work is supported by an International Committee (INTUD) and Nature Policy Committee (NATUD). Both committees are made up of volunteers. As part of the BirdLife partnership, DOF BirdLife builds on the policies and principles of international work that BirdLife International continuously formulates and updates.

* + 1. *DOF BirdLife’s organizational capacity*

Regarding DOF BirdLife’s follow-up on recommendations from the CISU Capacity Assessment back in 2014 and up to the latest CISU Financial and Administrative Capacity Assessment 2021, the following points are considered the most important in relation to organizational capacity:

* DOF BirdLife has been in full compliance since 2016 with the CISU Guidelines on Financial Management and Administration, only pending an update and dating of the internal financial management and administration guidelines in DOF BirdLife.
* DOF BirdLife has had challenges in formulating a high-quality ToC and more meaningful and easily collected/monitored indicators that enabled easy-to-use/concise reporting formats for the partners focusing on outcomes/results that contribute to change. The capacity to do this has now been improved, first in connection with the formulation of the application to CISU for the additional Climate Grant 2020, ensuring the inclusion of the Climate Component 4 in the phase 2, secondly through participation of both DOF program staff in the CISU MEL training course September 2020, and finally through focused hands-on training by an external consultant on a 2-day training workshop for both DOF Program staff in October 2020.
* As also required, DOF BirdLife has produced an Anti-corruption Policy Document, which is in the process of being updated. Similarly, DOF BirdLife has produced a PSHEA manual. Both DOF BirdLife as well as our 3 partners will have finalized training in and initiated implementation of PSHEA by the end of 2022.
* DOF BirdLife has further produced the document, Behavior and Values ​​Policies and Guidelines, including Code of Conduct approved by DOFs board June 2021 which is disseminated to Danish employees and volunteers at workshops in 2021 and 2022 and as part of monitoring visits to program countries.
* During the previous phases and in cooperation with BirdLife International policies and guidelines have been developed to support and strengthen DOF BirdLife’s international development cooperation including gender policies, indigenous people’s policy, and LBM guidelines.

1. CONTEXT

**3.1. THE PROGRAMS’ GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS**

The Program continues in phase 3 to ensure sustainable conservation of six forest sites in Kenya, Uganda, and Nepal respectively through local development and strengthening of local living conditions as we in phase 2 of the Program in consultation with the external consultant (rev./app 2017) and NU took the decision to phase out of Echuya Forest, cf. section 1.1.4.

This decision has been made as the local communities' cooperation with local authorities on forest management works well and the communities have the capacity to jointly manage the forest and monitor the state of the forest/biodiversity as well as exerting influence on district forest management plans. In addition, the role of Community Forest Groups (CFGs) in forest conservation has been well articulated and communities now have the capacity to identify and report or act accordingly in case of any threat to the forest especially regarding forest/bush fires and illegal bamboo harvesting. In addition, there has been a general economic boost in the communities because of NU’s successful support for the development of income-generating activities and climate smart agriculture.

However, in a third Program phase the PMC has decided to continue with a handful of monitoring and follow-up activities to ensure a proper exit of the area after almost 10 years of presence and handover to the BirdLife-partner in Germany (NABU), which initiates activities in Echuya in partnership with NU.

In addition, Nature Tanzania (NT) is involved as an associated partner in the PPN III, as well as expanding PFM to other areas of the four PPN forest sites in Kenya and Uganda are established goals for phase 3 (cf. annex 3.1). In Nepal, the aim is to ensure the biodiversity of existing PFM agreements, as the PFM model in Nepal is already widespread in all forest areas under national protection.

*3.1.1. IBA concept and program forest sites*

The six forest sites, though geographically distinct, are all rather remote rural forested Important Birds and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) with high biodiversity values. The IBA concept has been developed and applied by BirdLife International for over 30 years with the purpose of identifying, protecting, and managing a network of sites that are significant for the long-term viability of naturally occurring bird populations. Considerable effort has been devoted to refining and agreeing a set of simple but robust criteria that can be applied worldwide. Initially, IBAs were identified only for terrestrial and freshwater environments, but over the past decade, the IBA process and method has been adapted and applied in the marine realm. BirdLife International has, to date, identified and documented more than 13,000 IBA sites in over 200 countries and territories worldwide, as well as in the marine environment.

The IBA concept is a recognized practical tool and site-based integrated approach for conservation and sustainable use of the natural environment by the local people living in and around the IBAs. Kenya, Uganda, and Nepal have all been through vigorous IBA-identification processes for several years, and new IBAs are still being identified.

IBAs are sites large enough to safeguard a viable population of a species, group of species, or entire avian community during at least part of its life cycle but are small enough to be conserved in their entirety and provide the BirdLife Partnership and others with a focus for conservation action, planning, and advocacy as is also the case for the PPN Program. Many of the IBA sites are also important for other forms of biodiversity, so the conservation of IBAs ensures the survival of a correspondingly large number of other animals and plants. The IBA network may be considered the minimum essential to ensure the survival of many of these species across their ranges and throughout their life cycles. Because some places are much richer in biodiversity than others, conserving a relatively modest network of sites is a cost-effective and efficient way of ensuring the survival of many species.

IBAs are:

* Places of international significance for the conservation of birds and other biodiversity
* Recognised world-wide as practical tools for conservation
* Distinct areas amenable to practical conservation action
* Identified using robust, standardised criteria
* Sites that together form part of a wider integrated approach to the conservation and sustainable use of the natural environment

In 2017 IUCN adapted the KBA (Key Biodiversity Areas) system. Almost all existing IBAs are also KBAs but to which extent the KBA terminology will replace IBAs is still undecided. It has not affected the Program so far and is not expected to do so due to the slow adoption and rolling out of the KBA concept. So, for the next decade, the BirdLife IBA Program continues to be relevant, both for the selection of sites, IBA monitoring and local engagement through Local Conservation Groups. The BirdLife International secretariat develops and maintains the list of ‘trigger’ species (those for which IBA sites are selected) and associated population thresholds to be used for each IBA criterion and makes sure the criteria are applied in a consistent and common-sense way, thereby ensuring consistency and the maintenance of standards.

Brief introduction to the six Program Forest sites:

* **Arabuko-Sokoke Forest in Kenya** covers a forest area of 42,000 ha and is the largest coastal forest in the country. It is one of Kenya's most important biodiversity areas and the second most important in terms of bird protection with 250 species, of which 6 are globally endangered and 2 are endemic. The area also houses a small group of elephants, 2 threatened mammals, 6 endemic butterfly species and several amphibian species. About 130,000 people live around the forest. The forest area has the status of protected and is classified as Important Bird & Biodiversity Area (IBA), Key Biodiversity Area (KBA), Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) and UNESCO MAB.
* **Dakatcha Woodland in Kenya** covers around ​​82,000 ha consisting of fairly intact dry coastal forest. It is the only place in the world where the endemic Clarke’s Weaver is known to breed. Dakatcha is home to 2 endemic species and a total of 220 different bird species as well as several globally endangered species, including 11 rare plants. The area also provides important ecosystem services. There live c. 50,000 people, including a small indigenous group of Sanya, while the majority are Giriama who settled in the 1940s. The forest area does not have the status of protected, but is under private and collective ownership of, among others, the surrounding village communities. The area is classified as an Important Bird & Biodiversity Area (IBA) and Key Biodiversity Area (KBA).
* **Taita Hills forests in Kenya** consist of several forest patches totaling c. 452 ha. The area is rich in biodiversity and holds many endemic species of which several are globally endangered. These include the Taita Apalis, one of the most endangered birds in the world with rapidly declining numbers. A total of 200 bird species have been registered in Taita, three of which are endemic. About 60,000 people live in the area giving a very high population density. The forest area has status as protected and is classified as an Alliance for Zero Extinction site (AZE), Important Bird Area (IBA) and Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) according to IUCN standards.

