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EVALUATION

Mid-Term Performance Evaluation of the Hariyo Ban Project

March 2015

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AUTHORITY

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PREPARED BY

The Evaluation Team:
Teri Allendorf, Evaluation Team Leader
Madhav Karki, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Specialist
Keshav Raj Kanel, Forestry and NRM Specialist
Bijay Kumar Singh, Rural Development and Livelihoods
and
Payton Deeks, Home Office Project Manager

Cover photo: Jum Dada Jhapri Community Forestry Group discussing the Hariyo Ban Program with Dr. Keshav Kanel.

Cover photo credit: Teri Allendorf/ECODIT.

ECODIT LLC
1600 Wilson Blvd., Suite 1220
Arlington, VA 22209
USA
Tel: +1 703 841 1883
Fax: +1 703 841 1885
Web: www.ecodit.com

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ACRONYMS

ACAP	Annapurna Conservation Area Project
AEPC	Appropriate Energy Promotion Centre
BIA	Biodiversity important areas
BZMC	Buffer Zone Management Council
BZCF	Buffer Zone Community Forest
BZCFUG	Buffer Zone Community Forestry User Group
BZUC	Buffer Zone User's Committee
CAC	Community Awareness Centre
CAMC	Conservation Area Management Committee
CAPA	Community Adaptation Plan of Action
CAPI	Climate adaptation planning and implementation
CARE	A US-based NGO, whose name originally stood for "Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe," later "Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere" and now the name is used in its own right rather than as an acronym.
CBA	Community-based adaptation
CBAPU	Community-Based Anti-Poaching Unit
CBNRM	Community-based natural resource management
CBO	Community-based organizations
CC	Climate change
CCA	Climate change adaptation
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CFCC	Community Forest Coordination Committee
CFOP	Community Forestry Operation Plan
CFUG	Community Forest User Groups
CHAL	Chitwan-Annapurna Landscape
CLAC	Community Learning and Action Center
COR	Contracting Officer Representative
CSO	Civil society organization
DFID	Department for International Development, the United Kingdom's overseas development body
DFO	District Forest Officer
DFRS	Department of Forest Research and Survey
DG	Director General
DNPWC	Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation
DoF	Department of Forests
DPR	Department of Plant Resources
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
DSCO	District Soil Conservation Office
DSCWM	Department of Soil Conservation and Watershed Management
DWIDP	Department of Water Induced Disaster Prevention
EbA	Ecosystem-based Adaptation (a project funded by GoN, UNDP, UNEP, and IUCN)
EFLGP	Environment friendly local government planning
EMMP	Environment Mitigation Monitoring Plan
ERPD	Emission Reductions Program Document
ERPIN	The Emissions Reduction Project Idea Note
FECOFUN	Federation of Community Forest User Groups Nepal
FGD	Focus group discussion

GCC	Global Climate Change
GESI	Gender equality and social inclusion
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GLA	Government of Nepal line agency
GO	Government organization
GoN	Government of Nepal
GPS	Global Positioning System
HB	Hariyo Ban
HO	Home Office
IGA	Income-generating activity
IOF	Institute of Forestry
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
Kamaiya	Bonded laborers
KII	Key informant interview
LAPA	Local Adaptation Plan of Action
LDO	Local Development Officer
LDRMP	Local Disaster Risk Management Plan
LFP	Livelihood and Forestry Program
LOE	Level of effort
LRP	Local resource person
MMHPP	Madya-Marsyangdi Hydro-Power Project
MoAC	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives
MoE	Ministry of Environment
MoFALD	Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development
MoFSC	Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation
MoLD	Ministry of Local Development
MoSTE	Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSFP	Multi-Stakeholder Forestry Programme
NAPA	National Adaptation Plan of Action
NCCSP	National Climate Change Support Project
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NRM	Natural resource management
NTFP	Non-timber forest products
NTNC	National Trust for Nature Conservation
PA	Protected area
PAF	Poverty Alleviation Fund
PES	Payments for Environmental (Ecosystem) Services
PGA	Participatory Governance Assessment
PHPA	Public Hearing and Public Auditing
PMP	Performance Management Plans
PSC	Program Steering Committee
PWBR	Participatory Well-Being Ranking
RCDC	Rural Community Development Centre
RDWSF	Rural Drinking Water Support Fund
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation
REDD+	REDD plus conservation, the sustainable management of forests, and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks

