

Integrating Livelihoods and Conservation

People Partner with Nature for Sustainable Living

Program 2015-2017



List of contents

1. Introduction	6
1.1 The Danish organisation's experience and capacity	6
1.2 Development of program concept	7
2. Regional, national and sector context	8
2.1 Regional context	8
2.2 The program's geographical focus	8
2.3 Forest Sector context	14
3. Program objectives	18
3.1 Development objective	18
3.2 Immediate objectives and indicators	18
4. Overall strategy of the program	19
4.1 Program strategy	19
4.2 Strategic approach to the components	22
5. Methodological approaches and activity areas	24
5.1 Overall program approach and activity areas	24
5.2 Organisational development	26
5.3 Advocacy	27
5.4 Synergy effects in the program	28
5.5 Monitoring, evaluation and reporting	28
5.6 Other key approaches	29
6. Cross-cutting concerns	29
6.1 Relevant cross-cutting concerns	29
7. Target group and partners	31
7.1 Target group	31
7.2 Partners	34
8. Information work in Denmark	36
9. Outputs and indicators	37
10. Budget	41
11. Management and organisational set-up	41
11.1 Organisational structure and division of responsibilities in the Danish organisation	41
11.2 Organisation and division of responsibilities in the actual program	42
11.3 Administrative procedures and financial administration	43
12. Assumptions and Risks	43
12.1 Assumptions	43
12.2 Risks	43

Annexes:

- A. Relevant program framework
- B. Budget
- C. Strategy and organisational description
- D. Relevant sub-strategies
- E. Overview of program partners
- F. Organisational chart for the program
- G. Job description for expatriate staff
- H. The organisations popular support
- I. Overview of monitoring set-up
- J. Updated calculating existing project portfolio
- K. The organisation's statutes
- L. The organisation's procedures and administrative guidelines
- M. Annual report and auditing report
- N. Site descriptions
- O. BirdLife tool-kits and methodologies
- P. Assumptions and risks, country level

Abbreviations:

BCN	Bird Conservation Nepal
BLAPS	BirdLife Africa Secretariat
CAP	Council of African Partnership
CAT	Capacity Assessment Tool
CBD	Convention of Biological Diversity
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CFM	Collaborative Forest Management (Uganda)
CFUG	Community Forestry User Groups
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DOF	Danish Ornithological Society/ BirdLife Denmark
FECOFUN	Federation of Community Forestry Users (Nepal)
FUG	Forest User Groups
HDI	Human Development Index
IBA	Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas
IGA	Income Generating Activities
INTUD	International Task Force (Internationalt Udvalg, DOF)
IPM	International Program Manager
IPO	International Program Officer
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GNI	Gross National Income
GPD	Gross Domestic Product
LFA	Logical Framework Analysis
LCG	Local Conservation Group
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NOF	Norwegian Ornithological Society/ BirdLife Norway
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NTFP	Non Timber Forest Products
PAG	Program Advisory Group
PES	Payment of Ecosystem Services
PIP	Program Implementation Plan
PMC	Program Management Committee
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SSG	Site Support Group
TA	Technical Assistance
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNETCOFA	Uganda Network of Collaborative Forest Associations
UOBDU	United Organization for Batwa Development in Uganda
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

1. Introduction

Dansk Ornitologisk Forening (DOF) and our BirdLife partners in the South: Nature Kenya, Nature Uganda and Bird Conservation Nepal (BCN), plan a 3 years Program starting in 2015 with the title *Integrating Livelihoods and Conservation - People Partner with Nature for Sustainability*. BirdLife is a global partnership of 121 national NGOs that strives to conserve birds, their habitats and global biodiversity, working with people towards sustainability in the use of natural resources. It is the world's largest partnership of conservation organisations and collaborates on regional work programs on every continent. BirdLife has identified 16.000 Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) around the world. All projects and programs within BirdLife are implemented in and around IBAs and through the national BirdLife partner or affiliate. With the proposed Program DOF and our Program partners will contribute to the wise use of forest IBAs in Kenya, Uganda and Nepal through participatory forest and natural resource management¹, strengthened civil society and improved livelihoods of women, men and children in local communities, who are dependent and have an impact on IBAs. The proposed budget is DKK 15.7 Million for the first phase of the Program.

1.1 The Danish organisation's experience and capacity

DOF was established in 1906 with the goal to protect and collect data on Danish birds. Today DOF has more than 16.000 members distributed on 13 local sections all over Denmark. It is an independent Danish organisation with strong traditions for the members' active participation and democratic influence. Due to its long existence and high quality in nature protection DOF has considerable influence in Denmark and has entered into two agreements for cooperation with the Ministry of Environment, which uses DOF's data in its plans for the Danish nature. DOF is the Danish partner in BirdLife International and is represented in several Danish networks, including Det Grønne Kontaktudvalg and the 92-group.

DOF has for the past 30 years worked with IBAs in Africa and Asia with focus on the involvement of local communities in the sustainable management of natural resources. We currently manage Danida-funded projects in Indonesia with Burung Indonesia *Sustainable and Integrated Management of Mbeliling Forest, Flores* and in Uganda with Nature Uganda *Improved Livelihoods through Sustainable Management of Forest Resources in and around Echuya Forest*². The project on Flores will be finished with a No Cost Extension in June 2015 and DOF will not at present continue its partnership with Burung Indonesia. The project in Echuya will continue into the Program's first phase and the partnership with Nature Uganda continued and extended with a new site. The project *Joint Environmental Management for Livelihood Improvement at Important Bird Areas* with Nature Kenya was finalised in 2012. It forms the basis for our partnership in the Program. DOF also provides technical assistance (TA) to the *Danida Support to the Harapan Rainforest Program* on Sumatra in Indonesia (planned to end in December 2014), mainly for community partnerships, gender, indigenous peoples, and locally based monitoring of natural resources. DOF and partners have been successful in building civil society at grassroots level, i.e. empowering communities to organise themselves into groups that can negotiate agreements with e.g.

¹ Participatory forest management refers in this context to various similar approaches to forest management, e.g. collaborative forest management (Uganda) and community forest management (Nepal).

² The Mid-Term Review of this project takes place end September 2014 with an external consultant

forestry departments to enable them to locally begin new activities for improved livelihoods and forest management. DOF's International Section has two staff, a biologist and a social anthropologist, who are the main responsible for international development activities. They are supported by a strong financial department, a communication department and an International Task Force (INTUD) of volunteers with a background in development and natural resource management. DOF currently employs 32 people.

A capacity assessment of DOF was carried out in 2005 which concluded that the facilitation, establishment and early institutional capacity building of member based organisations are key competences of DOF as is the member based structure and active participation of many members. It also found that the members have been fully mainstreamed in DOF's work and that DOF has proven key competence in protecting birds and their habitats in Denmark and internationally. Following the recommendations of the assessment DOF employed a social anthropologist to add value to the International Section. Recent reviews of DOF's project on Flores (2013) and in Kenya (2011) remarked on the positive cooperation between local partners and local governments and communities and the projects' impacts on livelihoods based on local and nature based resources. The CISU Capacity Assessment carried out in May-June 2014 concluded that 'DOF is considered to have professional and administrative capacity to carry out its Danida/CISU supported development activities within the proposed approach considering the full existing and planned portfolio of the organisation. The relevance and strategy of the proposed Program including considerations of activities by other stakeholders and best practices in the main focal areas and internationally are considered to be in top'. This conclusion is based on the consultant's assessment that DOF and partners have sufficient experience and capacity, a long-term strategy, and have presented a well described first phase of the proposed program in the Concept Note. The consultant also applauded that DOF has recently revised the organisation's International Strategy and formulated guidelines and policy papers on gender, indigenous peoples, nature politics and Locally Based Monitoring (LBM).³

1.2 Development of the Program concept

The Program concept was developed in close cooperation between DOF and Program partners. DOF has in recent years streamlined the approaches to development cooperation and the international projects are in line with BirdLife approaches based on the integration of conservation and livelihoods, empowerment of local people and civil society, and ecological sustainability. The Program formulation process was supported by a CISU funded Partnership Intervention which in the beginning of 2014 allowed DOF and partners to meet in workshops and on field visits and - in the case of BCN - to get to know a new partner with whom DOF had not previously worked but who was recommended to us both by the British BirdLife partner, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and the Norwegian BirdLife partner (Norsk Ornitologisk Forening – NOF). For the development of this Program Document we had several joint Skype meetings with partners who delivered the required data and were instrumental in developing the LFA and budget. Approaches and activities are to a large extent based on our shared experiences and lessons learned from previous and current projects. These will be further developed and adapted to the programmatic goal of knowledge sharing and learning

³ These are attached in Annex D

among partners, especially within the field of participatory forest management. The Program will also have stronger emphasis on promoting equality of women and their access to Program benefits and participation, addressing inclusion of indigenous and other marginalised groups, networking and strengthened influence of local civil society groups, and advocacy within the national contexts of Program partner countries.

2. Regional, national and sector context

2.1 Regional context

The Program does not have a specific regional outlook but will utilise regional forums, for example the Council of Africa Partnership (CAP) to share lessons and experiences from Kenya and Uganda with the other 23 countries in Africa where Birdlife has a presence. Likewise in Asia the BirdLife Asia Partnership currently consisting of 12 national conservation NGOs, plus BirdLife in Indochina, provides fora for regional networking and sharing. Overall the Program addresses a global concern related to unprecedented forest loss estimated at approximately 13 million ha each year which affects us all. In Program partner countries depletion of forests and their biodiversity is due to complex factors, including the quest for economic growth leading to unsustainable use of natural resources, population pressure, illegal activities, failing implementation of national laws, poverty among forest adjacent communities and conflicts about rights to the forests. As a result, biodiversity is often seriously depleted and basic ecosystem services negatively affected compromising sustainable living of local communities. Indigenous and other local communities are often victims of externally driven top-down decisions leading to rural poverty. Access to a healthy environment is a human right and a precondition for survival, not the least for the millions of people⁴, who subsist directly on local natural resources and arable land, and are seriously affected when forests disappear, water sources are drying-up, top-soils are eroded, soil fertility reduced and the climate changes. They often unfairly bear the cost burden of keeping natural resources for the wider national and global good without benefits or cost compensation. Specific ecosystems also have great cultural value and are an integral part of local identity, not the least for indigenous peoples, yet their access to resources and sacred sites continue to be limited even when laws recognise these rights. Local communities, in cooperation with authorities and other stakeholders, play a crucial role in securing sustainable development based on own experiences, knowledge, needs, aspirations and rights.

2.2 The Program's geographical focus

The Program will be implemented in three countries, two in East Africa and one in South Asia. The choice of countries and BirdLife partners in East Africa was based on the existing policy and institutional frameworks, government good-will to address underlying causes and the mutual wish to continue partnerships with Nature Kenya and NatureUganda and to assist the partners in the two neighbouring countries in recognising their program delivery experiences within a region where forest loss is taking place at unacceptable levels. The main bulk of the first phase of the Program will be implemented in Kenya, where devolution of government to county level presents immediate

⁴ According to BirdLife International *Empowering the grassroots* (2011) 70% of the world's poorest people live in rural areas with very high dependency on natural resources

opportunities and challenges for sustainable forest management while the current project in Uganda will be included in the Program and activities extended to a second site after the termination of the Echuya project in 2015. BCN in Nepal was chosen as partner in the Program's first phase with the long-term goal to build BirdLife partnerships and support knowledge exchange in the South Asian region⁵. In Nepal the Program will initially be piloted with a limited number of core activities in a few communities, while more activities and communities will eventually be phased in. We believe that it will be mutually beneficial for our African and Asian partners to learn from and work with each other, especially within our chosen field of participatory forest management. This is in line with BirdLife policies to engage partners' experience sharing including South to South partnerships. Nepal is a well-documented case where legal recognition and government protection of community forest rights have helped maintain healthy forests, particularly in the hills and mountains.⁶ The Nepalese government has devolved forest management rights to the communities over the past 35 years and supported the establishment of legally recognized community Forestry User Groups (FUGs). With 32% of the population benefiting from community forestry it has become one of the country's most important poverty reduction programs generating livelihood as well as environmental benefits.