* **Kasyoha-Kitomi in Uganda** is a 40,000 ha forest area in western Uganda with a high biodiversity. A total of 308 bird species have been recorded, 4 of which are globally endangered. The forest also holds several primate species and Chimpanzee. There are c. 175,000 people living in the area, while 50,000 of these live directly by the forest. The forest area has the status of protected in the category Central Forest Reserve and is also classified as an Important Bird & Biodiversity Area (IBA).
* **Resunga forest in Nepal** covers a forest area of ​​3,400 ha and has a high value in terms of biodiversity, especially birds. So far, 252 bird species have been registered of which 5 are globally threatened, while only one species is endemic. The forest is surrounded by villages and agricultural areas holding a population 33,365, and Reshunga holds the status of protection forest area and is classified an Important Bird & Biodiversity Area (IBA) as well as a Key Biodiversity Area (KBA).
* **Madane Forest in Nepal** covers a forest area of ​​13,761 ha and holds great biodiversity, especially birds. So far, 264 bird species have been registered. 5 of the species are globally threatened, while only one species is endemic. Madane still has good populations of primates, deer, and leopards. About 32,278 people live around the forest. The forest holds the status of protection forest area and qualifies to be an Important Bird & Biodiversity Area (IBA).

**3.2. KEY DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES, POLICY FRAMEWORK & MAIN STAKEHOLDERS**

According to the State of World’s Forests 2020 by FAO and UNEP (2020) the world’s forest continues to decline primarily due to population growth, agriculture, and unsustainable levels of exploitation, much of which is illegal. The situation in Kenya, Uganda and Nepal does not differ much from the global tendencies when it comes to deforestation. In Kenya, only seven percent of the country’s natural forest area remains corresponding to approx. 40,000 km2. In Uganda, nine percent of the natural forest area remains, covering approx. 11.300 km2 of the country’s total area, while in Nepal 40 percent of the country’s forests remains, covering approx. 59,600 km2 of the country’s total area.

Kenya

In Kenya, deforestation is driven by agricultural expansion, unsustainable use of forest resources and population increase, all three factors often exacerbated by widespread youth unemployment. The average annual depletion of forest cover appears to be about 1%.

Although the forest sector contributes only a small amount to the formal economy, its unrecorded value in the informal and subsistence sector is great. According to FAO’s State of the World’s Forest (2014), estimates that Kenya’s forestry sector contributes USD 365 million to the GDP annually. Over 80% of the national energy supply is met by fuelwood. Forests contribute 3.6% to the GDP excluding vital environmental services and contributions to other sectors. Current wood deficit is projected to increase from 10 to at least 15 million m3 per year by 2030. The private sector including tree farmers, communities and medium- and large-scale investors provide 90% of the wood supply. Forest-related enterprises and industries provide employment to over 60,000 people. The total commercial role of forests in the economy is far larger than this, considering value-added, unrecorded, and informal sector activity.

Over half a million households, or about 10% of the population, living within 5 km of indigenous/natural forests, depend on the direct use of forest resources, including timber and Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs). Both official regulations and illegal encroachment into forests for agriculture and settlement constitute a major and perhaps the most severe threat to indigenous/natural forest status and integrity. Dakatcha is threatened by agricultural expansion given that it is not protected. As for Arabuko & Taita Hills forests, pressure here is driven by unsustainable forest resource use.

Just over 9.400 km2 of the forests are under formal protection corresponding to 255 forest reserves according to the National Forest Program. 32.000 km2 is gazette under county, community, or private ownership.  A large part of the forest areas under protection (just over 12.000 km2) are classified as indigenous closed canopy forests providing goods and services such as wildlife habitats, biodiversity, water catchments, employment opportunities and livelihood resources for millions of people.

Uganda

As in Kenya deforestation in Uganda is driven by agricultural expansion and unsustainable use of forest resources combined with a high population growth, poor forest management and lack of enforcement of forest legislation by authorities. Inadequate policies to integrate rural populations in forest management and benefit sharing were found to be a major driver for natural resource degradation and the ensuing poverty. The by-product of this cycle is that basic livelihood strategies of local communities have evolved with heavy reliance on natural resources, mainly forests.

Within a period of 15 years from 1990, Uganda’s forestry estate has shrunk from 24% of the total land area to 9% in 2015, representing an average annual deforestation rate of 1.7%. The rate of deforestation in Central Forest Reserves was 1.1%. The Forestry Policy 2001 estimated the contribution of forests to the GDP to be 6% while the annual contribution of forests to household cash income was estimated at 11-27% in 2002. According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 92% of Uganda’s energy needs are met from woody biomass, with rural households consuming about 97% of the household energy requirements. 34.4 million tons of round wood worth USD 130 million were used in construction work in 2007.

Just over 36% of the forests are under different categories of formal protection extending from Central Forest Reserves (18,5%) managed by National Forestry Authority (NFA), over National Parks and Wildlife Reserves (17,5%) managed by Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) to local forest reserves (0,03%) managed by local governments (District Local Governments under District Forest Services). The rest of the forests (64%) are on private and communal lands and managed by private and local community forest owners.

Nepal

The deforestation is driven by Illegal logging, encroachment, road construction and fuelwood consumption. Such activities are mainly due to growing population and ongoing development activities.

The average annual depletion of forest cover appears to be about 1.7%

Within a period of 19 years from 2001, the forest cover was reduced with approximately 464 km2 representing an average annual deforestation rate of 0.90 percent. The agriculture and the forestry sector contribute with 39% to the total GDP and employ about 80% of the population. At the national level, 28% of all household income comes from these two sectors. It is estimated that the forestry sector alone contributes 15% to the GDP of the country (MoFSC 2009). Similarly, Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) contribute about 5% of GDP. Tourism, much of which is nature-based, provides about 2% of the total GDP and about 25% of the total foreign exchange earnings (MoFSC 2010).

3286.627 km2 of the forests are under formal protection corresponding to 16 forest reserves. The Ministry of Forests and Environment (MoFE) is the main governing body for the Forestry Sector. Under this Ministry there are two main departments directly related with forest management, the Department of National Parks & Wildlife Conservation and the Department of Forests and Soil Conservation. Forests inside Protected Areas are under the jurisdiction of the first, forests outside under the latter. Currently Protected

Areas cover 23.39% of Nepal’s total area and is the dominant approach to biodiversity conservation.

**3.3. CLUSTER APPROACH**

It is a strategic choice by DOF BirdLife to establish regional collaborations to focus the organization's international development efforts, create synergy effects and ensure sustainability in project implementation in both the short and long term.

By agreement with the national BirdLife partner in Tanzania, Nature Tanzania (NT), the PPN Program will in a third phase include PFM activities in Tanzania to strategically fit-in and fill a gap in BirdLife Africa's regional strategy for the protection of unique and important forest nature. In Nepal however, a stronger foundation needs to be built before upscaling PFM-learnings regionally in Asia. However, an expansion of program activities into Bhutan and/or Myanmar continues to be an ambition of DOF BirdLife. This is to avoid Nepal becoming a non-integrated satellite to a Program with a strong focus on East Africa with two permanent and one associated East African Program partner. The reasoning is thus that we either build a balanced Program with two equal regional clusters or focus, qualify, and scale up the focus on one regional cluster.