REPLACE	Restoring the Environment through Prosperity, Livelihoods, and Conserving Ecosystems
SAGUN	Strengthened Actions for Governance in Utilization of Natural Resources, a USAID-funded project implemented by CARE
SMF	Sustainable forest management
SOW	Statement of Work
TAL	Terai Arc Landscape
UCPV	Underlying causes of poverty and vulnerability
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	US Agency for International Development
USG	US Government
VDC	Village Development Committee
VIA	Vulnerability Impact Assessment
WOO	Window of Opportunity, a special provision of HB designed to fund innovative activities through the government or NGOs to complement the core programs of HB
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

This report is a mid-term performance evaluation of USAID/Nepal's Hariyo Ban (HB) project. HB is USAID/Nepal's flagship project under the natural resources management and climate change sector. It is a five-year project with a total budget just over USD 29.9 million that began in August 2011. The overall goal of HB is to reduce adverse impacts of climate change and threats to biodiversity in Nepal. The HB project is implemented in two nationally important biodiverse landscapes: Chitwan-Annapurna Landscape (CHAL) and Terai Arc Landscape (TAL). HB is implemented by the World Wildlife Fund, along with CARE, National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), and Federation of Community Forestry Users Nepal (FECOFUN).

The purpose of this mid-term evaluation was to:

- examine how effective the project strategies and approaches have been in addressing the natural resources management (NRM) and climate change issues and achieving the project goals and objectives;
- identify what needs to change in the project for the remaining period until August 2016; and
- provide inputs to the upcoming NRM Global Climate Change (GCC) project, which is under design at the moment.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

This evaluation addressed six questions:

1. Which Hariyo Ban (HB) strategies or approaches currently underway need more time to reach a successful outcome, and which could be replicated or expanded in the future based on their success to date?
2. How effective have the project's partnerships with the Government of Nepal (GoN) and local communities been in terms of implementing activities and delivering results?
3. What synergies or challenges can be observed due to the combination of multiple high-level objectives (biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, and climate adaptation) within a single project?
4. Does evidence exist that the project's approach to integration led to improved outcomes?
5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the project's unique approach to climate adaptation planning and implementation (CAPI)[1] at the community level, as opposed to the higher-level Local Adaptation Plan of Action (LAPA) process implemented elsewhere?
6. What key gaps and challenges remain in terms of accomplishing the stated objectives of Hariyo Ban?

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The team, composed of one US-based consultant and three Nepali consultants, worked over seven weeks to undertake the evaluation, including six weeks in Nepal. The team's data collection methodology included the following:

- Desktop review of secondary data including HB project documents and progress reports, Government of Nepal (GoN) documents, and related scientific and technical reports and data

[1] Please note that the use of CAPI seems to be erroneous as the generally accepted term is Community Adaptation Plan of Action (CAPA).

prepared by donors and implementing partners in Nepal to understand and assess implementation progress towards HB project objectives.

- Semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs) with relevant stakeholders, GoN officials, and implementing partners. With input from USAID/Nepal and the Hariyo Ban core team, the team identified and prioritized a list of key informants.
- Focus group discussions (FGDs) with community leaders, beneficiary groups, women's groups such as cooperatives, community-based organizations (CBOs), and field level project staff. FGDs were conducted using a standardized checklist-based questionnaire. FGD participants were drawn from districts and sites in which HB activities are being implemented, with primary focus on the clusters, corridors, sites and districts where most activities have occurred to date.
- Site visits and field observations were conducted in 14 districts and utilized a structured data collection protocol to observe how HB activities operate on the ground and to understand and assess key constraints and challenges as well as opportunities during the course of implementation.

FINDINGS

Progress in the three HB objectives is generally good, particularly at the site and output levels. The community-based activities, such as biodiversity conservation and NRM groups' capacity building, are showing good progress. The activities for meeting different objectives are generally integrated as they are mutually compatible and the funding streams allow for flexibility in meeting community and site-based needs. The weakest objective is 2 because it is working on a yet-to-be-defined framework and largely relies on policy success with Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD+) and payment for ecosystem services (PES) mechanisms, although the community-based activities, such as awareness-raising, improved cook stoves, biogas, and income-generating activities (IGAs) for the poor, are successful.