The Program thus focuses on three countries and 6 distinct geographical sites with similar challenges and the shared feature that they are all forest IBAs (in Nepal a projected IBA) primarily in hilly landscapes with adjacent communities. The IBA program was started in the 1980es. IBAs are identified by using internationally agreed, standardized and objective scientific criteria applied by local and international experts, making the IBA program approach and results recognized and used by e.g. the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD). This also makes the IBA program a recognized practical tool and site-based integrated approach for conservation and sustainable use of the natural environment by the local people living around the IBAs. Kenya, Uganda and Nepal have all been through vigorous IBA-identification processes for a number of years, but new sites are still being identified. Reshunga in Nepal is an example.

The three partner countries and the Program sites are briefly introduced below⁷:

Kenya

Kenya covers an area of 581,309 km² and has a population of 41 million (in 2011) and a population growth rate of 2.7%⁸. It is an ethnically diverse country with estimated 42 different ethnic groups whose stability is threatened by poverty and competition over resources. Its GNI⁹ is 1541 USD, its HDI¹⁰ ranks as 145 and its GII¹¹ as 130. The unsustainable use of natural resources threatens the livelihoods of local communities. Land degradation, land use conflicts, depletion of water catchment areas and loss of biodiversity are some of the consequences. Kenya currently has 64 IBAs covering

⁵ It will be explored during the first phase of the Program whether and how it will add value to the program and/or the BirdLife partnership to bring BirdLife partners from e.g. Nepal, Bhutan, Burma and India together for knowledge exchange and capacity building

⁶ World Resource Institute: *Securing Rights, Combating Climate Change. How strengthening Community Forest Rights Mitigates Climate Change*

⁷ More detailed information on sites can be found in Annex N

⁸ UNDP Human Development Report 2013

⁹ GNI: Gross National Income per capita

¹⁰ HDI: Human Development Index measuring average achievement in a long and healthy life, knowledge and a decent standard of living

¹¹ GII: Gender Inequality Index reflecting inequality in reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market

10% of the land area, including 22 forests. Only 58% are protected while the rest are severely threatened. Three IBAs, Dakatcha Woodland, Arabuko-Sokoke Forest and Taita Hills have been chosen for the Program. Nature Kenya has a presence there and all sites have Site Support Groups (SSGs). At all three sites, over 60% of local people are poor and the sites are threatened by poverty linked unsustainable harvesting of forest products exacerbated by policy failures and low institutional capacities of both government and civil society.

Arabuko-Sokoke Forest is an area of 41,600 ha located in Kilifi County. Malindi, Watamu, Kilifi and Mombasa are major urban centres that are easily accessible and provide markets for local products. Kilifi is the County Administration operational base. The forest is the largest forest reserve and contains the greatest area of natural complete forest cover in coastal Kenya. It is one of the most important biodiversity sites in Kenya and is ranked as the second most important for bird conservation on mainland Africa. Subsistence use of the forest remains important and involves illegal logging and hunting of endangered animals. Permits for household to collect domestic fuel wood in the forest are abused by local communities who attempt to use the same permits to collect larger quantities of fuel wood for commercial purposes. Illegal pole wood harvesting for construction and sale is also rampant. The finding of petroleum could potentially be the biggest threat to the survival of the forest. The area has 18 sub-locations with a total population of about 130,000 people, including 51 villages bordering the forest. The people are predominantly Giriama but a small group of the indigenous Sanya lives on the northern side of the forest. Prior to the forest gazettement in 1932, the Sanya used the forest freely for their subsistence needs. The population density of Kilifi District has risen from 47 to 60 people per km² between 1989 and 1997. 70% of all households live below the poverty line with insufficient food, high levels of unemployment and illiteracy. Subsistence agriculture is the main occupation. Agricultural land is generally poor, and crop yields low. Forest usage includes the collection of water, fuel wood, poles, and herbs, butterfly farming and hunting of wildlife for meat. About 700 out of estimated 8000 households are involved in nature-based enterprises linked to butterfly farming or beekeeping. The potential for eco-tourism is huge and largely untapped. There are a number of civil society organisations operating in the area as a result of Nature Kenya and Birdlife work over the years. These include the Arabuko-Sokoke Forest Adjacent Dwellers Association, Arabuko-Sokoke Forest Guides Association, Mida Creek Conservation and Awareness Group, Kipepeo Butterfly Project and user groups linked to honey, butterfly farming and other products in the forest and Community Forest Associations. Nature Kenya has an office at the site located at Kipepeo Butterfly Project and has implemented several projects in the area.

Dakatcha Woodland is an unprotected 82,000 ha tract of relatively intact coastal woodland in Kilifi County. The nearest commercial and administrative centres are Malindi, Watamu, and Kilifi. It is the only site where the bird, Clarke's Weaver, is known to breed in the world and holds substantial populations of other globally-threatened birds and rare plants. The woodland also provides critical ecosystem services and is part of the Coastal Forests Global Hotspot defined by Conservation International. Despite its importance as one of the last patches of relatively intact coastal woodland, it has no formal protected status. Due to poverty and lack of local people's capacity to live sustainably, it has suffered major damage from uncontrolled clearing, charcoal burning, encroachment for agricultural expansion and shifting cultivation, fires largely from charcoal burning and agricultural

activities, massive illegal logging and extremely high levels of unsustainable bush meat hunting. Climate changes have contributed to high weather variability leading to reduced food production. The area is inhabited by several ethnic groups, including the indigenous Watha/Sanya (3%) and Giriama (93%), who settled there in the 1940s. Due to settlement schemes and immigration especially of Kamba the population has risen dramatically to 50,000. The poverty level is above 70% and illiteracy and unemployment are widespread. Livelihoods are predominantly based on mixed farming, charcoal burning and some sale of firewood. Rainfall is erratic and crop yields insecure. Lack of water, over reliance on woodland resources, smoke in the atmosphere due to rampant charcoal burning and poor housing characterize the area. A number of NGOs, and civil society organisations whose presence was catalysed by Nature Kenya, operate in Dakatcha, including Dakatcha Woodland Conservation Group that hosts Nature Kenya field staff, World Vision, Action Aid, Red Cross, and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

Taita Hills is located in south-eastern Kenya in Taita-Taveta county at 1,350–2,228 m above the semi-arid plains of Tsavo West National Park. Voi and Wundanyi are the largest towns that provide ready markets for local produce. Taita is a forest reserve with a small protected area. The area is categorized as a Key Biodiversity Area and a Global Biodiversity Hotspot, hosting globally-threatened species and restricted-range species. The forest habitat has been severely fragmented and continues to decline in both extent and quality. Indigenous cloud forest currently covers an area of just 450 ha, reflecting 98% deforestation over the last 200 years. Cultivation of especially maize is intensive and the protection of all remaining patches of natural forest critical. The most common products obtained from the forests are water, firewood, fodder, timber, medicine, honey, and fruits. 82% of households in Taita get their main incomes from farming. The county has a population of 300,000. The Taita Hills is heavily settled in the upper zones with 1400 people per square kilometres. The Taita people migrated to Kenya from Tanzania and interacted with local communities. They are now known as Taita. Some civil society groups operate in Taita, including Dawida Biodiversity Conservation Group composed of 5 community groups and Taita Taveta Wildlife Forum, the SSG collaborating with Nature Kenya which has also housed its staff, Sufu Self Help group, and Wuchichi Self Help group.

Uganda

Uganda covers an area of 236,040 km² and has a population of 37.5 million and a population growth rate of 3.1%. It has more than 40 ethnic groups. Uganda's GNI is at 1168 USD, its HDI ranks as 161 and its GII as 110. Uganda has 34 IBAs, 22 within the national protected areas system. Although the general population living below the poverty line has decreased country-wide, little change has occurred among the remote communities. They have developed an intricate dependence on forest resources, managing forest-related costs against the benefits such as wood energy, construction material, medicine, farming, livestock grazing, fisheries and hunting. Deterioration of natural resources has been found to have a net negative effect on their well-being as it tends to exacerbate the costs while reducing the benefit. Conversely, increased poverty also tends to lead to increased natural resource degradation.

The Program will initially be implemented in the current project area, Echuya Central Forest Reserve covering 3,400 ha along the Albertine Rift. It is mainly constituted of moist montane forest, but also

has an extensive swamp. The surrounding area has one of the highest population densities in Uganda, and four Community Forest Management (CFM) groups work with the National Forestry Authority to implement the CFM agreements. The Reserve is shared between Kisoro and Kabale district and lies near the towns of Kisoro and Kabale at an altitude of 2270-2570 m. The reserve is one of the highest conservation priority montane forests in Uganda with high conservation value of species that are endemic, rare or globally threatened. In 2004, NatureUganda highlighted it as a key priority for its conservation program and the field office in Kabale was established. Echuya plays a significant role in stabilizing soils and acting as buffer against strong winds and is an important water catchment area. The surrounding area is hilly and steep, and land degradation acute due to soil erosion arising from poor land planning and management. Cultivation covers most hilltops and wetlands have been drained, while there is complete deforestation outside the protected area. Land shortage, coupled with intensive use for subsistence agriculture, has led to soil degradation, poor yields and, ultimately, poverty, and consequently high dependence on some forest resources. According to the 2002 Uganda Population and Housing Census, the total population is 109,304. The forest adjacent communities are among the poorest in Uganda, and include a significant number of indigenous Batwa 'pygmies', who are particularly disadvantaged. The communities are dominated by two ethnic groups, the Bakiga (app. 51%) and Bafumbira (app. 44%). The Batwa make up app. 6% of the population. They were evicted in the late 1980s and early 1990s and now eke out a living around the forest. There are a number of civil society groups operating in the area. These include, among others, the United Organization for Batwa Development in Uganda, four Collaborative Forest Management Associations, the International Gorilla Conservation Programme, the Institute of Tropical Forest Conservation, the Albertine Rift Conservation Society, the Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Trust and Uplift the Rural Poor.

A second site, Kasyoha-Kitomi Central Forest Reserve, is foreseen to be phased-in from the middle of Year 2. It includes almost 40,000 ha mid-altitude moist forest in the northern part of the Albertine Rift, where CFM initiatives were piloted years ago with a high diversity of surrounding communities and an important watershed. It is located in western Uganda and lies in the administrative districts of Bushenyi, Ibanda and Kamwenge in the proximity of several towns, Bushenyi, Rubirizi, Ibanda, Kamwenge and Nsika. *NatureUganda* implemented a programme there from 2007-2009 that integrated empowerment of local communities with sustainable management of natural resources and livelihood improvement. Since 2011 coordination has been handled through the Kampala and Kabale field offices. It is one of Uganda's few remaining medium altitude moist forests. The majority of the larger trees have been exploited for timber and fuel wood but recent assessments by international conservation agencies classify the region as one of international importance in terms of global biodiversity values. The landscape also has great importance for stakeholders at the regional, national and international levels. The main reasons for pressure on the forest are the need for timber, fuel wood, herbs, grazing, poles for construction, and fires. Approximately 150,000-200,000 persons reside in the landscape; 50,000 live adjacent to the forest. In terms of ethnic composition, the area is dominated by Banyankole and Bakiga; however, many other ethnic groups have immigrated to the area, especially the Banyarwanda, Bakonjo and Bafumbira. The villages adjacent to the forest are mainly occupied by immigrants. The area has experienced high population growth in the last decade. In Bushenyi district, for example, the population increased from 579,137 (1991 census) to 731,392 (2002 census) resulting in increased pressure on land and natural resources. As natural resources have become scarcer, conflicts between

managers and communities have escalated, bearing heavily on government budgets to control rampant destruction and illegal use. The main income of the local communities derives from forest resources and farming outside the forest. Livelihoods are hampered by scanty health and education services that are out of reach to some households and access to markets. Most households derive their livelihood from activities related to agriculture. The high population densities, in-migration and lack of fertile land cause a general trend of land shortage. Furthermore, land shortage negatively affects the poorest inhabitants of the villages, as the areas with better fertility are mostly owned by people who are well off. A number of civil society organisations operate in the area. These include WWF UCO, ECO trust, and Rukararwe partnership.