The ambition of building a Himalayan Cluster will be further explored and resources are allocated to strengthen BCN. However, if it does not prove possible to further expand in Asia, DOF BirdLife will from late 2024 begin phasing out of Nepal and from 2026 focus the international work exclusively on sustainable forest protection and management in East Africa in partnership with Nature Kenya and Nature Uganda. This will likely give rise to a formalization of the collaboration with NT depending on the evaluation of the performance and collaboration with NT during PPN III just as an expansion of activities to include Ethiopia will be explored.

4. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

**4.1.** **PROGRAM AIM AND JUSTIFICATION**

The causal link between healthy ecosystems and human living conditions is well-documented, just as unspoiled ecosystems with high biodiversity values are more resilient to fluctuations in climate and natural disasters. Forests provide goods and services such as wildlife habitats, biodiversity, water catchments, employment opportunities and livelihood resources for millions of people. In addition, nature-based solutions have been found to be some of the most efficient ways to combat climate change. During the last four-five decades, scientists have revealed clear links between human overexploitation of nature and escalating human-nature interaction to the emergence of aggressive virus species like HIV/AIDS, Ebola, Marburg’s Disease, SARS, and COVID-19. Therefore, forest conservation and sustainable management reducing overexploitation of forest biodiversity and resources and thereby also physical human-wild mammal contact, is also a necessary investment in the future of mankind, yet the extent and quality of the World’s forests continues to decline. According to the State of the World’s Forests 2020 by FAO and UNEP (2020), this decline is primarily due to continued human population growth, agriculture, and unsustainable levels of natural resource exploitation, much of which is illegal.  
  
The worrying conclusion of the global reports on deforestation, destruction of nature and the associated threat to the livelihoods of poor people shows the continuing and increasingly urgent need for sustainable management of the World's forests and initiatives to (1) reduce forest dependency and agricultural encroachment to protect the World’s unique forest ecosystems - home to 2/3 of the worlds flora and fauna and one of the main banks for carbon storage – and (2) to address the global biodiversity and climate crisis – the two major crisis the World is facing threatening half a century of development efforts, relative global stability and the basis for human existence. The situation in Kenya, Uganda and Nepal does not differ much from the global tendencies when it comes to deforestation.

Within development aid, there is an increased focus on the need to combine nature efforts, climate efforts and the fight against poverty. There is a growing consensus that neither the biodiversity crisis, the climate crisis nor poverty can be addressed as independent problems, and that the natural dimension must be integrated to a greater extent in the overall effort in the future. If this does not happen, aid will in many cases be short-term and unsustainable[[6]](#footnote-6).

The PPN Program thus continues in a third phase to work towards securing long-term conservation of crucial biodiversity and at the same time long-term supply of forest resources and ecosystem benefits to forest adjacent communities with a view to reducing the necessity for strict law enforcement by the authorities with time based on three interdependent approaches to forest conservation and local development:

(1) Supporting the development of sustainable climate-smart agricultural practices, promotion of site-wide community enterprises and tree planting

(2) Training in and rolling-out sustainable PFM as well as monitoring, enforcement, and reduction in levels of fuelwood consumption

(3) Expanding PFM into new parts of PPN forests and beyond in East Africa, formalizing the partnership with FECOFUN for upscaling in Nepal and developing PFM training courses with forestry training/research institutions in all three partner countries

*4.4.1.* *The Programs’ key contribution to UN’s Sustainable Development Goals*

UN’s Sustainable Development Goals are guiding for and in line with the Program Partnerships’ development and conservation visions and are making tangible contributions to civil society engagement in the delivery of several SDGs (as also concluded and argued in the 2021 review report).

**GOAL 1 & 2:** The Programs’ strong focus on developing sustainable income-generating activities and climate-smart agricultural practices contributes to end poverty **(Goal 1)** and to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture **(Goal 2)**. *More specifically, the program contributes to SDG Targets 1.1, 1.4, 1.5 and Targets 2.1, 2.3 and 2.4.*

**GOAL 13 & 15:** The Programs’ long-term impact objective of protecting and conserving unique forest areas for the benefit and enjoyment of people and nature does, that the Program naturally contributes to both taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts **(Goal 13)** and to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss **(Goal 15).** *More specifically, the program contributes to SDG Targets 13.1 and 13.2 and SDG Targets 15.1, 15.2, 15.5, 15.7, 15.9, 15.b and 15.c.*

**GOAL 5 & 17:** The PPN Program builds on an active and formal partnership between DOF BirdLife and national BirdLife partners in Kenya, Nepal and Uganda (and Tanzania) and works actively to enhance partners' capacity and partnerships through the BirdLife International Partner-to-Partner Program. The program thus naturally contributes to strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development **(Goal 17)**. The Program specifically contributes to *"strengthening of global, public, private and civil society partnerships as well as the strengthening of international cooperation around, and access to, science, technology and innovation"* (SDG Targets 17.6, 17.16 and 17.7).

In relation to **Goal 5**, the PPN Program has, in phase I and II, contributed to achieving gender equality and empowering of women and girls. Not as a direct Program goal, but as a cross-cutting theme that also contributes to sustainable forest protection and management based on improving livelihoods for all. The focus is on *"stopping discrimination and violence against women and equal participation for women"* (SDG Targets 5.1, 5.2, 5.5 and 5a).

**GOAL 6, 8 & 10:**  In relation to **Goal 6**, the PPN Program contributes to ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. The program specifically contributes to the *"protection and restoration of water-related ecosystems (forests), support for and strengthening community participation in water management and the reduction of people suffering from water scarcity"* (SDG Targets 6.4, 6.6 and 6.b).

In relation to **Goal 8**, the PPN Program works to promote sustainable, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. The Program specifically contributes to *"higher economic productivity through diversification, entrepreneurship and the promotion of micro-enterprises and access to micro-loans"* (SDG Targets 8.2 and 8.3).

In relation to **Goal 10**, the PPN Program works to reduce inequality within and among countries. The program specifically contributes to *"a gradual increase in income for the poor and democratic inclusion"* (SDG Targets 10.1 and 10.2).

**4.2. PROGRAM INTERVENTION LOGIC**

Program pillar 1

Training in and rolling-out sustainable PFM as well as monitoring and surveillance of the state of the forests and biodiversity is **one of three pillars** in the program strategy and is aimed at striking a healthy balance between local development on one side and forest and biodiversity conservation on the other. The conservation, management and monitoring are centered around the formal Community Forest Groups (CFGs) in partnership with the forest authorities. Each CFG is responsible for a specific part of the forest in question and holds a signed PFM agreement with the forest authorities about rights and responsibilities in their section of the forest. The PFM work and the biodiversity and forest canopy cover monitoring will take place in the main or all parts of six forest estates, and partly also in Echuya Forest. The total forest area is adding to app. 1,800 km2.