Partnerships with GoN have been difficult because HB is funded through non-government organizations (NGOs) with little to no direct support for the government, and took some time to establish the program level partnerships with the central government. Also, although government representatives participated in the original design and development of the program with USAID, this did not ensure ownership of the program by the GoN due to various reasons including weak communication strategy of the HB with the GoN partners. The higher-level coordinating mechanism with HB's counterpart, the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation (MoFSC), through the Steering Committee and Working Groups seems generally to be functional. At regional and district levels, the coordination mechanism is unclear, patchy, and based on personal rapport and relationships. Only in the Western Development Region, where CHAL is located, are the HB activities relatively well coordinated. At the cluster and site levels, the partnership and collaboration is generally working—although more clear and effective in TAL than in CHAL—but needs more coordination and integration.

Partnerships with communities and CBOs are generally good and build on a long history of work with Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) and Buffer Zone User's Committees (BZUCs) by all the partners. In some cases, CFUGs are starting to network to achieve multiple objectives.

Synergies are occurring, particularly between Objectives 1 and 3, which lend themselves fairly naturally to integration. At the site level, many synergies are seen. One of the resounding successes is the creation, strengthening, and expansion of savings and credit cooperatives, especially by women members of a CFUG that has an impressive buildup of capital for extending soft interest loans to members. This, in fact, is one resource that can help continue livelihood activities.

The HB consortium partners are producing better outputs and outcomes because of complementing expertise and capacity of the partners. The synergies can be seen both among the partners in terms of sharing knowledge and tools, and at the ground level, in terms of more integrated activities and

collaboration with communities. However, the transaction costs required of such partnerships are easy to underestimate, as it appears they were in HB, especially at the beginning of the program. A program with four diverse partners and other multiple NGOs, CBOs, and GoN partners requires a tremendous amount of coordination, convening capacity, and management skills, which must be balanced with progress on the ground. Joint planning, monitoring, and reflective learning at all levels can ensure more synergy and complementarities.

Experience of partners played a key role in HB success. However, partners may be overconfident in their experience. For example, some components are not as integrated as they might have if the partners weren't basically carrying on "business-as-usual" activities with some tweaks.

CAPAs are a good complement to LAPAs, providing a community-based set of vulnerabilities and adaptation activities focused on most vulnerable community groups and forest/biodiversity sites. The large number of CAPAs in both TAL and CHAL is considered as an opportunity to develop integrated and implementable LAPAs in future, especially in TAL.

PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REMAINDER OF HB

Over the next 20 months, we recommend the following for HB:

- Learn lessons from integrated sites that are showing synergies to ensure their sustainability after HB (e.g., policy for climate change adaptation [CCAs] and CFUG networking).
- Either phase out "patchy" sites—those that are less integrated and successful—or work to bring them the full package of activities (e.g., re-do or support governance activities, strengthen or re-run CLACs, ensure appropriate technical backstopping).
- Develop a clear strategy for strengthening and/or reframing the water basin approach by focusing resources and activities at sites that have potential to show how water basin approach can work (e.g., focus on strong and workable PES sites).
- Use CAPAs as a bottom-up planning tool to prepare LAPAs, and mainstream both into Village Development Committee (VDC) plans using the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MoFALD) framework of environment friendly local government planning (EFLGP).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMS

Incorporate lessons from appropriate previous experiences and projects. We could not find evidence of lessons being learned and applied to the design and implementation of CHAL based on TAL's experiences. From the USAID side, this is particularly surprising as USAID had invested in TAL through the Global Conservation Partnership for 10 years. We did see lessons from the SAGUN (Strengthened Actions for Governance in Utilization of Natural Resources) project being incorporated.

Have a clear strategy for choosing activities and sites. Selection of activities and sites should be clearly linked to program outcomes. The benefits of a few good models should be weighed against trying out a variety of activities at many sites. If the project chooses to initially spread itself over many sites and activities at the beginning of the project, they should be explicit about the purpose and dangers of spreading resources thin and the consequences for activity/site success. The program should also have a programmatic strategy and framework for how to develop integrated activities that can be models for future activities and sustainable over time. For example, HB spread itself thin in CHAL. However, now some strategizing and investment of resources into certain sites might bring them to fruition and provide models that can be a legacy, such as watershed management and PES opportunities.