Nepal

Nepal covers an area of 147,181 km² and has a population of 26.5 million and a population growth rate of 1.7%. It has 102 enumerated castes and ethnic groups. Its GNI was 1137 USD in 2011, its HDI ranks as 157 and its GII as 102. The forested areas in Nepal covers nearly 40% but many of them are depleted and biodiversity severely threatened primarily due to population pressure, overuse, firewood collection, development interventions, illegal activities, and climate change. Especially in the hilly and mountainous areas a healthy forest cover is of vital importance for preventing erosion¹². Community forestry has had positive impacts on the forests but still needs to be further evolved and to increase equity of benefits¹³. Nepal has 27 IBAs covering about 18% of the land area and 5 potential IBAs.

The Program will be piloted and implemented in a potential IBA, Reshunga Forest in Gulmi District in Western Nepal. Thamghas bazaar is a small town located at the western side of Reshunga while the nearest larger city is Tansen, 75 km away. The forest lies at an altitude of 800 – 2300 meters. It covers an area of 3,400 ha, has high biodiversity especially of birds, the reason why it is likely to be recognized as an IBA, and it is an important watershed. Firewood and fodder collection, forest fires and grazing are major reasons for pressure on the eco-system. Reshunga is surrounded by forest dependent communities, mostly poor according to the National Poverty Index. It is an important Hindu religious area and the core area is managed as religious forest by the Reshunga Forest Conservation Committee, which also looks after the temple. The outer area is managed by at least 18 Community Forestry User Groups covering 24,871 people. The District Development Committee is the main administrative body for all development work in the district. Its role is to coordinate, cooperate, facilitate and synergize initiatives taken by different development partners. It can sometimes provide the matching grant to local communities involved in a project. Village Development Committees constitute the main administrative body for all development work at village level. There are 7 Village Development Committees surrounding Reshunga Forest with a population of 36,800.

The majority of the population are Magar but migrants from other parts of the district and further off, including Brahmin, Dalit and Chhetri are also present in the area. Subsistence is mainly based on agriculture, harvesting of forest products, business and remittance. The area has good potential for

¹² A recent landslide on the Sun Kosi river in Nepal created massive destruction and left several people dead and hundreds missing

¹³ The CARE report *Forests for all. A Question of Rights and Equity* concludes that gender and social status play an important role in forest management. A field study from Nepal shows that especially low caste and Dalit people have a tendency to be absent from the executive committees in the CFUGs, when equitable sharing of decisions and benefits is not part of the structure. The same is the case with women.

tourism. Civil society organisations in the area include the Reshunga Forest Conservation Committee and Janajagaran Kendra Nepal, a small local organisation working for empowerment, biodiversity conservation and livelihoods.

2.3 Forest Sector context

The Program focuses almost exclusively on the Forest Sector, but social, agriculture, water and wider environmental sectors are also important. Participatory forest management is practically and in the Program's understanding a means to integrating forest, environmental, social, economic, and governance/democratic concerns. The Program will work within national forest laws and regulations and fully use these to guide the application of forest management in the field in close collaboration with relevant stakeholders at Program sites.

2.3.1 Kenya's Forest Sector

About 7% of Kenya's land area is forested; only 2.6% is closed forest cover. Around 1.6 million ha of land are gazetted as forest reserves, 1.06 million ha of these are indigenous closed canopy forests and 0.16 million ha exotic plantations. Another 0.18 million ha of indigenous forest cover is found outside gazetted areas. The Kenya Forest Master Plan of 1995 lists some 255 separate forest reserves, 52 of which are not yet gazetted. The average annual depletion of forest cover appears to be about 1%, with the highest rates occurring in forests near or in high potential agricultural lands. Although the Forest Sector contributes only a small amount to the formal economy¹⁴, its unrecorded value in the informal and subsistence sector is great. 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, taking into account value-added, unrecorded and informal sector activity.

The principle that all people have the right to benefit equally from the use of natural resources and equal entitlement to a clean and healthy environment is enshrined in the Kenya Constitution 2010. The enabling policies and legislative, institutional framework for participatory natural resources management include the Kenya Constitution, the Forest Act 2005, the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act 2013, the Environmental Management and Coordination Act 2000, the Energy Act 2004, the Water Act 2002 and the Land Policy 2009. The Environmental Management and Coordination Act protects traditional interests. The Forest Act and the Wildlife Act objectives include sustainable natural resources management for socio-economic development, poverty reduction, employment creation and improvement of livelihoods within a framework where all stakeholders ensure the sustainability of wildlife and the Forest Sector. The Forest Act allows members of a community resident around a forest area to register a community forest association that can protect, conserve, and manage forests and formulate and implement forest programs consistent with traditional user rights. The latter is the incentive around which the participatory forest management centers seen from the perspective of the forest adjacent communities reliant on forest resources. Over half a million households, or about 10% of the population, living within 5 km of indigenous forests, depend on the direct use of forest resources, including timber and Non Timber Forest Products (NTFP), for their livelihoods. Both

¹⁴ Over the last decade approximately with GDP shares of 1% of the monetary economy and 13% of the non-monetary economy

official excisions and illegal encroachment into forests for agriculture and settlement constitute a major and perhaps the most severe threat to indigenous forest status and integrity. Participatory forest management in Kenya predates the enactment of the Forest Act. In 1993, Nature Kenya piloted community engagement in Arabuko-Sokoke Forest through butterfly farming. This received written government consent to pilot participatory forest management in the forest in 2000 backed by a management plan in consultation with CSOs. Nature Kenya together with Kenya Forest Research Institute helped the Kenya Forest Service in the development of guidelines on participatory forest management. After the enactment of the Forest Act 2005, Nature Kenya and the Forest Research Institute together with Kenya Forest Services have used the legal frameworks to extend participatory management to other forests. However, success requires devolution of forest management powers, capacity building for community forestry associations and other stakeholders. The challenge is to push for county policies to enable counties to implement their mandate on sustainable forest management including allowing civil society participation in this decision-making.

Key government institutions with direct mandate in forest management with which the Program will collaborate include the County Governments in Kilifi and Taita Taveta, the Kenya Forest Service, Kenya Wildlife Service, the Forest Research Institute, National Museums of Kenya sparring on biodiversity research and monitoring, the National Environment Management Authority for environmental coordination and safeguards and the Department for Resource Surveys and Remote Sensing for natural resource monitoring and mapping.

2.3.2 Uganda's Forest Sector

In Uganda forests cover 3,604,176 ha, of which 17% consists of Central Forest Reserves managed by the National Forestry Authority, 18% of National Parks and Wildlife Reserves managed by Uganda Wildlife Authority, 0.85% jointly managed by the two together, and 0.03% local forest reserves managed by local governments. The rest of the forests (64%) are on private and communal lands, and managed by private and local community forest owners. The Uganda Forestry Policy 2001 provided direction to the Forest Sector developments through specific forestry policy statements. It recognises the importance of the development and sustainable management of forests on private land, in gazetted areas, and within urban areas for the provision of goods and services. However, the forest cover has continued to deteriorate. Within a period of 15 years from 1990, the forest cover reduced by approximately 1.3 million ha, representing an average annual deforestation rate of 1.8%. The rate of deforestation in Central Forest Reserves was 1.1%. Unsatisfactory forest law enforcement and governance, and institutional failures have been the major causes for the poor performance of the sector. Forests and trees contribute to the national economy in various ways. The Forestry Policy 2001 estimated the contribution of forests to the GDP to be 6%. In 2004, the annual contribution of forests to household cash income was estimated at 11-27%, and the contribution to ecosystem services at USD 110 Million. According to 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.

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 the forests. In order to address poverty especially among the rural populations who often live adjacent to forests, the Forest Sector reviewed its policies and developed a National Forest Policy 2001. The Ministry of Water and Environment formulated the Uganda Forestry Policy which proposes reform in the central and local governments' roles with a view that more forest resources should be managed through devolving responsibility to District Local Governments, the private sector and local communities. This was followed by the National Forest and Tree Planting Act 2003, which provides for the conservation, sustainable management and development of forests for the benefit of the people. It provides for the declaration of forest reserves for purposes of protection and production of forests and forest produce, for the sustainable use of forests resources and the enhancement of the productive capacity of forests. The same year, the Collaborative Forest Management Guidelines were approved. These stipulate the manner in which to engage in collaborative forest management between the National Forest Authority and local communities through collaborative forest management groups. The most recent legislation of relevance is the National Forestry Plan 2012, which is a sector-wide national instrument for managing and utilising the forestry resources in Uganda. The first plan was developed in 2002. There are only a few attempts across the country to implement policy approaches to integrate rural populations in forest management, including Echuya and Kasyoha-Kitomi. Forests in Uganda are divided broadly into Central and Local Forest Reserves. All Central Forest Reserve are managed by the National Forest Authority whereas Local Forest Reserves are managed by District Forest Services. Echuya and Kasyoha-Kitomi are thus under the jurisdiction of the National Forest Authority. Both levels will be main collaborators in the Program. The Forest Sector Support Department whose role is to oversee Forest Sector development and the National Forest Resources Research Institute play a part at the national level, while Uganda Wildlife Authority is a major partner at both sites. The National Environment Management Authority provides necessary input into programs related to income generating activities as well as restoration of degraded landscapes particularly through District Environment Officers. At district level, the Community Development Offices, and the District Agricultural Office especially through the National Agricultural Advisory Services are also key collaborators for the Program. The Uganda Network of Collaborative Forest Associations (UNETCOFA) is an umbrella network for Collaborative Forest Management for individual and sub-regional networks of CFM Associations that are constituted of local level CFM groups. Lastly, district NGO fora bring together all NGOs in the district for knowledge and information exchange.

2.3.3 Nepal's Forest Sector

Agriculture and forestry remain Nepal's principal economic activities, employing 80% of the population and contributing 35% to the total GDP. At the national level, 28% of all household income comes from these sectors. The Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation is the main governing body for the Forestry Sector. Under this Ministry there are two main departments, the Department of National Parks & Wildlife Conservation and the Department of Forests. Forests inside the protected areas are under the jurisdiction of the first; forests outside under the latter.

Nepal has a well-defined policy and legal framework for the Forestry Sector guided by the Master Plan for the Forestry Sector 1989 and periodic national plans. The Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation is responsible for a number of relevant policies including the Leasehold Forestry Policy Guidelines 2003, the Herbs and NTFP Development Policy 2004, and the Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy in the Forestry Sector 2004–2019. The Forest Act 1993 supports the handover of national forest to adjoining Forest User Groups (FUGs) which are empowered to manage parts of the forest estate. Some 15,000 FUGs have been established to date, the majority belonging to the Federation of Community Forestry Users (FECOFUN), which acts as a conduit for local communities to input into policy processes. Since its inception in July 1995 FECOFUN has grown into a social movement organization with about 8.5 million people represented, all of whom are forest users. The membership is categorized into two types according to user group involvement in natural resource management and use rights. FUGs organized under the Forest Act 1993 are eligible to become general members of this federation and any other user group based on forest resources at grassroots level are qualified to become elementary member. Of more than 15000 Community Forestry Users Groups and other Community Based Forest Management Groups (such as leasehold forestry groups, religious forestry groups, buffer zone and traditional forest management groups) approximately 13000 are affiliated with FECOFUN. FECOFUN is supported by thousands of volunteers and community forestry facilitators as well as by several national and international organizations.

Community forestry has been successful in: restoring degraded land and greenery, increasing and conserving biodiversity and the supply of forest products, empowering rural women, poor and disadvantaged groups, promoting income generation and community development activities; and in improving livelihoods of people in rural areas. Nepal is also engaged in REDD+ activities which will enhance its efforts to reduce deforestation and degradation, and encourage forest restoration. Protected Areas have remained the dominant approach to biodiversity conservation. Currently, they cover 23.23% of Nepal's total area. The National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1973 and the Buffer Zone Management Regulation 1996 are the legal tools for Protected Area declaration and management. For Protected Areas with buffer zones, 30–50% of the total income is shared with local communities to implement community development activities. Altogether, 11 buffer zones have been declared so far, embracing over 80 Village Development Committees in 27 districts and over 700,000 people. Communities adjacent to protected areas benefit directly from the services flowing from the habitats. However, they often also bear the costs of restricted access to forest resources. A challenge for protected areas managers is therefore to balance requirements to conserve biodiversity, with the wider benefits of the site and the immediate needs of the local community. Forests outside protected areas fall under six main types of management arrangements: community, collaborative, leasehold, religious, protection, and government. Except for government-managed forests, there are different levels of community involvement. Since 2002, the government has taken the initiative to manage natural forests with high biodiversity value as protection forests. Private forests and trees grown in farmland are contributing to the conservation of biodiversity by minimizing pressures on national forests. The Director General of the Department of Forestry is responsible for the overall forest administration of both national and private forests. The Department extends its services through four administrative levels. At its headquarters it has functional divisions for planning and monitoring, Community Forests

and National Forests. There are 74 District Forest Offices responsible for field level implementation of forest programs.