In addition, the Program has added (since 2020) a special focus on the high fuelwood consumption which contributes to both forest degradation/removal of nutrients and CO2 emissions. The fuelwood consumption alone in the seven sites adds up to several thousand tons annually. One of the solutions is establishing Energy Saving Stoves (ESSs) reducing household fuelwood consumption by up to 40-50% (based on preliminary results in 2021). To further reduce the pressure on the forests, the program will over a period of four years from 2022 to 2025 plant 83,000 seedlings (ensuring a min. survival rate of 85%) in the agricultural land outside the forests. Tree planting contributes to increased CO2 uptake and, together with the ESSs and the program's general ambition to reduce deforestation, is part of the program's climate mitigation strategy. In addition, tree planting has an added value for both biodiversity, agriculture, and the local community livelihoods as the selected species will be nitrogen-fixating and/or fruit trees, which will provide shade, reduce temperatures in their immediate surroundings, retain moisture, provide crops in the form of fruit, and will serve as a habitat for insects, birds, mammals, and other animal groups, just as some of the trees can, with time, be used for building materials and fuelwood. In addition to conserving the six forest areas (cf. section 3.1.1 above), the program's ambition is to ensure sustainable forest management and upscaling of PFM to other forest areas. The Program will actively use best practices from the current seven program forest areas as well as the additional lessons learned as PPN III unfolds in these endeavors.

Program pillar 2

However, pressure on the forest areas and their resources cannot be reduced with just good management practices and joint monitoring/patrolling alone. It also requires that the pressure agricultural and agriculture-related activities put on forests is reduced - a pressure that is likely to increase with the population growth around the program forest sites in all three countries.

Continued support to further development and extending of climate-smart agricultural practices continues to be the core of the **second pillar of the program strategy**, while the Program in phase 3 moves away from training in IGAs to organizing communities in cooperatives and explore options for private sector engagement in financing and market linkages by carrying out/implement market analysis, value addition/improve product processing, quality improvement and bulking to strengthen market access and increase income aiming at ensuring better profitability and more long-term sustainability.

The development of site-wide, sustainable enterprises is informed by and based on previous IGA experiences and successes and will integrate and make use of existing Saving and Loans Groups established in previous Program phases.

The underlying assumption is that increased income from selected IGAs and selected enterprises will sufficiently supplement the income of many households, in combination with climate-smart agriculture, to make it unnecessary for them to encroach on more forest land and other natural areas to obtain better livelihoods. The push for a better utilization of the currently utilized agricultural land around the PPN forests is also becoming a necessity due to shrinking household acreage and increasing land prices.

The Program focus on climate-smart agriculture follows the same logic that by introducing a range of higher-yielding and more climate resilient crop varieties using organic measures and simple irrigation methods, households will experience a higher and more sustainable net yield of more crop varieties, and thereby improving food security, nutritional status, and net income (if some of the produce is sold). In some areas, this will be supplemented with animal husbandry preventing further encroachment of nature for growing of crops. This increases the likelihood that households will live better lives by utilizing their current acreage more efficiently and sustainably reducing the need for clearing more forest land and other natural areas.

Climate-smart agriculture constitutes most of the program's climate adaptation strategy in combination with the tree planting in and around agriculture areas.

The creation of sustainable enterprises and the building of local capacities in climate-smart agriculture are approaches that complement each other well, as climate-smart agriculture has a broad mainly subsistence and livelihood improving focus, while support for the development of sustainable enterprises has a primarily monetary and market-oriented focus, tailoring the two approaches to the diverse contexts that exist in the forest-adjacent communities and stimulates development at different levels creating local lasting changes in relation to adaptation to climate change, better food security and nutrition as well as a reduction in poverty.

Program pillar 3

Finally, advocacy and to some extent also lobbying and policy work constitutes **the third pillar in the program strategy**. At both national and local levels, the work is building on the training and practical experiences gathered during previous program phases as well as through other similar projects and programs. At the national level, the program partners execute their advocacy work on program related topics towards selected target groups, including governments, sometimes alone but often collaboratively through established networks, coalitions, and platforms. The national lobbying and policy work relating to the program is mainly targeted at seeking influence on PFM and other forest/nature/environment legislation as well as international green/environmental conventions. At the local level, the advocacy work is spearheaded by the Local Conservation Groups (LCGs), sometimes assisted by the formal Community Forest Groups (CFGs). The local lobbying and policy work with the local government representatives (both politicians and technical staff) is also done by the LCGs sometimes with inputs from fellow LCGs in the national network, CFGs and the national partner.

In phase III, the more political and information-oriented efforts take place to develop and test contextually appropriate approaches for sustainability, upscaling, and replication through strategic partnerships by applying a landscape perspective and engage more in local development planning processes through LCGs and in alliances with civil society partners and in collaboration with local governments to ensure they do not lead to encroachment in the forests, as there has generally been limited engagement by the partners in local development planning and local land-use planning, although these can significantly affect forests, e.g., mining in Kasyoha-Kitomi forest in Uganda and road construction in Resunga forest in Nepal.

In addition, the partnership will engage in PFM training course development with forestry training/research institutions and offer attachments and PPN site visits for forest practitioners and forestry students, formalize a national partnership between BCN and FECOFUN in Nepal to include biodiversity conservation elements in CFG agreements and by gradually expanding PFM support to into new parts of PPN forests and beyond.

As explained in the chapter on the partnership, capacity building of partners and (in-country) fundraising is central to both upscaling of PFM, forest conservations and enhancing sustainability and climate change resilience of local community land-use and livelihoods.

**4.3. THEORY OF CHANGE**

Et billede, der indeholder tekst

Automatisk genereret beskrivelse

The Theory of Change (ToC) for the **PPN III Program** is that *by* involving local communities in PFM and conservation while providing them with opportunities for increasing incomes through sustainable enterprises and climate smart agriculture and engage in influencing PFM legislation and development of planning processes, *then* their livelihoods will improve, reducing the need of encroaching new land, while enhancing their capacities to push for sustainable use of forest resources and better law enforcement. *This* will improve forest biodiversity, maintain the forest areas, and increase carbon stocks and thus contribute to achieving the impact objective of the program**: Forest sites conserved creating sustainable benefits for biodiversity, people, and climate.**

1. Outputs to outcomes: The outputs are organized in three themes, each leading to one of the three intended outcomes:

i) Outputs 1.1 - 1.4. relates to (1) Strengthening climate-smart agricultural practices by introducing a range of higher-yielding and more climate resilient crop varieties using organic measures and simple irrigation methods, combined with animal husbandry in some sites (2) Support to development of sustainable nature-based enterprises by implementing market analysis, value addition/improve product processing, quality improvement and bulking to strengthen market access and increase income (3) Facilitating and training LCGs and partners in influencing local and national development planning processes and (4) Improvement of partners technical skills, which will lead to Outcome 1: **Enhanced sustainability and climate change resilience of local community land-use and livelihoods.**

ii) Outputs 2.1-2.4 concerns (1) Reduction of fuelwood consumption in forest adjacent communities by supporting households (HH) with tailormade energy-saving stoves, (2) Improving community forest management capacities to steward community forests (forest management, monitoring, patrolling and documentation) in cooperation with forest authorities, (3) Facilitate and train CFGs and partners in influencing the enforcement of PFM legislation and (4) Improving partners technical skills, which will lead to Outcome 2:  **PPN forests’ conservation status maintained or improved.**

iii) Outputs 3.1 - 3.4 relate to (1) Gradually expanding PFM support into other parts of PPN forests and beyond through exchange visits and workshop with Nature Tanzania and by establishing/strengthen CFG networks in Kenya and Uganda, (2) Formalizing BCNs partnership for upscaling with FECOFUN by including biodiversity conservation elements in CFG agreements, (3) Developing PFM training course with forest training/research institutions, and facilitate PPN site visits for forest practitioners and students, (4) Improving partners’ funding mobilization skills for upscaling/replication, which will lead to Outcome 3: **The basis for sustainability and upscaling of PFM improved.**

2. Outcomes to impact: The enhanced livelihood sustainability and climate resilience, improved forest conservation and mitigation status, strengthened influence on the enforcement of forest PFM legislation and the development of planning processes in addition to improved partner capacities in nature-based climate change adaptation and mitigation solutions, socio-economic engagement, evidence-based advocacy and influencing of policy and planning and funding mobilization skills,are expected to contribute to the impact objective by reducing the need for further agricultural encroachment and the pressure on forest resources and ecosystem services and improving forest biodiversity, and thus maintain the forest areas and increase carbon stocks for the benefit of nature, people and climate.