Make sure the right experts are involved. A complex and integrated program with multiple objectives requires multidisciplinary inputs and interdisciplinary management. It is surprising that there is

no watershed expert, preferably with experience in payments for ecosystem services, in HB. We are aware that an infrastructure expert was recently brought on as infrastructure emerges even more clearly as a threat to the landscape. However, river basins, watersheds, and catchments were explicit operational units of HB from the outset, yet there were no water management experts with relevant knowledge involved in the project. Make sure the right expertise even exists at the field level to provide appropriate technical backstopping for specific activities, from seedling choice to water control.

Focus on scaling up community-based organizations (CBOs), especially Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs), which are the intervention point of both TAL and CHAL, and also for watershed user groups where appropriate. The creation of policies and mechanisms to facilitate CBOs to formally network to reach multiple objectives is the next generation of landscape conservation.

Invest more resources in building community capacity to run their own projects from the ground-up. Local people should be trained and hired as the project "experts" in biodiversity, wildlife, ecology, public health, appropriate technology, and so forth, either by projects or by the CBO networks themselves. In the buffer zone around Chitwan, for example, local people have the capacity to be doing most of the HB activities if training was available. For example, the conservation area management committees (CAMC) and BZMC (buffer zone management committees) could have their own staff to manage many activities and work in collaboration with national NGOs and government staff.

Get the relationship right with the government from the beginning. Decisions made at the central levels need to be transmitted to the regional and district levels, so that GoN staff at the lower levels will have incentives to own the program and coordinate their regular activities with those of HB. Future programs should be aligned with the GoN's priorities and engage with GoN's planning process at the local level to the extent possible. Ultimately, it is the successful implementation of activities in the field that will ensure the sustainability of programs.

नेपाली हरियो वन कार्यक्रमको मध्यवधि मूल्याँकन प्रतिवेदन
कार्यकारी सक्षेप

परिचय

यो प्रतिवेदन यूएसएआइडी नेपालको सहयोगमा संचालित हरियो वन आयोजनाको मध्यावधि मूल्याँकनको कार्यसम्पादन हो । हरियो वन आयोजना यूएसएआईडी नेपालको प्राकृतिक श्रोत व्यवस्थापन र जलवायु परिवर्तन अनुकुलन क्षेत्रको एक महत्वपूर्ण आयोजना हो । लगभग ३० मिलियन अमेरिकन डलर लागतको यो पाँच वर्षीय आयोजना २०११ अगस्तमा शुरु भएको हो । यस आयोजनाको मुख्य उद्देश्य नेपालमा जलवायु परिवर्तनको नकारात्मक प्रभाव र जैविक विविधताको खतरालाई न्यूनीकरण गर्ने रहेको छ । यो (हरियो वन) आयोजना राष्ट्रिय दृष्टिकोणले महत्वपूर्ण दुईवटा भूपरिधि भित्रमा कार्यान्वयन गरिएको छ : चितवन-अन्नपूर्ण भूपरिधि र तराई भूपरिधि । यो आयोजना लाई विश्व वन्यजन्तु कोष, केयर नेपाल, राष्ट्रिय प्रकृति संरक्षण कोष र सामुदायिक वन उपभोक्ता महासंघले संयुक्त रुपमा संचालन गरेका छन् ।

यस मध्यावधि मूल्याँकनको उद्देश्यहरु यी रहेका छन् :

- आयोजनाका रणनीति र कार्यनीतिहरुले प्राकृतिक श्रोत व्यवस्थापन र जलवायु परिवर्तनका सवालहरुलाई कति प्रभावकारी रुपले सम्वोधन गरी रहेका छन् र आयोजनाले लिएका उद्देश्यहरु प्राप्त गरी रहेका छन् भन्ने विषयको जाँच गर्ने ।
- आयोजनाको वाँकी अवधि अगस्त २०१६ सम्म के के कस्ता कुराहरु परिवर्तन गर्नु पर्दछ भन्ने विषय पहिचान गर्ने, र
- हाल तयार हुन लागेको प्राकृतिक श्रोत व्यवस्थापन तथा विश्वव्यापी जलवायु परिवर्तन सम्वन्धित आयोजनाको लागि सुझावहरु दिने ।