3 Program objectives

The long term objective of the Program is to improve and qualify the management of natural resources, especially forested IBAs, on which local livelihoods depend for food, fuel, etc. and for critical ecosystem services, such as water, soil conservation and reduced vulnerability to natural disasters such as landslides, and climate changes. It builds on the assumption that best practices within participatory forest management based on the genuine involvement of local women and men, duty bearers and other key stakeholders will contribute to improved livelihoods and poverty reduction of local communities by securing access to natural resources and ecosystem services, also in the future. The Program's focus is on equitably shared benefits from participatory management practices addressing the needs of poor and marginalised people, and the strengthening of civil society, both BirdLife partners and local civil society groups, through capacity building, facilitation of networks and advocacy. The long term objective and three Program objectives were thoroughly discussed and agreed by partners during the Partnership Intervention. There was general consensus that the Program should centre on participatory forest management. The term covers a variety of approaches that have proven to be successful in involving local people in managing and thus reducing pressure on forests by allowing them to both, participate in decisions that influence their lives and livelihoods and benefit them economically. Advocacy is closely linked to the Program's forest management goals, while the strengthening of local civil society groups is both, a goal in its own right and a means to improve local livelihoods for the needy, better manage ecosystems, and carry out capacity building and advocacy, especially at local and decentralised levels. The Program will help existing local civil society groups at site level (e.g. Site Support Groups in Kenya) to move a 'step upward' by supporting their participation in and contribution to networks at decentralised and national levels, thus providing them with better opportunities for having a voice in matters that concern their livelihoods and the resources on which they depend.

3.1 Development objective

The long term objective of the Program is to:

Reduce the destruction of forested IBAs and contribute to the realisation of best participatory forest management practices for the benefit of all

The main indicators for achieving this goal include BirdLife's regular monitoring of IBAs, national living standard and poverty reduction surveys, and national performance evaluation of participatory forest management practices.

3.2 Immediate objectives and indicators

The Program is expected to achieve three immediate objectives during its first phase. These are equivalent to the three components of the Program:

1. *Program partners have increasing capacity to strategically work with the integration of poverty reduction and nature protection*

Indicators:

- Program partners recognized as contributing to best practices for the integration of poverty reduction and nature protection within the BirdLife network and nationally
- Program partners formulate and review relevant strategies and approaches based on lessons learned for the development of Phase II of the Program
- Program partners invited/seconded to participating in relevant poverty and nature protection planning and ‘think tank’ groups

2. *Participatory forest management contributes to improved livelihoods of poor communities, and reduce pressure on ecosystems and biodiversity*

Indicators:

- The population in forest adjacent communities experience better living conditions, and reduced poverty as a result of improved forest management
- Monitoring data and scientific studies show reduced pressure on forest sites
- Forest management plans reflect increase in forest productivity and greater benefits from participatory management.

3. *Local civil society groups are empowered to engage in rights based advocacy and political processes*

Indicators:

- Livelihood and biodiversity concerns, and local civil society reflected in management plans
- Local civil society involvement in decentralised political processes documented and consistent
- Improved services and community driven priorities referenced as a result of participation in political processes

4 Overall strategy of the Program

4.1 Program strategy

In accordance with DOF’s statutes, and overall and international strategy 2013-2016 the goal of DOF’s engagement in development cooperation is the protection of birds and their habitats outside Denmark through sustainable management of natural resources, improved livelihoods, capacity building and strengthening of civil society. The Program’s approach is also informed by BirdLife’s strategic priorities and target BirdLife partners’ strategies and host country development plans, National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans¹⁵, the Draft Policy for Danish Support to Civil Society, the Strategy for Denmark’s Development Cooperation¹⁶, and the Strategic Framework for Natural Resources, Energy

¹⁵ BirdLife Strategy 2013-2020; *Listening to Local Voices. Livelihoods and the Environment at IBAs, Building Partnerships for Conservation and Development; Good for Nature, Good for People, Key lessons learned from BI’s Improving Livelihoods Projects in Africa, Empowering the Grassroots, BirdLife, participation and local communities*, and other Birdlife publications

¹⁶ *The Right to a Better Life. Strategy for Denmark’s Development Cooperation*, May 2012; *Regeringens udviklingspolitiske prioriteter 2015*, August 2014

and Climate Change. It is further guided by the Rio+20 agreements on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), based on a balance between environmental, social and economic concerns, and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its Aichi goals. It is in line with the IUCN mission ‘to influence, encourage and assist societies...to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ...sustainable’ and with Danida’s support hereof¹⁷. It supports the ambitious goal of the New York Declaration on Forests (2014) to halve deforestation within the next 5 years and bring it to a total stop by 2030. Poverty reduction is one of the key international imperatives as stressed by the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and one of the main concerns of Danish development cooperation. Support to poor local communities to improve their livelihoods is therefore central, both as a goal in itself and a crosscutting issue. Likewise the article of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and UN’s Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is an important concern and other international and national instruments to regulate human rights and the use of natural resources. Gender has an important role to play both when it comes to access to resources and rights. The Program will strengthen partners’ capacity to mainstream gender, empower women and take the rights and needs of women, indigenous peoples and marginalised groups into account, thereby contributing to more equality and the fulfilment of these rights and needs. It will aspire to support local people’s genuine and equal participation, because we consider this to be a precondition for sustainability and conflict prevention, and because the wise use of nature can only be successful when tightly bound up with understanding and addressing local needs, rights and knowledge. The Program is in line with national policies and laws that have provisions for institutional arrangements with clear guiding principles of participatory forest management. It will enable national actors, both civil society and collaborating government agencies to support participatory natural resources management by and for local natural resources rights holders recognising their rights for sustainable living through freedom of participation in decision making. It will target national partners who will be the conduits of change at national and regional government levels to create the enabling environment for local civil society groups¹⁸. The capacity of these local groups will be enhanced so that they can act as agents of change to promote site based participatory forest management and collaborations among all local civil society actors including forest associations, women groups, natural resource user groups and local government authorities. It will enhance the ability of national partners in the Program to catalyse national policy making and implementation of participatory forest management objectives beyond just the target sites.

BirdLife considers the protection of nature and its services a *precondition* for the fulfilment of basic human rights to adequate and equitably shared livelihoods¹⁹. This is not the least evident in the communities in which the Program will be implemented that are directly dependent on the forest and local natural resources for their survival and in which poverty reduction and conservation are inextricably linked²⁰. The BirdLife partnership has in the implementation of projects demonstrated that

¹⁷ *Concept Note. Organisation Strategy for Denmark’s cooperation with IUCN, 2015-2017*

¹⁸ Called Site Support Groups in Kenya and Uganda or Community Based Organizations or Forest User Groups in Nepal

¹⁹ FAO’s report *State of the World’s Forests. Enhancing the Socio-economic Benefits from Forests*, 2014 seeks to establish empirical insight into the connection between forests and livelihoods.

²⁰ This is, for example, recognized by the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) and the Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA) in Uganda; in Kenya in the Vision 2030, the PRSP, the NBSAP and the Agricultural Sector Development Strategy; in Nepal in the Nepal Agriculture Perspective Plan, the Master Plans for Forestry and Irrigation and the PRSB

it is indeed possible to support local development through the maintenance and management of biodiversity and natural resources and the targeted support to diversified and sustainable agro-forestry and other 'green' initiatives. Conservation today is based on involvement of local stakeholders. Without providing benefits to these and at the same time adhering to principles of democracy, devolution and sustainability, conservation is hardly possible.

The Program will take its point of departure in the 'change triangle' in that its 'three legs' correspond to the three components. Program partners have learned from previous projects that a combination of capacity, strategic services and advocacy is mandatory for achieving set goals. DOF and partners have already gone some way in balancing the delivery of services (or strategic deliveries) - mostly concentrated on training and support to livelihoods - capacity building, civil society support and advocacy. The Program will provide an excellent opportunity to further integrate these based on shared lessons and with a long term focus on enhancing civil society's capacity to facilitate and advocate for social accountability in delivery of government services and local initiatives. The Partnership Intervention provided an excellent opportunity to discuss this and further develop the approach.

The ultimate goal of the Program is to ensure the long-term protection of biodiversity based on participatory management of forested IBAs to secure legal, equitable and sustainably managed access to natural resources by local communities. A strong civil society will be instrumental in reaching this goal. Improved livelihoods and poverty reduction is both, a goal in itself and a precondition for protecting the environment and securing long term access to vital ecosystem services and natural resources. Nature protection, civil society and local livelihoods are thus intricately linked. All partners have considerable experience of integrating and ensuring synergy between the three, and in demonstrating inclusion by targeting poor and marginalised individuals and groups of people. Lessons learned from DOF's and partners' many projects show that successful approaches include management plans developed in a process of dialogue and based on both regulations, concise data and knowledge, formal and voluntary natural resource use agreements between all members of communities and local/national authorities, locally based monitoring of human activities related to the agreements and biodiversity, improved technical and other capacity of all stakeholders, public awareness, education and advocacy.

Mutual knowledge sharing about the value of ecosystems to be protected and the laws governing community participation in forest management is a precondition for true involvement. One of the main activities of the Program will therefore be to strengthen and support local capacity for advocacy, environmental education, public awareness, use of local knowledge and other approaches to inform and involve the people. The aim is both, to strengthen local capacity and local people's knowledge and ownership and to involve a substantial part of the local people, including youths and children, as well as authorities and other stakeholders. Moving a step up from community level the district or county levels will be another important area of engagement, especially for support to civil society to engage with government and other stakeholders at those levels. It is the Program's strategy and approach to encourage equal opportunity for meaningful participation by strengthening a bottom up approach to decision making, influencing the top down delivery of services, and building consensus for priority

areas in sustainable livelihood improvement and conservation. In Kenya, for example, the newly formed county level governments need to increase their capacity for integrating livelihood support with environmental planning and implementation and their ability and willingness to engage with civil society.

4.2 Strategic approaches to the components

Component 1

The main objective of this component is to build partners' capacity for integrating poverty reduction and nature protection but also to build modus operandi for working together as partners in a program. At the Program level the main task will be to set up procedures for cooperating in a programmatic approach and thus facilitate learning that can benefit all partners and help initiate change processes. The Program is in itself a capacity building opportunity for partners to start acting and influencing medium and long term strategies rather than being limited to the short term engagements of a project approach. It will help build capacity of all partners for natural resource management, with focus on participatory forest management, advocacy, strengthening of civil society and equitable inclusive improved livelihoods and for the interlinking between these. This approach will enhance partners' capabilities to embrace a wider strategic view and approaches to problem solving with larger and longer term impacts. It requires new thinking on the development of the logical framework, results and indicators as well as on monitoring and measuring impacts. It requires understanding and capacity to address and monitor core 'cross cutting' issues, e.g. indigenous peoples' rights and gender.

In addition to DOF and the three Program partners benefitting from being affiliated to the BirdLife network, the intention is also to ensure that the wider BirdLife partnership is involved, informed and inspired by the approach, processes and lessons learned as the Program unfolds feeding into at least two of BirdLife's strategic pillars of the 2013-2020 BirdLife Strategy, namely local empowerment and capacity development. The Program will document and communicate valuable lessons and recommendations for further improvement of approaches to these pillars, both during implementation of the current strategy and the formulation of the next. The inputs will be communicated to the wider BirdLife community by the regional BirdLife representative, but also more comprehensively by the Program partners as and when experiences are documented and analysed, for example through participation in regional BirdLife meetings in Asia and Africa. Through Birdlife it is anticipated that the sharing of lessons and experiences will take place across the entire Birdlife network.