*4.3.1. Assumptions*

It is an assumption that an increase in household nutrition, food security and net income will reduce the need for agriculture encroachment and pressure on forest resources and ecosystem services.

It is also assumed that forest authorities remain willing to transfer the formal and legal responsibility for PFM with and bestow the rights to benefit from forest resources to forest adjacent communities. It is further assumed that communities will manage forest resources sustainably and in a transparent and inclusive manner and avoid elite capture. Finally, it is assumed that FECOFUN and forestry training/research institutions have the willingness to engage in upscaling of PFM with emphasis on biodiversity, and that there is sufficient availability of funding options for upscaling in the three countries.

However, it should be noted that the benefits vis-à-vis carbon sequestration and improved livelihoods will materialize over time, as the degraded forests gradually improve through natural regeneration; hence, the full range of benefits will be achieved in the years after the program has been completed.

*4.3.2. Risks and sustainability*

Three overall risks have emerged from the risk analysis: COVID-19, drought, and unsustainable natural resource extraction/ large-scale infrastructure developments.

COVID-19

As COVID-19 is considered a non-permanent risk and currently actively dealt with professionally by health care staff and relevant ministries in the three partner countries, it is not included in the above ToC. Besides, despite the global and national COVID-19 situation, NK, NU and BCN remain operational and implement and manage the PPN II and a number of other projects. Field visits are also possible, as long as local requirements for the use of medical face masks and hygiene rules are complied with and restrictions on distance and number of people allowed to gather simultaneously. These requirements and restrictions are complied with by e.g., implementing workshops and meetings in small groups and by making widespread use of online meetings/training etc. nationally as well as having regular program-wide and bilateral meetings online meetings. To guarantee the safety of local staff and enable partners to comply with the local restrictions and guidelines, funds have been set aside in the project budget for the purchase of facial masks and disinfectants.

Drought

Furthermore, droughts, especially in coastal lowlands in Kenya, and floods in Nepal can influence the number of households with improved yields but nonetheless makes the program effort more important, especially the program's focus on climate adaptation and especially activities centered around climate change adaptation based on training in climate-smart agriculture practices and use of organic measures and simple irrigation methods and introducing a range of higher-yielding and more climate resilient crop varieties.

Nature destruction

National (and local) development programs based on unsustainable natural resource extraction (like oil and gas) and large-scale infrastructure developments like construction of roads, dams, powerlines etc., sometimes driven by corruption and short-term gains, has the potential to and could in the worst-case scenario end up damaging the Program forest sites.

To mitigate the consequences of nature-damaging development programs, the PPN Partnership deliberately works to build/strengthen locally based organisations that can respond, in a timely manner, to unsustainable/illegal natural resource extraction in any type of conservation area, e.g., the forest sites in the PPN Program and indigenous community territories as well as enhance partners' and LCGs’ knowledge of and experience with HRBAs and advocacy/lobbying skills.

Equally important is the great local support from the communities involved in the development of IGAs based on NTFRs, which create local ownership and financial incentives to protect the forest areas as well as other natural areas from destructive activities as the communities have invested time in the IGA development and see a financial return on their efforts. In short, the involvement of communities in community livelihood improvement has created a greater self-awareness and understanding of the link between sustainable development and nature conservation, giving both LCGs and CFGs strong mandates. Together with a strong organization, this is assumed to help mitigate and manage potential risks related to nature-destructive activities both in and around Program forest sites.

In addition, the locally driven advocacy can be supplemented by campaigns which, together with local representatives, can put external, public, and media-borne pressure on political and private actors. Should the need arise, the PPN Partnership has the capacity to support, organize and execute such campaigns. NK proved this back in 2018, when an oil and gas company, with the backing of local and national government, initiated prospecting activities in Arabuko-Sokoke Forest. An effective media-backed counter-campaign was organized by NK with a demand for an immediate halt to the prospecting and explaining the importance of nature protection. This created public pressure on the local government, with back-up from other BirdLife-partners and a range of other national and international NGOs and institutions, which resulted in local government putting an immediate stop for the prospecting activities.

In addition, the partners has established good relations with forest authorities, local and national governments through years of fruitful cooperation, which should reduce risks of forest destruction, also taking into consideration that all three partner countries do have sensible and functional environmental laws, just as potentially destructive projects and plans will often be detected at an early stage (this is one of the reasons for training the target group in the use of documentation in the form of regular monitoring as including the use of GPS and cameras, cf. outcome 2) improving the likelihood of counteractions and/or mitigation following due processes.

Sustainability permeates the entire program planning and implementation from; linking DOF BirdLife monitoring trips with PMC meetings and merging monitoring visits and financial audits to save flights, to strategic collaboration with educational institutions and building and strengthening of local and national forest networks to create a sustainable foundation for upscaling forest protection, over capacity building of partners with a special focus on resource mobilization to peer learning where partners across the partnership build capacity for/with each other and exchange experiences and knowledge. The program's upscaling to Tanzania will be south-south-driven primarily implemented by NK and NU, which is another example of the program's peer learning approach.

Close attention to regular monitoring and assessment of risks, assumptions and sustainability is, and will continue to be so during PPN III, part of the quarterly narrative reporting, quarterly online PMC meetings as well as on the annual physical PMC meetings. In addition, and as part of the day-to-day work, DOF BirdLife and especially the partners closely follow the political, legislative, and human rights situation in the partner countries.

**4.4.** **RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND M&E**

The causal coherence in the Program ToC has been strengthened following the recommendations in the external review report 2021 just as the ToC and results framework are now fully integrated (cf. annex 2.1 and 4.1). The ToC and the results framework are thus built around three outcomes which together contribute to the realization of the impact objective. Progress and success in delivering on outcomes are measured on the basis of nine carefully selected indicators (3 indicators for each outcome). The indicators are translated into generic targets so that in each program country quantitative progress can be measured and compared. All targets are adapted to the context (e.g., carefully selected crop types and key biodiversity indicator species from country to country and from site to site). The generic approach makes it possible to both measure national progress and at the same time report and document results and progress at Program level. The ongoing quantitative progress and performance measurement is complemented by qualitative studies of forest biodiversity and livelihood. In addition, a series of outputs have been defined to guide the program implementation towards achieving outcomes and to define main activities.

As strongly recommended in the review report 2021, also the outcome indicators, that frames the identification and formulation of the national targets, needed to be carefully selected to ensure a more clear and tangible measure of the outcomes that will be generated by the activities leading up to the 12 outputs. The introduction of quantitative outcome indicators and national targets is therefore deliberate and supported by both the external review 2017 and 2021 recommendations.