मूल्याँकनका प्रश्नहरु

यस मूल्याँकनले सम्वोधन गरेका ६ वटा प्रश्नहरु निम्नलिखित हुन् ।

१. सफल उपलब्धिहरु, जसलाई भविष्यमा अन्य क्षेत्रमा पुनः दोहऱ्याउन सकिन्छ वा ठूलो क्षेत्रमा संचालन गर्न सकिन्छ, प्राप्त गर्न हरियो वनको कुन रणनीति र कार्यनीतिहरु अहिले वढी समय लिई रहेका छन् ?
२. आयोजनाका क्रियाकलापहरु संचालन गर्न र नतीजा दिन नेपाल सरकार र स्थानीय समुदायहरुसंगको साझेदारी कति प्रभावकारी छ ?
३. एउटै आयोजना उच्च स्तरीय वहुउद्देश्यहरु (जैविक विविधता, जलवायु परिवर्तन न्यूनीकरण र जलवायु अनुकुलन) संयोजन गर्न मा केकस्ता अन्तरवल वा synergy र चुनौतीहरु देखिएका छन् ?
४.के आयोजनाको एकीकृत कार्यनीतिले सुधारिएको उपलब्धि प्राप्त गरेको उदाहरणहरु देखिएका छन् ?
५. आयोजनाको समुदाय स्तरमा जलवायु अनुकुलन योजना तर्जुमा र कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अनुपम कार्यनीतिका के फाइदा र वेफाइदाहरु देखिएका छन् खासगरी जहाँ स्थानीय स्तरको जलवायु अनुकुलन योजनाहरु कार्यान्वयन भएका छन ?

६. हरियो वनको उद्देश्यहरु प्राप्त गर्न के के अन्तराल (Gaps) र चुनौतीहरु रहेका छन् ?

मूल्याँकन विधि

यस मूल्याँकन टोलीमा एक जना अमेरिकन र ३ जना नेपाली विशेषज्ञ परामर्शदाताहरु रहेका छन् जसले ६ सप्ताह नेपालमा गरी जम्मा ७ सप्ताह मूल्याँकन सम्वन्धी काम गरेको थियो । टोलीको तथ्याँक र जानकारी संकलन विधि यस प्रकार रहेको थियो ।

- **दोश्रो श्रोतवाट प्राप्त भएको जानकारीको पुनरावलोकन**: यसमा हरियो वन आयोजनाको दस्तावेजहरु, प्रगति प्रतिवेदनहरु, नेपाल सरकारका दस्तावेजहरु र अन्य सम्वन्धित वैज्ञानिक र प्राविधिक प्रतिवेदन र तथ्याँकहरु रहेका छन् । यी प्रतिवेदनहरु आपसी समझदारी वुझाउन र संचालन भएका कार्यक्रमहरु अनुगमन र मूल्याँकन गर्न दाताहरु र कार्यसंचालन गर्ने साझेदार संस्थाहरुले तयार पारेका थिए ।
- **खास जानकारी दिने व्यक्तिहरुको लागि अर्ध-खुला भएको प्रश्नावली**: यसमा सम्वन्धित सरोकारवालाहरु, सरकारी पदाधिकारीहरु र कार्यसंचालन गर्ने साझेदारहरुसंग अर्ध-खुला भएको प्रश्नावली अनुसार अन्तरवार्ता गरिएको थियो । यूएसएआइडी नेपाल र हरियो वनको मुख्य टोलीसंग छलफल गरी खास जानकारी दिने व्यक्तिहरुको पहिचान र प्राथमिकीकरण गरेको थियो ।
- **समूह केन्द्रीत छलफल**: समुदायका नेताहरु, लाभान्वित समूहहरु, महिला समूहहरु जस्तै सहकारीहरु, समुदायामा आधारित संस्थाहरु, र स्थलगत कर्मचारीहरुसंग समूह केन्द्रित छलफल गरिएको थियो । यो छलफल एक निश्चित (स्टैन्डर्ड) चेकलिष्टमा निहित प्रश्नावलीहरुको को आधारमा गरिएको थियो । यी समूह केन्द्रीत छलफलहरुका लागि सहभागीहरु जिल्ला र क्षेत्रहरुको कार्यक्रमको गतिविधी संचालन भएको आधारमा गरिएको थियो । यसमा खास गरी क्लष्टर, कोरिडोरहरु, स्थलगत स्थानहरु र जिल्लाहरुको आधारमा छलफल गर्ने स्थान छनौट गरिएको थियो ।
- **स्थलगत भ्रमण र अवलोकन** : यस मूल्याँकन टोलीका सदस्यहरुले १४ वटा जिलाको भ्रमण गरेका थिए । स्टैन्डर्ड चेकलिष्ट र प्रश्नावलीका आधार, स्थलगत अवलोकन, र सरोकारवालाहरुसंग छलफल गरेर स्थलगत रुपमा कार्यक्रमहरु कसरी संचालन भएको छ, कार्यक्रम संचालनमा के के कठिनाई, वाधाहरु, सवालहरु, र अवसरहरु रहेका छन् भनी छलफल गरिएको थियो ।