Component 2

The main objective of this component is to support local capacity for developing and engaging in activities that contribute to improved livelihoods with focus on inclusion and without jeopardising the environment. Poverty reduction strategies will build on a strategic approach to income generating activities (IGAs) based on diversification and 'close to nature' initiatives, and adapted to the local context, for example utilisation of NTFP, smallholding agriculture and horticulture, agro-forestry,

forest gardens²¹, tree planting for fuel wood and construction etc. The Program will also look into and promote crops which, as for example organically grown coffee, can contribute to biodiversity²² while at the same time providing local people with economic opportunities. Other context dependent initiatives and market opportunities (for example ecotourism) will be assessed and supported with women and men in local communities and their community-based groups and implemented under consideration of cross cutting issues, particularly rights, equality and gender. DOF and partners also work with what we call ‘political windows of opportunity’. This refers particularly to community involvement in forest management and other ‘green policies’, which is a key entry-point for Program activities, but also to poverty alleviation and gender policies²³. The translation and use of legislation conducive for legal access to crucial natural resources for forest dependent and often poor and marginalised individuals and households, such as for example indigenous groups, provides the incentive to improve their livelihoods as well as providing the platform on which to negotiate and execute their legal rights within the said legislation. This is in line with the expected results of IUCN’s current program: ‘Improved governance arrangements over natural resources deliver rights-based and equitable conservation with tangible livelihoods benefits’.

Participatory forestry refers to processes and mechanisms which enable people with a direct stake in forest resources to be part of decision-making in all aspects of forest management, including policy formulation processes²⁴. Apart from showcasing that a participatory forest management approach can be mutually beneficial for the stakeholders involved as well as for the state of the forests, the Program aims to further develop and strengthen participatory forest management regulations. Decentralized participatory and community forest management regimes have gained currency in developing countries in recent years being viewed as a means of enhancing economic efficiency, public accountability, community and individual empowerment, and allocative efficiency in the forest sub-sector²⁵. These reforms are expected to reconcile conservation and livelihood needs. In particular, forest decentralization is aimed at enhancing local livelihoods, poverty alleviation and preservation of the forest. To support this the close cooperation with forest departments and other important stakeholders (for example forest guards and other government departments) at decentralised levels is mandatory for establishing their sense of ownership but also for facilitating training of staff, meetings with local communities and their active participation in the development of management plans, local natural resource agreements etc. Natural resource agreements at community level refer to an inclusive process between community members and authorities that reflect local needs and priorities but also establish rights and responsibilities, for example clear rules for access rights that do not discriminate between users and responsibilities for, for example, keeping water sources clean. Self-help groups allow women and/or marginalised households to benefit from IGAs and other initiatives through cooperation, joint training and access to small grants facilities. Demonstration plots and small grant facilities allow farmers to test new crops before entering into what they may consider experimental enterprises. Locally based

²¹ Forest gardens are widespread in many tropical countries and are now being promoted in the North because of their capacity to capture and storage carbon

²² See for example Robert Rice: *The Ecological Benefits of Shade-Grown Coffee*, Smithsonian Institute September 2010

²³ For example implementation of the national Poverty Reduction Strategies and the *Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW).

²⁴ www.fao.org/forestry/participatory

²⁵ World Bank, 2009: *Community driven development*

monitoring involving multiple stakeholders engage local people in monitoring effects of natural resource agreements on the ecosystem and also for appreciating their value for the long term sustainability of the resources on which their livelihoods and biodiversity depend. The Program will also investigate whether Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) can realistically be developed and employed for one or more sites.

Component 3

The objective of the component is to support local civil society groups in becoming independent of Program support, creating alliances with other CSGs and asserting their roles as main agents for advocacy and change. This primarily but not only refers to those groups, such as the Site Support Groups, which have been developed by the partners in the South, but also to the Forest User Groups in Nepal. The component feeds directly into the second objective of the Policy for Danish Support to Civil Society, namely to ensure that ‘civil society...has the space and capacity to gain influence to combat poverty and inequality, promote human rights as well as sustainable development in an accountable, inclusive and transparent manner, in particular in favour of poor and excluded groups’. It also contributes to BirdLife’s Local Empowerment Program and its goal to help local civil society groups to build ‘confidence, skills, knowledge, resources and rights’²⁶. For BirdLife empowerment is about facilitating and supporting a process through which people ‘can take control and bring about positive changes for the benefit of the environment and themselves’. BirdLife regards it as one of its most distinctive approaches that its partners are working locally and long-term to ‘support, mobilise and empower networks of organisations and individuals, rooted locally, for the conservation and sustainable management of IBAs’. BirdLife calls this the Local Conservation Group (LCG) approach but for the sake of the wider understanding also outside of the BirdLife network we have chosen the broader term Civil Society Groups (CSGs) for the Program. These goals will be achieved through training of CSGs members, capacity assessment of both members and the CSG, organisational development of CSGs into democratic, transparent, accountable, and well-functioning civil society groups, facilitation of local CSGs’ participation in local and national networks and other activities above site level, facilitation of their inclusion in forest management processes at decentralised levels, strengthening of their capacity to act as representatives for community interests, and to involve and provide feed-backs to these, and facilitation of both local CSGs’ and their networks’ access to the media and other means of communication for change. One of the challenges is to ensure access for civil society to political fora and platforms and to ensure that the openings in national political regulations, especially for forest management, are fully recognised and utilised by the Program.

5 Methodological approaches and activity areas

5.1 Overall Program approach and activity areas

The implementation at country and site level will be guided by a common approach which will be developed in details at the outset of the Program, including a Strategic Plan for IGAs, an M&E and

²⁶ BirdLife International *Empowering the Grassroots. BirdLife, Participation, and Local Communities*, 2011. The aim is to increase the number of IBA LCGs, grow their capacity to monitor and manage natural resources sustainably, link local groups, empower them through rights (for example tenure, policy and legal processes) and provide sustainable resource for local group development, networking and action

Reporting System, and a Communication and Advocacy Plan, and all activities shall contribute to the overall goal and objectives of the Program and deliver to the outputs and results. The more detailed activities and approaches will naturally depend on the context, including the local partner's experiences, national regulations, etc. Participatory forest management, for example, has different names and implications in the three countries. It is important to note that though the Program is informed by formulated methodological approaches it does not build on a set of fixed methods tailored to its many facets. The Program shall in itself provide space for innovative approaches, and refinement but also for errors. This is essential for a learning process as is the increased capacity for and application of critical analysis of both approaches and achievements.

The overall approach is to show how participatory forest management can contribute to improving the livelihoods of forest adjacent communities, inclusion of local people and civil society, improved forest management and conservation of biodiversity, and the implementation of national forest regulations at local levels, and how it can forge collaboration between authorities and local rights-holders, increased awareness of the potential benefits of laws and rights, and the application of forest laws and regulations at local/site level. The Program strives to maximise exploitation levels of agreed legal offtake of forest products for the benefit of local people, identify economic activities that do not affect the environment and the natural resources negatively with a focus on natural resource based and sustainable activities and support local people with skills training and technical knowledge to maximise their benefits. The Program will strengthen local civil society's ability to be the driving force and main change agent in the forest management process. It will demonstrate its applicability and related benefits, influence government policies and funding, create public awareness on the mutual benefits of sustainable utilization and stabilisation of national forests, and facilitate the networking and joint advocacy efforts of civil society organisations. While implementation takes place at the national level, lessons learned sharing at the Program level will be central and will inform and improve the approaches at the national levels both through program learning but also from already existing knowledge and experiences in the partner countries, and elsewhere. The Program also contributes to the devolution process that takes place within the authorities in all three countries, in the sense that it attempts to strengthen the lower levels which are often underfinanced, understaffed, lack capacity and have limited access to new knowledge as appropriate channels for knowledge transfer are often lacking. The main activity areas are listed below. The concrete Main Activities of the three components are provided in the LFA matrix in Annex A, while the detailed LFA and Program Implementation Plan (PIP) for the implementation in partners' countries will be developed by each partner and approved by the PMC during the Inception Period.

Main activity areas include but will not be limited to:

- Program workshops for planning, coordination, lessons sharing and reviewing the Program. During the Inception Workshop a Terms of Reference for the Program Management Committee (PMC) and the national Program Advisory Groups (PAG) will be developed and partners' potential training needs assessed;
- Formulation of joint Program M&E and reporting system;
- Development of Program system to capture, document and analyse lessons learned;
- Formulation of joint Program Communication and Advocacy plan;

- Formulation of Strategic Plan for IGAs and other poverty reduction initiatives;
- Program workshops and coordination at national levels and adaptation of Program plans, policies and systems to this level. This includes the setting up and functioning of a national Program Advisory Group;
- Baseline studies and analysis for gender and poverty orientation in natural resource management, social profiling of program sites and establishment of forest and biodiversity indicators;
- Participatory forest management plans developed in a multi-stakeholder approach;
- Community based monitoring of biodiversity and ecosystem services²⁷;
- Activities to explicitly empower and involve women based on the gender analyses;
- Activity to address the needs and rights of indigenous and other marginalised groups, as well as youth;
- Context specific assessment and start-up of financial support for prioritised nature based inclusive livelihoods initiatives, and technical skills training ;
- Market research, business development, value chains and branding;
- Capacity assessment, technical training and constituency development of government and other stakeholders;
- Organisational strengthening and training of civil society groups;
- Capacity development of CSGs for advocacy (skills and means);
- Support to the establishment and strengthening of civil society networks;
- Capacity development of civil society to engage local government at decentralised levels;
- Engagement of partners in NGO- and other networks and with government departments at the national level;
- Engagement and lessons sharing within the BirdLife network;
- Public awareness raising and advocacy through appropriate media and other means²⁸;
- Engagement of volunteers in program related activities.

5.2 Organisational development

Based upon the thematic approach, the Program is especially expected to contribute to the Program partners' capacity to integrate forest management, improved livelihoods and a strong civil society. It will enhance the partners' ability for international collaboration and for sharing and learning by integrating site specific experiences and achievements into a greater perspective, thus contributing to a wider understanding of the thematic areas within which the Program operates. We trust that this is both mutually beneficiary for the partners involved and for BirdLife as it will help refine and develop approaches to and toolkits for participatory forest management in addition to the monitoring methodologies. There are several avenues for doing this, including the recently established BirdLife Extranet accessible to all BirdLife employees, regional and other international BirdLife meetings, involvement of regional representatives and individual partners in overseeing the implementation, and

²⁷ This refers to an approach that DOF calls Locally Based Monitoring (LBM) and to the TESSA toolkit developed by BirdLife International for ecosystem services monitoring. See Annex D for LBM guidelines and Annex O for the TESSA toolkit

²⁸ It depends on the context whether for example Theatre for Development can be applied as a useful advocacy and communication tool

coordination with BirdLife organisations that are also engaged with partners in specific projects and activities. The BirdLife partners will be exposed to new ideas and methods that may not previously have been captured and tried out nationally. DOF especially learns to better facilitate, in a more target oriented manner, the capture, documentation and analysis of lessons learned and to guide our partners in the implementation. In Denmark, the Program is expected to contribute to NGO capacity for integrating participatory forest management and livelihoods. At another level the organisational development of the civil society groups involved is a crucial activity and objective. For this purpose the program facilitates and supports activities which help strengthen the groups' identity and goal oriented visions, their ability to act independently and to interact and network with likeminded CSGs and other stakeholders, their self-confidence to act and work within their visions and missions, and to share and fight for them.

5.3 Advocacy

The Policy for Danish Support to Civil Society defines advocacy as 'a process by an individual or group, which aims to influence public policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions'. One of the main objectives of BirdLife, including DOF and partners, is to do exactly that in order to help ensure that goals such as people's rights to access and participatory management of natural resources receive support and public attention also as a tool to ensure the wise-use of the habitats and biodiversity and their protection. For 'green' organisations working with issues that tend to be neglected by national governments when it comes to financing and are often erroneously seen as competing with poverty reduction agendas, it is vital to reach out to decision makers, the media, civil society and the general public to remind all that sustainable economic growth is best built on and intricately linked to the sustainable use of natural resources. The Program will strategically use the partner countries' commitment to the UN Biodiversity Plan 2011-2020 and those Aichi targets which are especially relevant for our work, e.g. the target 1: 'By 2020, at the latest, people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably'.