The national targets featuring in the Results Framework (cf. annex 4.1) are the result of consultations between headquarter and field-based partner staff and local resource people to ensure that they are representative and meaningful either across PPN sites or specific to one PPN site only. Subsequent bilateral consultations between partners and DOF BirdLife staff lead to the current agreed national targets. Where possible, the primary target group/number of beneficiaries have been identified measured in households (HHs).

Outcome 1 targets

The first target under Outcome 1 is a selected stable type of crop that is cross-cutting for each of the six sites in the three countries, where the climate smart agriculture approach is applicable and can generate increase in yields/ha. Nature Kenya added an improved breed of goat and chicken rearing in Dakatcha Woodland, which is a semi-arid PPN site, and the forest is not officially protected, making them better protein sources from a climate and forest conservation perspective by avoiding deforestation, and by providing organic manure for climate smart crop production.

The second target under Outcome 1 is selected to reflect the intended upscaling and professionalization of the selected enterprises, where long-term profitability and involvement of a higher number of stakeholders is key. It will be measured by collecting data on production volume, total net-profit for the enterprise/site and per household as and when this is possible – latest by year 4.

The third target under Outcome 1, planting of a high number of useful tree species in the agricultural landscape, is part of climate smart agriculture but also links to biodiversity and a range of other climate beneficial aspects.

Outcome 2 targets

The first target of Outcome 2 is selected to measure the effect of the efforts on Energy Saving Stoves (EESs), which were piloted during PPN II from mid-2020, and a good example of a generic and cross-cutting target. It is placed under Outcome 2 because it relates to the currently unsustainable fuelwood collection from the PPN-site forests, but the planned reduction in fuelwood consumption is also directly contributing to climate mitigation, CO2-sequestration and human health benefits.

The second target under Outcome 2 consists of carefully selected forest indicator species (mainly birds) that are specific for each of the PPN-sites. Some of these are globally threatened, while others are more widespread, but the Program has baseline data for all of them, which was an agreed criterion.

The third target under Outcome 2 was selected to ensure that besides having a measure of the biodiversity status (second target under Outcome 2), a measure of the general condition and size of the PPN forests was also desirable, hence the canopy cover in % target, which is truly generic and cross-cutting.

Outcome 3 targets

The first target under Outcome 3 pertains only to Kenya and Uganda due to the fact that in Nepal, site-wide and national CFG networks have been in place for decades by law. The target reflects the expansion into new areas (= new and more CFGs) of the PPN-sites and the attempt to link these up on a site-wide scale.

The second target under Outcome 3, on the other hand, only pertains to Nepal, and relates to the ambition to upscale the collaboration with FECOFUN, the national umbrella for CFGs, by formally reflecting biodiversity conservation measures in their work.

The third target under Outcome 3 is generic and cross-cutting and is measuring the progress in the collaboration between forestry training and research institutions and the PPN III Program, which is a deliberate step towards integrating PFM as an integral part of the curriculum of future forestry practitioners/students by way of showcasing the PPN site-based PFM work through field visits, longer-term attachments etc. All this to improve sustainability of the PPN Program by direct interaction with duty-bearers.

The thinking behind and adaptation of the Programs’ new ToC has also given rise to a radical change of the monitoring formats compared to the first two phases. The aim has been to make reporting simpler (for partners to fill out), and much more results oriented by focusing on a few strategic targets as the foundation of monitoring and documenting results but also by creating a monitoring tool that captures results and challenges so that the Program can continuously be adapted to changes in the context e.g., based on the monitoring on assumptions and risks. Quarterly reporting is thus designed to measure progress towards the realization of end-of-Program-targets every quarter. In addition, the monitoring will focus on the realization of main activities and most significant progress observed under outputs during each quarter in addition to risks and assumptions monitoring (cf. annex 4.2).

Once a year the Program implementation is being evaluated cf. delivery on targets, to which extent the Program has contributed to the impact and main lessons learned vis-à-vis achieving the outcomes and impact to be communicated to CISU, constituencies and the public (cf. annex 4.3). Based on the Annual Country Progress Reports, changes to program strategy can occur prompting adaptation of the program and/or budget where necessary to ensure the Program Partnership works towards the changes agreed on. This will be discussed at the physical PMC meetings held annually in January/February where annual workplans are also being discussed and agreed. Prior to PMC meetings, Program partners develop and share work plans and corresponding detailed budgets.

The work plans also serve as a management tool for DOF BirdLife's management team and are discussed during quarterly meetings together with overall Program implementation and budget expenditure. DOF BirdLife's International Committee also provide sparring on and constructive input to Program implementation during their meetings.

**4.5.** **TARGET GROUPS**

By the end of 2025, the Program will have reached c. 7,000 HHs in Nepal, c. 5,300 HHs in Kenya and c. 4,500 HHs in Uganda, corresponding to c. 85,800 individuals. The many individuals are reached in different ways and for different purposes following the activities under the outputs leading up to the expected outcomes.

The focus on strengthening sustainable and participatory management of forests is achieved through organizing and training CFGs in management, monitoring, patrolling and documentation of illegal forest activities and influencing the enforcement of PFM legislation to conserve the ecosystem services and the natural resources that the forests provide, which the forest adjacent communities still depend on.

The focus on reducing encroachment by improving community livelihoods in terms of food security, nutrition, and poverty reduction and by influencing local development planning processes of forest adjacent land is achieved through training of Farmer Groups (FGs) in sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture as well as support to establishing of site-wide, sustainable enterprises.

The influence on local development planning processes is done through partners and Local Conservation Groups (LCGs) acting as local branches of the partner, sometimes in close collaboration with the CFGs in place.

In Kenya, the LCGs also engage in environmental education and awareness raising and monitoring of biodiversity and collect data to support local governments in their biodiversity conservation planning process. In Nepal, the LCGs do not have the status of local branches but play the same role as advocates for sustainable local development and they consist only of young people: "Leaders of the future". In Uganda, the CFGs carry the same mandate and implement the same activities as the LCGs in Kenya and Nepal.

All community members are invited to become members of at least one of the Community Forest Groups (CFGs), Local Conservation Groups (LCGs), Farmer Groups (FGs) or enterprises. However, the program attempts to have only a maximum of one person per HH, as the basic idea behind this approach is to let the group members' efforts, learning and successes trickle down in local society and benefit their respective families and communities, and to attempt to provide equal opportunities and avoid unintended favoritism of certain individuals/HHs.

The Program thus works directly with 149 groups (62 groups in Nepal, 57 in Kenya and 30 in Uganda) established by the partnerships benefitting a total of c. 85,000 people indirectly, including c. 16,800 people directly benefiting from training and learning.

The focus on securing a sustainable upscaling of the program’s best practices with PFM is achieved by engaging in cooperation with new CFGs and forestry training/research institutions. We expect to reach at least four new CFGs and a minimum of 265 forest practitioners/students.

*4.5.1.* *The PPN approach to HRBA*

The program approach continues to be rights-based in that it promotes transparent and inclusive forest management and helps enabling communities to raise their voice to influence the decision-making government duty-bearers at the local level. In phase 3, the program will also strengthen the capacities of government entities to fulfil their obligations as duty-bearers and address the demands and challenges raised by the right-holders by influencing or engaging in forest training.

Gender and equity

Previous reviews have found that ‘issues of inclusiveness and equity are addressed directly and at a satisfactory level’ (review report 2017) and that the PPN Program is ‘generally gender sensitive’ (review report 2021).

Gender equality is further enshrined in Nature Kenya's statutes and each partner has formulated gender action plans, carried out gender specific surveys, participated in gender training and implemented gender sensitive and inclusive activities both during the first and second phases of the program.