उपलब्धिहरु (Findings)

हरियो वनको तीनवटै उद्देश्यहरु विशेषतः ठाँउ र प्रतिफल तहको प्रगति राम्रो छ । समुदायमा आधारित गतिविधीहरु जस्तै जैविक विविधताको संरक्षण र प्राकृतिक श्रोत व्यवस्थापन समूहहरुको क्षमता

विकासहरुले राम्रो प्रगति गरेको देखिएका छन् । विभिन्न उद्देश्यहरु हासिल गर्ने संचालित कार्यहरु साधारणतया एकीकृत रुपमा नै संचालन भएका छन् किनकि तिनीहरु एक आपसमा मिल्दाजुल्दा छन् एवं समूह तथा स्थान विशेषको आवश्यकता परिपूति गर्न पनि आर्थिक श्रोतको प्रवाहममा लचकता रहेको देखिन्छ । सवभन्दा कमजोर उद्देश्य २ नम्वर रहेको छ किनकि यो उद्देश्य अझै परिभाषित नभएको ढाँचा अन्तरगत काम गरि रहेको छ र धेरैहद सम्म वन विनाश एवं वनको क्षयीकरण कम गरी कार्वन उत्सर्जन कटौती गर्ने र "वातावरण सेवाको भुक्तानी" जस्ता नीतिगत सफलतामा भर पर्दछ । तापनि समुदायमा आधारित क्रियाकलापहरु जस्तै सचेतना जगाउने, सुधारिएको चुलो, गोबरग्यास एवं गरीव तथा सीमान्तकृत वर्गहरु को लागि आयआर्जनका कार्यक्रमहरु सफल नै छन् ।

हरियो वन आयोजना र नेपाल सरकार वीच साझेदारी अलि कठिन जस्तै छ किनकि यो परियोजनाले गैर सरकारी संस्था मार्फत आर्थिक श्रोत परिचालन गरेको छ र नेपाल सरकारका निकायहरुलाई धेरैथोरै प्रत्यक्ष सहयोग गरेको छ । नेपाल सरकारसंग कार्यक्रमका हिसावले साझेदारी स्थापना गर्न पनि केही समय लाग्यो । साथै शुरुमा योजना तर्जुमा गर्दा र कार्यक्रम तयार गर्दा सरकारी निकायका प्रतिनिधिहरुको सहभागिता भए पनि, यतिले मात्रै यो कार्यक्रमलाई नेपाल सरकारको स्वामित्वमा शुनिश्चितता भएको देखिएन । यस्तो हुनुमा धेरै कारणहरु हुन सक्दछन् जसमध्ये हरियो वन परियोजनाका नेपाल सरकारका साझेदारहरुसंगको कमजोर संचार रणनीति पनि पर्दछ । हरियो वन परियोजना र वन तथा भूसंरक्षण मन्त्रालयका प्रतिनिधीहरु रहेका निर्देशन समिति र कार्यगत समूह जस्ता माथिल्लो तहको संयोजन गर्ने प्रक्रियाहरु क्रियाशील रहेका छन् । क्षेत्रीय र ज्लिला तहमा संयोजन प्रक्रिया स्पष्ट छैन । व्यक्तिगत सहजीकरण र सम्वन्धको आधारमा आशिंक वा छिटफूट (Patchy) सफलताप्राप्त भएको देखिन्छ । पश्चिमान्चल विकास क्षेत्रमा मात्र चितवन-अन्नपूर्ण भूपरिधिको कार्यक्रमहरु तुलनात्मक रुपमा राम्रो संयोजन भएको पाइयो । क्लष्टर र स्थान विशेष तहको कुरागर्दा साझेदारी र सहभागिताले सामान्यतया काम गरि रहेको पाइयो र अझ चितवन-अन्नपूर्ण भूपरिधि भन्दा तराई भूपरिधिमा यो प्रक्रिया वढी प्रभावकारी रहेको देखिन्छ तर दुवैमा समन्वय र एकीकृत कार्यहरु अझ वढाउनु पर्ने देखिन्छ ।