Apart from building the strength and facilitating cooperation of Site Support Groups and other relevant CSGs, the program will strategically employ social and other media with the overall purpose to:

- a) Consultatively develop national and decentralised advocacy strategies, policy development guidance and nature safeguard strategies and action plans and use these to catalyse systemic changes through advocacy initiatives;
- b) Inform and build awareness of the national public, NGOs and other important stakeholders about the Program and the areas within which it works, especially participatory forest management, improved livelihoods and biodiversity as well as the results obtained;
- c) Inform, educate and build awareness of local communities (direct and indirect beneficiaries, including youth and children) about the Program, its goals, benefits, challenges and their own involvement;
- d) Carry out advocacy directed primarily towards duty bearers and other stakeholders with a significant role to play within the Forest Sector;

- e) Facilitate local CSGs' access to and use of media for networking and advocacy;
- f) Facilitate local beneficiaries' access to markets and other means of economic gains;
- g) Strengthen BirdLife partners' communication approaches
- h) Share lessons and experiences and influence change processes

A plan for the Program's communication and advocacy goals, approaches and activities will be drafted between partners during the Inception period and further developed throughout the first phase. As most of the activities will be implemented in the individual countries, the Program Advocacy and Communication plan will be translated into the local context and the planned results achieved through different approaches based on country contexts and what is practically applicable at local levels.

5.4 Synergy effects in the Program

As already described above, the Program is expected to contribute to synergy between BirdLife and partners in situations where more partners are supporting and cooperating with the same national BirdLife partner as is the case with all partners in this Program. Though the focus is on the Forest Sector, its regulations, policies, departments and staff, the Program will strive to integrate other sectors where appropriate and create coherence between policy areas which are all important to the Program, for example the social sector, agriculture and micro-finance. The country poverty reduction and gender strategies are, for example, an important reference frame for the Program's take on the implementation of participatory forest management. It will also aim to create synergy among those organisations, and others, who work within similar thematic areas, at least in the sense that partners participate and/or help establish networks and other formal and informal channels for coordination and sharing of best practices. This is a deliberate aim of the Program efforts to create national networks of Site Support Groups and other CSGs to join forces in advocacy on shared interests and selected topics.

5.5 Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

A drafted guideline has been developed for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)²⁹ based on both a quantitative and a qualitative approach, including the use of Most Significant Changes (MSC). We will have a discussion among partners on the value added by adapting current theories of change³⁰ and their reflection on how change occurs and on processes, and apply a change theory and outcome mapping approach accordingly. The M&E and reporting system for the Program will be finally drafted by all partners during the Inception Workshop, based on donor criteria, best practices and partners' lessons learned. A formal external Mid-Term Review will serve as a basis for adjustments to the Program and provide inputs to the formulation of the second phase. The M&E will guide the continuous and systematic supervision of Program activities and results over time and provide the means for constantly improving and modifying it. It will also generate data and knowledge for lessons learned and will continuously involve women and men in local communities and other stakeholders in reflecting on the Program's successes and challenges and in contributing with their own inputs, visions and ideas. M&E will also serve as a tool for learning and communicating results and issues related to implementation at the national levels between partners. Finally it will address the needs at the Program level though

²⁹ Annex I

³⁰ See, for example, Danida Evaluation News: *What is new in the Evaluation Department?*, 2014

implementation and daily monitoring carried out by the individual partner. The draft M&E guidelines will thus be developed as a joint approach between partners and applied at all levels of the Program. The Program reporting will follow the CISU reporting system and requirements supplemented with quarterly reporting to DOF. This reporting is expected to report not only on measurable progress but also and especially on significant changes, results and challenges and to involve the beneficiaries in delivering the case stories and own assessment of how and if the Program contributes to positive changes in their localities and for themselves. In the Inception period the detailed plan for Program implementation will also be developed and finalised.

5.6 Other key approaches

The Program will strive to engage volunteers both in Denmark and in the partner countries. Since most members are concerned with birds and many are ornithologists with profound knowledge of and interests in birds it is envisaged that these will be invited to visit the Program sites and contribute with e.g. monitoring of birds, teaching of local people in bird watching and other activities which are not within the Program's budget but would contribute to the members' involvement and feeling of ownership. It could also provide potentially important knowledge to both local people and the Program and help quality assess biodiversity data. Another opportunity which has not yet been explored is to liaise with DOF Travel to arrange travels for Danish bird watchers to the Program sites. Finally and when the program has started DOF will explore whether it is feasible to offer one or more Danish students the opportunity to carry out anthropological or biological research for their master thesis within the Program with the goal to both, benefit their own research and contribute to learning processes of the Program.

6 Cross-cutting concerns

DOF and partners will strengthen our commitment to address and integrate gender, and – where relevant - indigenous peoples' rights in the program and strive to produce 'best practices'. Likewise inclusion of marginalised and needy people and groups is an important overall cross cutting issue as well as a target in itself³¹. The Program outputs and country level activities and monitoring will reflect this. Activities will be based on thorough context-related studies that connect gender, indigenous and marginalised groups with the main objectives of the program. Likewise the Program will ensure that all activities are carried out within the framework of bird and biodiversity protection, the environment, and climate changes.

6.1 Relevant cross-cutting concerns

Gender and Equality

Almost all UN member states, including the countries in which DOF works, have committed themselves to promoting gender equality and women's rights but gender continues to be a contentious issue. According to the UNDP Gender Inequality Index (2013) that reflects women's disadvantages in reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market the partner countries fare rather poorly:

³¹ Taking note of the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, the MDGs and Danida's poverty oriented focus

Kenya ranks as 147, Uganda as 161, and Nepal as 145³². Violence against women is also rampant. Current statistics indicate that, for example, one in five Kenyan women has experienced one form of the many forms of violence representing a significant increase since 2003. Likewise, according to Amnesty International, violence against women is pervasive in most parts of Uganda and is widely accepted as justified by 'traditional values'. Danida's revised *Strategic Framework for Gender Equality, Rights and Diversity in Danish Development Cooperation* (2014) has increased the focus on gender³³ equality and empowerment of women within a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA). Progress on gender equality and women's rights is 'a goal in itself but also... a critical factor in achieving poverty reduction and sustainable development'. DOF's gender policy is in line herewith, and rights and equality informs our program's approach to gender. Much of the inequality is due to structural courses that the Program cannot efficiently address. It will concentrate on those aspects of gender equality where we believe that we can have an impact and can contribute to change. We will concentrate on building knowledge about the role that women and men play in natural resource management, household livelihoods, decision making processes and civil society; building capacity of partners and stakeholders, including local women to address and work for enhanced gender equality; supporting empowerment of women, individually and in groups to participate in decision making processes at all levels; supporting involvement of both women and men in all program activities; and increasing women's capacity for and involvement in advocacy. Gender will be systematically monitored on the basis of indicators. Specific activities will be developed to support and empower women, and training of staff and important stakeholders provided as needed. These activities are expected to produce at least four results: X number of activities target women, gender is a cross cutting issue all through the Program, partners and stakeholders have capacity to work for gender equality, and women know their rights and have capacity and resources to realise them.

Equality as a cross cutting issue not only refers to gender but also to groups and households in the Program sites which are especially in need of support and consideration because of poverty, family situation (e.g. widows), age or other forms of marginalisation. The socio-economic profiling of the Program sites to be carried out during the Inception period will provide data and knowledge that will help the Program develop activities and strategies for the involvement and benefits of these groups and people. As with gender activities they will be planned in such a way that they best address inclusion and do not affect marginalised and poor people negatively.

Indigenous peoples

Indigenous peoples are addressed in several Danida documents, most specifically in *Danida's Strategy for Danish Support to Indigenous Peoples*, last reviewed in 2012. Indigenous groups are present in some of the Program localities, e.g. the Batwa in Echuya in Uganda. Where relevant, the Program will have a specific focus on indigenous peoples' rights and their special relationship to and knowledge about the forest. It will build the partners' capacity to employ Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) in their interaction with indigenous groups. A social assessment of the indigenous groups will inform concrete activities to support these groups based on DOF's policy on indigenous peoples. The overall goal is that indigenous groups have capacity to realise their specific rights within the framework of the

³² As a comparison: Denmark is ranked as 5 on the GII

³³ Understood as a 'cultural and social construct' that refers to both women and men and their relations

Program and participate fully in its benefits, are recognized by other stakeholders as having specific customary rights and identity and are respected on an equal footing; participate fully in program benefits; are adequately represented in stakeholder consultations, trainings etc.; have access to capacity building for advocacy, networking, organisational and technical skills; can contribute with their traditional natural resource management practices and knowledge; and have resources and capacity to advocate for their role and rights in natural resource management.

Biodiversity, environment and climate

In recent years BirdLife's - and DOF's - focus on the protection of birds has been extended to encompass biodiversity more generally, in particular the mutual dependency of birds with the ecosystem in which they live. Policy processes through advocacy delivered by the Program will have systemic influence on governmental decisions and policy making for all sectors of the economy ensuring sustainability of production to meet people's daily needs. As such, while this Program targets the Forest Sector, the methodology and approach promote sustainable land management with cross cutting environmental and climatic impacts. Biodiversity and environment (e.g. pollution of water or water scarcity) are an important cross cutting issue as well as the conservation hereof an objective in itself. Because biodiversity conservation and local livelihoods are closely linked to ecosystem services and climate changes these will be thought into the program based on an assessment of the site specific situation. We take biodiversity not to just be limited to forest IBA but also the surrounding landscapes which are, for example, home to common birds which must continue to be common due to sustainable land use patterns catalysed by sound policies which also benefit intact forest ecosystems. Specific indicators will help monitor biodiversity, ecosystem services and livelihood activities screened against impacts on the ecosystem, climate change adaptation and resilience measures in order to mitigate conflicts between biodiversity conservation and the economic interests of local stakeholders. All of the three partner countries have signed the Convention on Biological Diversity and have formulated recent status reports on biodiversity trends and on national actions taken to achieve the 2020 Aichi Biodiversity Targets. These will be taken into account, and addressed in the partners' advocacy work.

7 Target group and partners

Three main target groups have been identified and are listed below. The BirdLife partners are described separately in 7.2

7.1 Target groups

The main target groups include:

- a. Local communities in and around selected IBAs who benefit from engagement in forest management, increased incomes, technical support and advocacy;
- b. Civil society groups which build capacity and benefit from networking with other civil society groups and improved access to authorities;
- c. Duty bearers (Government and decentralised/local authorities) and other stakeholders who are both, central actors and the main target groups for advocacy.

The wider target group also includes other civil society organisations and NGOs in the three Program countries – some of which may become strategic partners - and a greater part of the population which will benefit from advocacy, a stronger civil society, the capacity of our partners and an improved environment. It is expected that the BirdLife network will benefit from shared lessons learned and support to its strategic priorities. In Denmark it will build DOF's capacity for development cooperation and knowledge sharing between international and national projects; it will also contribute to lessons sharing, especially on participatory and sustainable forest management, among Danish NGOs and inform DOF members, and to a lesser extent the Danish population, about the Program's achievements, challenges and best practices. Last but not least DOF members, and especially INTUD, will be involved in lessons sharing and advice to the Program, foremost through the establishment of an advisory group (PAG).

a. Local communities

The main beneficiaries are women, men and children in local communities directly dependent on the local ecosystem and its services. These communities are typically remote and geographically scattered and they are rarely reached by development initiatives. For some communities living around or in protected areas their development options and access to resources and basic services is often restricted. The majority of the population in all of the Program sites is therefore poor but poverty is not evenly distributed in terms of gender, ethnic group, marital status etc. Some groups of people, e.g. the indigenous Batwa around Echuya in Uganda, or Dalit (so-called casteless people) in Reshunga in Nepal are especially vulnerable to marginalisation. The Program's focus on equity and equality will ensure inclusion with a special focus on the most needy, especially in the activities that concern income generation, saving and loan groups and other activities directly related to poverty reduction. As for the civil society groups the most vulnerable may not have the resources or may not want to be leading agents of change. But the Program will actively support the gender balanced inclusion of representatives from those groups and households, which are in danger of being excluded as well as their inclusion in participatory forest management. The identification of these and assessment of vulnerability will be part of the baseline and social profiling studies at the beginning of the Program and specific activities will be developed accordingly. Marginalisation and vulnerability is often related to other factors than economic poverty. Access and rights to vital natural resources (such as wood, water and land) and to decision making are crucial for inclusion and livelihoods and will therefore be an important focus and concern.