The program has a clear strategy for engaging women and vulnerable groups and from the outset the Program has have a strong focus on promoting gender equality and supporting women empowerment both as a cross-cutting issue (cf. annex 2.4.) with requirements for meaningful representation of women in CFGs, awareness raising and livelihoods activities (e.g., BCN reports that 52% of the beneficiaries in 2019 were women). Gender distribution is therefore considered when forming the groups and ideally half of the members of a group are women and the other half are men.

In line with DOF BirdLife’s Gender Policy, the Program will continue to concentrate on those aspects of gender equality where the Program can have an impact and can contribute to change among beneficiaries such as knowledge, capacity, empowerment, and involvement of women. In addition to the knowledge gained from the surveys conducted during Phase II, monitoring results and other lessons, the Program will carry out a more in-depth gender sensitive study on how beneficiaries have experienced Program benefits and perceive most significant changes to revise the existing strategy and adapt concrete activities to this knowledge. Women have generally had high participation in income generating activities, less in LCGs, training, advocacy, and exchange visits. Despite efforts from the partners, it continues to be difficult to persuade women to take on new roles.

Similarly, marginalized/vulnerable groups are included and empowered to take part in community decision-making on equal terms through participation in CFGs and income-generating activities, as equality as a cross-cutting issue not only refers to gender but also to households and individuals at Program sites who are especially in need of support and consideration because of poverty, family situation (e.g., widows), age or other forms of marginalization/vulnerability. The socio-economic profiling of the sites provides the Program data and knowledge which guides partners in the development of activities and strategies for their involvement and benefits. As with gender, activities are planned in such a way that they best address inclusion.

Indigenous people

Marginalized groups also include indigenous peoples in Nepal and Uganda, as well as Dalits (people below the caste system) in Nepal (BCN reports that 48% of the beneficiaries in 2019 were indigenous peoples and 12% are Dalit). In Echuya forest (Uganda), Nature Uganda has worked with the highly marginalized Batwa indigenous people, who traditionally were forest dwelling hunter-gatherers. The Batwa are no longer allowed by the Government to live in the forest, but still have some special rights to forest resources from Echuya. NU cooperates with the Batwa’s own organization (UOBDU) vis-à-vis promoting their rights to forest resources and improving their livelihoods and status in the communities. The PPN program management committee has developed a strategy for addressing the rights of indigenous peoples and special relationship with the forest to ensure their equal participation in the program (cf. annex 2.5). DOF BirdLife’s Indigenous Peoples Policy). The strategy was aligned with the BirdLife Position, adopted by the BirdLife Council in 2018 and has been in use since the beginning of the first phase of the Program.

The strategy envisages that indigenous groups at Program sites are supported to build their capacity to realize their specific rights within the framework of the Program and to participate fully in its benefits. Other important goals are that they are recognized by other stakeholders as having specific customary rights and identity and are respected on an equal footing, that they are adequately represented in stakeholder consultations, trainings etc., that they have access to capacity building for advocacy, networking, organizational and technical skills and are able to contribute with their traditional natural resource management practices and knowledge including having resources and capacity to advocate for their role and rights in natural resource management.

Many BirdLife Partners have experience with working with indigenous peoples as reflected in the 2016 *Contribution from BirdLife International to the Thematic Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.* However, not all Partners have knowledge and understanding of the specific rights of indigenous peoples as laid down in the ILO treaty no. 169, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and other legal instruments. The Program continues to build capacity of partners by for example using some of the BLI options for capacity building and as with gender, DOF supports the efforts of BirdLife to provide resources and training to partners.

**4.6.**  **PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

*4.6.1. Division of roles and responsibilities within the partnership*

NK, NU and BCN are responsible for implementation in their respective countries and sites, cooperation with all their local and national stakeholders, achievement of results, hiring and line management of adequate staff, quality assurance of deliveries, monitoring, financial and narrative reporting internally and to DOF BirdLife as well as sharing of lessons between partners and in BirdLife. Additionally, they are responsible for hiring local short-term consultants in collaboration with DOF BirdLife as and when needs arise and share information on relevant political and other developments in their countries, changes in their own organizations, and knowledge and data, which can be useful for other partners and the Program. This knowledge and data are also the basis for the annual risk and assumptions analysis, which will be carried out during PPN III.

DOF BirdLife is as per contract formally responsible for the entire Program to CISU and day-to-day management. DOF BirdLife takes lead in providing general oversight of the program on all aspects, mainly regarding progress on implementation, status on expenditure/financial management and all contact to CISU, but also TA and development of guidelines, policies, and methodologies. The DOF international team involves other DOF BirdLife technical staff and hires external consultants for short-term technical assistance when needs arise. In addition, DOF BirdLife takes the lead in coordinating Program activities with partners and carrying out supervision and monitoring at Program and country levels. DOF BirdLife is also responsible for Program related information, communication and knowledge sharing in Denmark as well as spearheading and back stopping recruitment and sub-contracting of external consultants that may be required at Program level and will be responsible for arranging and facilitating the annual external audits after having received annual audit reports from partners. DOF BirdLife’s international team will likewise be responsible for staying updated on new policies, guidelines etc. from CISU and Danida relevant for guiding the Program work, and on new methodological approaches as well as ‘best practices’ within the broad context of development cooperation and conservation and sharing this with partners through the PMC and as relevant also with BirdLife International and its global network of national partners.

*4.6.2.* *Program Management Committee*

To coordinate and jointly steer the Program, the Program Management Committee (PMC) will continue to meet physically at least once per year with each partner having hosting responsibilities on a rotational basis, and online, as a minimum, through quarterly video meetings and bilateral ad hoc dialog with Program managers and TA sessions. The PMC consists of directors and program managers from the three local partner organizations in addition to DOF BirdLife's international staff with responsibility for the PPN Program, and is the overall responsible for planning, ensuring alignment between national activities and objectives and strategies, following-up on and sharing of lessons learned, assessment of training needs and the refinement of the joint monitoring system and any other Program level documents. The PMC is also responsible for the information on and dissemination of DOF BirdLife’s Behavioral and Values Policy and Guidelines (including Code of Conduct Policy, Safeguarding Policy - PSHEA Policy, Complaints Policy & Procedures, and Anti-Corruption Policy.

It will be possible to report unacceptable incidences/circumstances etc. anonymously both internally in DOF BirdLife and externally, through a form on DOF BirdLife’s website, which is currently being developed by DOF BirdLife’s IT-team. A specific complaints instruction with the required minimum information and a format to support the process will also be made readily accessible on DOF BirdLife's website. This will be in Danish and English.

The annual PMC meetings also include training of participants and, if relevant and feasible, field visits. To contribute to wider ownership, the PMC can invite additional participants to ensure a more fruitful output, which can be thematic, and be mutually beneficial for all four partners and the additional participants.

*4.6.3.* *Administrative procedures and financial administration*

Prior to the Inception period, DOF BirdLife is obliged to enter into a formal contract with CISU, and during the Inception period, to enter into a formal contract with each of the three previous partners, as well as with the incumbent partner, Nature Tanzania. Part of the contract, as annexes, are all the formal CISU guidelines relevant for the Program, including audit instructions that partners must sign up to follow. This also includes the CISU approved DOF BirdLife Anti-Corruption Policy, which stipulates the roles and responsibilities on this subject. It has been translated into English to allow it to be attached as a formal document to each of the three South partner contracts, on top of the formal inclusion of the Danida anti-corruption clause in all four partner contracts.

All four partners are obliged to ensure that accounting and auditing is in full compliance with the current version of the CISU guidelines, ‘Financial Standard for grants of and above 1 million, including Programs’, at any point in time, pertaining to budgets, accounting, financial reporting and internal controls. This entails having a professional and sufficiently equipped financial administration system in place from the onset of Program implementation; including financial management procedures, internal control measures, top-end electronic accounting system, up-to-date bookkeeping documented by vouchers, and segregated accounts duties between minimum two employees. Finally, all four partners shall maintain up-to-date records of expenditures that are sufficient to be audited annually by a registered and reputable audit company.

DOF BirdLife is responsible for the overall financial administration, for the management of the Danish funds as well as for ensuring that the use of the Danish grant is appropriately accounted for. The budget line ‘Un-allocated funds and budget margin’ will be the responsibility of DOF BirdLife. The spending of this budget line as well as any other major changes to the approved and agreed budget is subsequent to unanimous PMC decisions on expenditure and distribution to partners. Any major changes will have to be approved by CISU and subsequently spent on the agreed and intended purpose and be subjected to the external annual audits as all other expenditures.

DOF BirdLife will be responsible for submitting payment requests to CISU based on records of expenditure and resulting cash requirement budgets at the Program level. Grant disbursements to partners, for which DOF BirdLife is responsible, shall be processed following payment requests based on quarterly financial reports and cash budgets prepared and submitted by partners to DOF BirdLife.

Each partner will have fixed annual budgets as well as one for the entire Program period, which must feature in both quarterly financial reports and payment requests. As per the CISU guidelines, the grant disbursements must be deposited in a special bank account that is separated from the partners’ own cash holdings. Additionally, accrued bank interests and net exchange rate gains must feature clearly for audit purposes and be credited and reimbursed to CISU upon Program phase finalization. Each partner is obliged to allocate the CISU funds to the Program activities according to the Program Document, Budget, Results Framework, and the Annual Work Plans.

The annual audits of the Program accounts will be conducted following the fiscal year January-December. Each of the partners are obliged, in agreement with DOF BirdLife, to contract a registered external audit company to carry out both the formal annual financial audit of their Program accounts and the performance audit to international accounting standards (IFAC/INTOSAI), CISU guidelines/audit instructions and the audit instructions given by DOF BirdLife’s external audit company. When the draft annual audit report is approved by the DOF BirdLife’s Head of Finance, each partner shall provide signed of the annual external audits for every year latest by end of May the subsequent year.

Annually, including at the end PPN III, DOF BirdLife’s external audit company will conduct full audits of Program accounts. It will be based on the annual audit reports, supplied by the local external audit companies through the partners, their annual final accounts, including accrued bank interests and net exchange rate gains, lists of fixed assets etc. as well as DOF BirdLife’s bank transfers to partners’ bank accounts and DOF BirdLife’s own spending, time sheets etc. for the entire Phase III.

**4.7.**  **POPULAR ENGAGEMENT**

In addition to the day-to-day management, coordination, and oversight of the program DOF BirdLife has a responsibility to strengthen the support for Danish development assistance, contribute to a broader understanding of global development issues and in general strengthen the popular engagement in Denmark.

This will be achieved through visual and written communication with members and the public mainly through DOFs own media.

The communication activities will be carried out in cooperation between DOFs international team and DOFs communications team and will include visits to partners and PPN sites to collect material for dissemination (interviews, photos, case stories, video recordings) in Denmark.

DOF has currently more than 50.000 followers on social media and 17.000 newsletter subscribers and subscribers to DOF's quarterly magazine (Birds & Nature) guaranteeing a broad outreach. In addition, the web page [www.dof.dk](http://www.dof.dk/) has more than 3000 unique visits daily.

**4.8.** **BUDGET**

The CSF budget applied for amounts to a total of DKK 16.640.000, where 64 % is allocated, expenses related to the program's three partner countries. 18 % of the total budget is planned to cover DOF BirdLife direct activity costs and allocated Program support costs.

The budget is based on a sustainability principle that will keep spending down and reduce the program's CO2 footprint. In practice this means, that (1) monitoring trips to East Africa are carried out as one long trip (of 2 weeks), thereby reducing pre- and post-work compared to a trip to Nepal, (2) PMC meetings are combined with monitoring to reduce travel costs and number of trips and (3) general reduction in travel by combining monitoring + compliance efforts so that both tasks are handled by one person/trip.

However, we have chosen not to combine TA and monitoring trips, because they will take up too large blocks of time combined, and it is good to separate things, cf. CISU's own recommendation in Phase 1 and 2.

In addition, all partners, DOF BirdLife included, do their utmost to take steps to increase cost-effectiveness whenever possible both during planning (breaking down of output-level budget lines to activity budget lines before each fiscal year, long- and short-term planning of actual implementation and related logistics etc.) to actual implementation (following formal organizational financial operational manuals with procurement procedures, including minimum 3 quotations for major fixed assets, equipment and material purchases, using and actively seeking cost-sharing opportunities with other CSOs/institutions/government departments on joint activities/events etc.). And all four partners are annually ‘measured’ on the ability to exert cost-effectiveness by their respective external audit companies.

Examples of the above efforts to ensure cost-effectiveness is that all partners make use of free or cheap community halls, public places and even churches or other places of worship if appropriate when having larger meetings and workshops mainly at local level. Likewise, all partners make proper calculations on how to save fuel and transportation costs during implementation, e.g., if the number of travelling participants from Kathmandu to a program site meeting is large, ground transportation is used instead of domestic flights (BCN); or if a larger meeting/workshop for representatives from the Community Forest Groups is arranged, the participants will use public transport (cheap public minibus or motorbike taxi) to come and go rather than the partner renting a more expensive minibus/bus with driver to pick everyone up and bring them back again (NU and NK).

All three partners also have examples of negotiating cost-sharing arrangements on joint activities, ranging from 1) on-farm tree planting exercises, where forest authorities have paid for/provided the tree seeds or tree seedlings and the program partners have provided transport of these, over 2) local training workshops where local forest authorities have provided the venue for free, while the program paid board and lodging for the participants who in turn arranged their own transport, to 3) procurement and establishment of an oilseed (Chiuri) mill was the joint support of BCN, Division Forest Office and some of the savings from a community group.

Finally, as all four program partners are green NGOs, we also ensure that we save as much as possible on consumption of electricity/power (power-saving bulbs and laptops/computers), office consumables (like toners, printing paper - emphasize on electronic documentation, stationary), fuel etc. for motorbikes and vehicles and so on (cf. annex 5.2).

1. www.naturekenya.org [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. www.natureuganda.org [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. www.birdlifenepal.org [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Achilles Byaruhanga, ED of Nature Uganda, is currently a Global Council member [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The BLI World Congress is scheduled to take place in October 2022, which corresponds to the 100th anniversary of BirdLife International. PPN Progamme partners will, if feasible, participate in this event. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. “The IPBES Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. Summary for Policy-makers” IPBES 2019 + “Guidance for using the IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions. A user-friendly framework for the verification, design and scaling up of Nature-based Solutions”. First edition. IUCN, Gland 2020 + ”Udenrigsministeriets Evalueringsstudie: Biodiversitet Og Naturbaserede Løsninger I Den Globale Og Danske Udviklingsbistand Udviklingstendenser, Perspektiver Og Muligheder”, Danida, 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)