The following direct local beneficiaries have been identified by the South partners for the individual sites³⁴. More detailed information on the socio-economic composition of the beneficiary groups will be produced during the Inception period. In Kenya in Arabuke-Sokoke the Program will directly benefit 22,000 out of a total population of about 130,000 people in 18 sub-localities, including 51 villages bordering the forest. In Dakatcha the total number of beneficiaries is expected to be 20,000 out of 50,000 people. In Taita 50,000 will be included out of an estimated population of 300,000. In Uganda in Echuya the total population is around 109,304 of which 5,000 people will benefit directly, including 1,000 Batwa. In Kasyoha-Kitomi the total population is 197,399. The target group are mainly immigrants living in villages adjacent to the forest, the majority of whom can be classified as poor. In

Nepal in Reshunga out of a population of 24,871, around 5000 people will directly benefit. Around 1500 of these can be classified as very poor who do not have their own agricultural land and depend mostly on forest resources for their livelihoods.

b. Civil society

Local civil society groups constitute an important target group. These groups refer to a variety of community based groups and in some cases their wider networks, including saving and loan groups, women groups, groups involved in specific IGAs etc. The most important groups are the existing Site Support Groups (SSGs) in Kenya, the Local Conservation Groups (LCGs) in Uganda and the Community Forestry User Groups (CFUGs) in Nepal. The SSGs and LCGs already have well-established relationships with the partner organizations. In Nepal BCN works with FUGs in all of their projects and is in the process of establishing working relations with FUGs in Reshunga in a small project in the Partnership Intervention. Most of the groups have been long established and have received support from BirdLife partners for e.g. organizational capacity, technical skills training, democratic structures, and improved gender balancing. The Program will target these groups with the overall goal to enable them to exist and act independently of the support from our partners and their coming together in networks with a vision of influencing political processes at various levels. Likewise improved gender equality, education/training and acting as representatives of their communities are important areas of support.

In Kenya, Nature Kenya is working with SSGs that are independent democratically governed open memberships representing the societal wider objectives functioning as nuclei of community change in conservation and development. SSGs partner and collaborate with all like-minded government, civil society and private agencies which support their core objectives to educate, and empower local people, build capacity of other local groups and advocate for social accountability, livelihoods improvement and sustainable living. Where sites are large or wide spread, SSGs establish a federated system of governance as it is the case at the three target sites.

In Uganda the LCGs (SSGs) included are Bufundi Echuya Conservation and Livelihood Improvement Association, Muko Echuya Conservation and Development Association, Kanaba Development and Echuya Forest Conservation Association and Murora Echuya Forest Conservation and Poverty Eradication Association. The United Organization for Batwa Development in Uganda is important since it works directly with the Batwa community. Additionally, the Saving and Credit Cooperative Organisations included are Kacherere Women's Group in Kacherere parish, Kanaba Twongerumsaruro, Kagano Kweyamba Ngozi Group in Karegyere parish and Kashasha Kweyombeka Biika Oguze in Kashasha with local CDGs such as African International Christian Ministries, Kigezi Health Care Foundation, and Uplift the Rural Poor necessary for synergy development. Additionally, there are Nine CFM groups (SSGs) in Kayoha-Kitomi which are all potential CSGs, with which NatureUganda will work.

The concept of community forestry has evolved in Nepal to ensure that forest resources remain sustainable and are available for the benefit of local people. Local forest users organized as Community Forest User Groups through household membership form an institution with a constitution and a 5

year operational plan. The District Forest hands over the management authority of the area of forest it has been using to the user group through approval of the constitution and the operational plan. Household members of the user groups will have access to the resources of the community forest as per the rules and regulations set by the user group. The members will also elect the 11 member governing body as an executive committee of the CFUG. FUGs operate community forestry activities related to the protection, production and distribution of forest products. They have emerged as new institutions in the community to carry out activities for the protection and sustainable management of forest resources. FUG members participate in decision-making processes and have been implementing community forestry activities to fulfil their basic needs. They also generate funds for various community development activities.

c. Government and authorities

Our partners have already established contact and have had cooperation with the strategically most important stakeholders at Program sites. In our previous and current projects the main focus is and has been on duty bearers constituted by authorities (e.g. departments for forestry, education, tourism, planning) especially at the lower levels (village, district etc.) who have been engaged in e.g. developing management and natural resource agreement plans together with local civil society and communities, training of staff, assuring synergy with national policies etc. This approach has proven to be successful and will be continued by the Program under consideration of contextual differences. In Kenya, for example, the newly established county level governments and administration/technical officers and their local level representatives will be the focus of attention. In Uganda Nature Uganda will continue working with the Local Government at District level and Sub-County level as well as with their related administration and technical officers, and the National Forestry Authority at its relevant levels (forest patrol men, forest supervisor, plantation manager, sometimes range manager for the site; and for CFM agreements approval and policy issues the Executive Director and technical officers at central level in Kampala). In Nepal the closest cooperation will be with the various levels of the decentralized governance system (especially Village/District Development Committees). The administrative system and the main target group of the Forest Sector was presented in chapter 2.3.

7.2 Partners

Nature Kenya³⁵, the East Africa Natural History Society, is Africa's oldest science and conservation society founded in 1909 and based in Nairobi. Nature Kenya is a legally constituted membership-based NGO with a membership of over 1000. The NGO has 51 employees, comprised of 20 full-time core and 31 project contract employees. The Executive Committee members have biodiversity technical expertise, business capacity and institutional development capacity. They are volunteers and this adds support to the funded initiatives. The local Site Support Groups have a membership of some 300 volunteers. The mission of Nature Kenya is connecting nature and people for a sustainable future. In pursuing this mission, Nature Kenya works to save species, protect sites and habitats, promote ecological sustainability and empower people to support nature. Nature Kenya 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 favourable to biodiversity conservation, and promoting

³⁵ www.naturekenya.org

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 60 IBAs of global conservation importance. The SSGs are non-profit organisations and implement conservation and livelihood activities such as monitoring, advocacy, income generating activities, education and awareness, and they work with government agencies to build site conservation and development partnerships. The SSGs have demonstrated that they empower and involve women and youth in the conservation of biodiversity and natural resources. Nature Kenya has developed resource centres that deliver environmental education to youth taking advantage of SSGs' presence at focus sites and has implemented more than 30 projects in the past 5 years. These have focussed on nature conservation through participatory and sustainable management of resources, thereby integrating development and environmental concerns. Nature Kenya is audited annually by internationally recognised audit companies and reports show that Nature Kenya has systems and controls that meet international standards. DOF has worked with Nature Kenya since 2003.

Nature Uganda³⁶ is the East Africa Natural History Society in Uganda operating independently from Nature Kenya. The NGO primarily works in key biodiversity IBAs with different stakeholders ranging from local people to local governments and central government. 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. NatureUganda is a membership organisation with over 3000 registered members, the biggest membership organization in Uganda. The organisation operates four branches across Uganda in order 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 programme called Wildlife Explorers Club. The main goal of NatureUganda 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. NatureUganda is a registered NGO with 30 employees, in the secretariat in Kampala and in the field. DOF has worked with NatureUganda since 2010.

Established in 1982, Bird Conservation Nepal (BCN)³⁷ is the leading organisation in Nepal, focusing on the conservation of birds, their habitats and sites, while benefitting 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 700 plus members and employs around 20 staff. It has as its guiding principles conservation of birds, their habitats and biodiversity, people's participation in conservation and benefitting the people themselves, institutional learning and building national and international networks to increase effectiveness in bird and biodiversity conservation. BCN implements several projects with a number of donors, for example in cooperation with BirdLife Norway and funded by the Norwegian development agency NORAD a

³⁶ www.natureuganda.org

³⁷ www.birdlifenepal.org

project in three IBA sites with focus on sustainable management of natural resources. DOF has not yet worked with BCN but the organisation has been positively assessed by RSPB. During the Partnership Intervention we had the opportunity to meet and discuss with BCN staff and board members during a workshop and to accompany two BCN staff on a field visit to two IBAs.

The Program also plans to cooperate and coordinate with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds RSPB³⁸, the UK BirdLife Partner. RSPB was founded by volunteers in 1889. Today it has over a million members. RSPB's headquarter is based in Bedfordshire in England and it has three national and nine regional offices. RSPB works in 25 countries around the world and supports a large number of BirdLife partners, including Nature Kenya, Nature Uganda and BCN. RSPB has UK-based national country officers responsible for the three partners and countries.

As described in the Introduction BirdLife International is a large international network of 121 nature protection organisations. Many BirdLife organisations cooperate across borders, mainly in connection with assistance from the more wealthy countries to the poorer. The BirdLife members must work together for implementation with a national member or affiliate, if the national organisation has not yet acquired full membership, based on a number of criteria. BirdLife is based in England and has 6 regional offices around the world. The Program will align with BirdLife International's regional offices in Kenya and Singapore responsible for Africa and Asia respectively to ensure that the Program and BirdLife's overall strategic approaches are complementary³⁹, and in order to mutually benefit from the capacity and resources within BirdLife. This is ensured by partners' participation in the bi-annual regional partnerships meetings with the BirdLife International Africa Partnership Secretariat based in Nairobi and BirdLife International Asia Partnership Secretariat based in Singapore, and other forms of knowledge exchange and communication.

8 Information work in Denmark

DOF will continue to use its main channels of communication to members and the public, dof.dk, the scientific online magazine Pandion, the member magazine 'Fugle og natur' and meetings with members, and NGO- and green networks in Denmark. Specifically for the Program the 2% information budget will be allocated to two main activities: a) Learning exchange workshop in Denmark on participatory forestry; and 2) An audio-visual product.

1) The workshop will take place in the second half of the Program in Copenhagen with the expected participation of all four partners. It will serve three purposes:

- Sharing of lessons learned from the Program with other Danish NGOs working within the forestry sector in developing countries
- Information to the public (mainly practitioners/NGOs and scientists) and networking
- Inputs to the development of the Program's second phase

³⁸ www.rspb.org.uk

³⁹ www.birdlife.org

It is planned that up to 30 people participate in the one-day workshop. DOF will subsequently report on its outcome to our members and the BirdLife network. DOF's international Section will be responsible for planning and implementing the workshop.

2) Information activities directed at DOF members and the general public were planned in close cooperation with DOF's Communication Department. On previous and current projects the department has delivered technical advice to the production of publications, films, and the development of partner websites and use of social media. For the Program DOF plans to produce a film to be distributed on the social media, and to be freely shared with partners and target groups. The film will contribute to:

- Information to DOF members, board, staff etc. about our international development work in order to raise their interest in the international work
- Reach out to other NGOs and interested individuals, especially in connection with Program experiences with participatory forest management
- Sharing of experiences within the BirdLife network
- Reach out to local target groups and advocacy at national levels⁴⁰

It is planned to produce the film during the second half of 2014, in order for it to be shown at the workshop in Copenhagen and with communities before the first phase of the Program ends. The Communication Department will produce the film with assistance from the International Section.

9 Outputs and indicators

The Program has three components 1: Capacity of partners, 2. Participatory forest management and livelihoods and 3. Civil Society and advocacy. Each of these components is expected to deliver 2-3 outputs with a number of indicators as described below.

Component 1

Program partners have increasing capacity to strategically work with the integration of poverty reduction and nature protection

Output 1.1:

Program partners' skills, learning and knowledge sharing facilitated and enhanced

- Critical review of program process and approaches carried out at annual PMC meetings
- Partners have developed systems for M&E, reporting and planning, and sharing of lessons learned
- Partners have capacity to deliver the program as a result of training based on training needs assessment and participation in training;
- Each partner is represented by two employees at each PMC meeting

Output 1.2:

BirdLife partners increasingly engage in advocacy for local involvement in biodiversity conservation

⁴⁰ Though one of the objectives of information work in Denmark this activity will also serve as a feed back to communities and for advocacy

- Partners have Program and national advocacy and communication plan in place before end of Inception period
- Partners are nationally recognised as credible players in the conservation and development agenda as a result of adapting and implementing the advocacy and communication plan nationally
- Partners represented at regional and global BirdLife meetings
- Partners participating in relevant national networks and international fora

Output 1.3

Duty bearers' skills for participatory forest management increased through formal and informal participation in the Program

- Duty bearers have capacity and engage in participatory forest management sharing lessons locally, and nationally
- Duty bearers represented in PAG
- Training needs assessment and training
- Joint (partners and duty bearers) monitoring of Program and Program deliverables and consolidation of ideas

Component 2:

Participatory forest management contributes to improved livelihoods of poor communities, and reduce pressure on ecosystems and biodiversity

Output 2.1

Local women, men and children have enhanced skills for sustainable equitable and improved livelihoods

- Inclusive gender sensitive participation in forest management and benefit sharing as a result of strategic approach to income generating activities developed at Program level
- Local communities develop plans for nature based economic initiatives, improved livelihood conditions and market access
- Program facilitates technical skills training of women and men in local communities
- Socio-economic profiling for each program site provides data for the inclusion of the poor and marginalised
- Livelihood and conservation financing mechanisms at site level in place

Output 2.2

Women have strengthened capacity to equal participation in the Program and benefit equally with men

- Gender analysis provides knowledge on gender relations in natural resource use and management
- Women receive benefits from participatory forest management and businesses and their welfare is improved
- Women participate in training for empowerment and in meaningful fora
- Strategic plan for gender mainstreaming, benefits and activities developed
- Inclusion of women in relevant platforms and decision making processes due to capacity development and advocacy

- Women livelihood and conservation initiatives strengthened

Output 2.3

Local communities are collaboratively managing forests with government partners and share benefits and responsibilities

- Forest management plans are developed consultatively involving local communities and government stakeholders
- Local communities and other stakeholders develop and review natural resource agreements at community level and forest utilization rules are established, agreed and followed
- Agreement holders and wider local communities involved in monitoring and overseeing the implementation of the agreements
- Capacity of forest authority, local government and other stakeholders to meet their obligations enhanced

Output 2.4

Monitoring results indicate improved biodiversity and eco system services

- Indicators selected and baseline in place
- Monitoring frameworks based on indicators are in place and implemented by stakeholders ensuring locally based monitoring and reporting feeding into national monitoring platforms
- Stakeholders develop and implement system of Locally Based Monitoring
- Studies assures quality of state of site, biodiversity data and ecosystem services

Component 3:

Local civil society groups are empowered to engage in rights based advocacy and political processes

Output 3.1

Program civil society groups have capacity to act as independent democratic organisations for the benefit of their communities

- By mid of Phase I local CSGs have sustainability plans;
- CSGs show ability to represent the interests of their community
- Capacity of CSGs to independently influence change processes enhanced
- CSGs practicing good governance, with strong leadership and vibrant membership.

Output 3.2

Civil society networks engage in advocacy for participatory natural resource management and benefit sharing

- CSGs build, strengthen and participate in networks
- Networks engage in advocacy activities at national and/or local levels
- National and regional networking and engagement plans developed and operationalised

Output 3.3

Civil society is included in governmental decision making processes at decentralised levels

- CSGs/networks claim rights to influence political processes and engage with stakeholders
- CSGs and duty bearers dialogue meetings organised and supported

10 Budget

Based on DOF's current portfolio, the proposed budget for the 3 year's Program will be a total budget of DKK 15.7 million distributed over three years. Please observe that to get a better and truer picture of the DOF turnover over the last two years, the actual expenditure on the active projects during 2012 and 2013 have been used to calculate the eligible Program budget amount to be applied for, instead of using the actual instalments received. This was agreed with DOF's sparring CISU employee, Søren Asboe Jørgensen, due to the fact that the actual instalments received by DOF during 2012 and 2013 were not following the actual expenditure during those years in particular. This change is effected in the Annex J (Calculating Project Portfolio), where notes pertaining to the projected expenditures on ongoing projects are inserted. Similarly, budget notes to the Program budget are inserted in Annex B Program budget.

11 Management and organisational set-up

11.1 Organisational structure and division of responsibilities in the Danish organisation

The DOF Secretariat is headed by a Director and three departments (see Organisational chart in Annex E). These are the Conservation and Science Department⁴¹, to which the International Section belongs, the Communication Department and the Financial Department, each with a Head of Department. The International Section consists of an International Program Manager (IPM, trained as a biologist) and an International Program Officer (IPO, trained as a social anthropologist). They will share the bulk of responsibilities for the Program based on their individual experiences and competence. The IPM will be the main responsible for overall management, financial reporting together with the Head of the Financial Department, communication on managerial and financial issues with CISU and partners, supervision of the Program in Kenya and Uganda, and TA on biodiversity related issues, including methodologies, and policies. The IPO will be the main responsible for overall narrative reporting, M&E, supervision in Nepal, TA and policy and methodology development on gender, indigenous peoples, socio-cultural and community issues, etc., and information sharing in Denmark with assistance from the Communication Department. Both staff will be involved in planning and execution of annual Program workshops and meetings, communication with partners, lectures for members, quality assurance and will be contributing to the Program as a whole with both, work and expertise. The Financial Department is responsible for issuing transfer requests to CISU and overseeing receipts of bank transfers from CISU as well as disbursement of Program funds to partners, quality assurance of partners' financial reports and annual external audit reports, proper inclusion of Program accounts into the overall DOF budget and accounts, and with the IPM for the final external audit at the end of the first phase of the Program. The Communication Department will assist the International Section in strengthening the profile especially for DOF's members of the international work and facilitate the use of the website, member magazine and social media as well as provide TA to the production of a film.

⁴¹ In Danish DOF's naturfaglige afdeling (DNA)

11.2 Organisation and division of responsibilities in the actual Program

The coordination and steering of the Program and between partners was discussed and agreed during the Partnership Intervention. DOF is responsible for the entire Program to CISU, and will provide oversight and coordinate Program activities with partners and carry out supervision and monitoring at Program and country levels, as well as spearhead the cross-country lesson sharing and capacity building of partners in a mutual process of knowledge sharing, e.g. through Back to Office reports to be submitted by all DOF employees after each Program related travel⁴². DOF is also responsible for Program related information, communication and knowledge sharing in Denmark as well as for recruiting and sub-contracting external consultants that may be required during Program implementation, and will be responsible for arranging the final external audit at the end of the Program. The staff of the International Section will be responsible for being updated on new policies, guidelines etc. from CISU and Danida relevant for guiding the Program work, new methodological approaches as well as 'best practices' within the broad context of development cooperation and in particular in the field of civil society, rights, natural resource management, participatory forest management, equity, gender, and indigenous people in order to be able to share this with partners, including new reports and other important materials. The three partners in the South are responsible for implementation in their respective countries and sites, cooperation with stakeholders, achievement of results, hiring and line management of adequate staff, monitoring, financial and narrative reporting internally and to DOF as well as cross-country sharing of lessons. Additionally, the partners in the South are responsible for hiring local short-term consultants if deemed necessary and in collaboration with DOF. They are also expected to share information on relevant political and other developments in their countries, changes in their own organisations, and knowledge and data, which can be useful for other partners and the Program. DOF and the other partners will be involved at the national levels when it is considered an added value. For the coordination and joint steering of the Program a Program Management Committee (PMC) will be established consisting of two representatives from each of the four Program partner organisations meeting annually. Regional representatives from BirdLife International and RSPB will be invited to advise the PMC, which will be overall responsible for program planning, ensuring alignment between national activities and objectives and strategies, following up on and sharing of lessons learned and Terms of Reference for the Mid-term Review, assessment of training needs and the development of a joint M&E system and any other Program-level documents relevant for all four partner organisations. In order to save resources, meetings between all partners shall be limited to once a year with alternating locations starting with a Program Inception Workshop in East Africa and followed by Inception Workshops at the national levels. The annual Program Workshops, where the PMC is meeting, will also include training of the participants and, if relevant and feasible, field visits. At the national level, a Program Advisory Group (PAG) will assist the local partner in the planning, reviewing and quality checking of the interventions. A similar PAG will be established by DOF to advise the International Section. A joint system for lessons learned will be drafted during the Inception and further developed and tested throughout the first phase. For the implementation of the Program the partners will establish or use existing field offices. In Kenya the offices will be located in Marafe (Dakatcha), Gede Ruins (Arabuko-Sokoke) and Wundanyi (Taita); in Uganda in Kabale (Echuya) and later Bushenyi (Kashioha Kitomi); and in Nepal in Tamghas (Reshunga). The field offices will have one

⁴² The draft format for these reports will be finalised during the Inception period

permanent field officer and one or more field assistants. The Program Manager will be based at the head office and will be assisted by a Finance Manager, Communication Officer and other staff. The Executive Director of each of the three head offices will be the main responsible for the national implementation of the CISU Program and will report directly to the DOF Program Manager.

11.3 Administrative procedures and financial administration

Prior to the Inception period, DOF 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 South partners. Part of the latter are all the formal CISU guidelines relevant for the Program, including audit instructions, that partners sign up to.

All four Program partners must have a professional and sufficiently equipped financial administration system in place from the onset of the Program implementation, including financial management procedures, internal control measures, top-end electronic accounts system, up-to-date bookkeeping documented by vouchers, segregated accounts duties between minimum two employees, and 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.

Accounting and auditing will be in full compliance with the CISU guidelines. DOF 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 lines 'Global' (in the Budget and financing plan) will be the responsibility of DOF including at external audit level. This also goes for the budget line 'Not planned' at the onset of implementation, but as decisions of expenditure of these funds is between all four partners through the PMC, funds might be selected, approved and documented in minutes of meetings by the PMC for activities in one or more of the partner countries. Such a decision has to be followed by an addendum to any existing contract(s) and feature in the revised partners budget(s) if it involves transfers of the agreed funds to partner(s). This will also feature in the external annual audits.

DOF 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 is responsible, shall be processed following payment requests on a quarterly basis based on quarterly financial reports and cash budgets prepared and submitted by partners to DOF. Each partner will have a fixed budget for the entire Program period, which has to feature in both quarterly financial reports and payment requests. As per the CISU guidelines, the grant disbursements have to 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 have to feature clearly for audit purposes, and be credited and reimbursed to CISU upon Program finalisation.

Each South partner is obliged to allocate the CISU funds to the Program activities according to the program document, budget, detailed LFA and the annual work plans.

The annual audits of the Program accounts will be conducted following the fiscal year January-December. Each of the South partners is obliged, in agreement with DOF, to contract a registered

external audit company to carry out the formal annual financial and performance audits of their program accounts according to international accounting standards (IFAC/INTOSAI), CISU guidelines and the audit instructions given by DOF's external audit company. When the draft annual audit report is approved by the DOF Head of Finance, each South partner shall provide one signed soft and two signed hard copies of the annual external audits every year by end of March the subsequent year. Every year an annual external audit will be conducted by DOF's external audit company regarding the total annual program expenditures as per South partners' financial reports to DOF, their cash in bank status, DOF's bank transfers to South partners' bank accounts as well as DOF's own spending, time sheets etc.

By the end of the 3-year Program a full audit of Program accounts will be conducted by DOF's external audit company, based on the annual audit reports supplied by the local external audit companies through the South partners, their final accounts, including accrued bank interests and net exchange rate gains, lists of fixed assets etc. as well as DOF's bank transfers to South partners' bank accounts and DOF's own spending, time sheets etc. for all three years.

12 Assumptions and risks

12.1 Assumptions

It is assumed that all partners will continue as BirdLife partners and be committed to the Program and its joint goals. There is no reason to believe otherwise. Though the Program approach is new and thus has some aspect of experimentation in it is nevertheless assumed that the implementation at national levels will be fully integrated into the Program concept and contribute to the expected results and that the Program will succeed in establishing a lessons learned system which will allow partners to actually benefit from each other's experiences and knowledge. Finally it is assumed that the national governments and local authorities will welcome and support the Program and that there will not be major changes in national forest laws nor in the regulations and opportunities for participatory forest management.

12.2 Risks

The Program has been developed based on lessons learned and alliances from previous projects, except in Nepal, and our partners' long experiences of implementing projects based on similar approaches. This should minimize the risk of overall failures of the Program and its approaches. The major but - within the duration of the Program - limited risks are political instability in all of the three countries which may affect Program sites and/or partners, natural disasters and changes in forest regulations that may affect the way we plan to work. See Annex P for country specific assumptions and risks.



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