सवै साझेदारहरुले धेरै समयदेखि सामुदायिक वन उपभोक्ता समूहहरु तथा मध्यवर्ती क्षेत्रका उपभोक्ता समितिहरु संगै काम गरेको लामो इतिहास भएकोले स्थानीय समितिहरु र समुदायमा आधारित संस्थाहरुसंगको साझेदारी सामान्यतया राम्रो देखिन्छ । केही स्थानहरुमा त सामुदायिक वन उपभोक्ता समूहहरुले आफै मिलि वहउुदेश्यहरु हासिल गर्ने संजाल वनाउने काम थालनी गरेका छन् ।

उद्देश्य नम्वर १ र ३ वीच विशेषतः वढी अन्तरवल तथा अन्तरउर्जा (Synergy) प्राप्त भएको देखिन्छ किनकि यी दुई उद्देश्यहरु वीच प्राकृतिक रुपले तथा स्वभावले राम्ररी एकीकृतीकरण हुन्छन् । ठाँउ विशेषमा त अझ धेरै सिनर्जीहरु देखिन्छन् । धेरै राम्रो सफलताहरु मध्ये सबभन्दा राम्रो सफलता त सामुदायिक वन उपभोक्ता समहहरु विशेषतः महिला सदस्यहरुले वनाएको, सुदृढ पारेको वा विस्तार गरेका वचत तथा ऋण सहकारीहरु नै छन् । यसले गर्दा गाँउ स्तरमा धेरै पूँजीको विस्तार भएको छ र सदस्यहरुलाई कम व्याजमा ऋण लगानी भएको छ ।

हरियो वन परियोजनाका समान लक्ष्यका लागि सहकार्य गर्ने साझेदारहरुले आ-आफनो विशेषज्ञता र क्षमता उपयोग गरेर एक आर्काको परिपूरकको रुपमा काम राम्रो उपलब्धि र नजीता निकालेका छन् । यस्तो सिनर्जी साझेदारहरुको वीचमै पनि देखिन्छ जस्तै ज्ञान र कार्यगत औजार एक आपसमा आदान

प्रदान गर्ने र स्थलगत स्तरमा समुदायसंग मिली एकीकृत कार्यहरुमा सहभागी भै काम गर्ने । तर साझेदारहरु वीचका यस्ता सहकार्य गर्दा लाग्ने कारोवार खर्च कम महत्व दिनु सजिलै हुन्छ जस्तै हरियो वन आयोजनाले पनि आयोजनाको शुरु गर्दा यस्तो देखिएको थियो । चारवटा फरक साझेदारहरुले अझ धेरै गैर सरकारी संस्थाहरु, समुदायमा आधारित संस्थाहरु तथा नेपाल सरकारका अन्य साझेदारहरु संगै कार्यक्रम संचालन गर्दा धेरै समय, प्रयास त समन्वय वैठक संचालन क्षमता र व्यवस्थापन क्षमता सम्वन्धी शीपमा लगानी गर्नु पर्ने हुन्छ र यसो गर्दा गर्दै स्थलगत तहमा पनि काम गर्ने व्यवस्था मिलाउनु पर्ने हुन्छ। सवै तहमा संयुक्त योजना वनाउने, मूल्याँकन गर्ने, विगतका गतिविधीवाट पाठ सिक्ने कार्यहरुले सिनर्जी र परिपूरकताको सुनिश्चितता गर्दछ ।

साझेदारहरुको अनुभवले हरियो वनको सफल हुनमा मुख्य भूमिका खेल्दछ । तथापि साझेदारहरु आ-आफनो अनुभव प्रति अति वढी आत्मविश्वासी हुने डर पनि छ । उदाहरणको रुपमा केही कार्यहरु अझै पनि थोरै परिवर्तन गरेर सनातनी रुपमा संचालन भएका देखिन्छन् र त्यसता कार्यहरुका विचका अंगहरु विच एकीकृत भएको देखिदैन ।

समुदायमा आधारित अनुकुलन योजनाहरु स्थानीय अनुकुलन योजनाको लागि परिपूरक रहेका छन् । समुदायमा आधारित अनुकुलन योजनाहरु वढी जोखिम समुदायहरु र जैविक विविधता क्षेत्रमा केन्द्रित छन् र यस्ता योजनाहरु समुदायले पहिल्याएका जोखिम क्षेत्रहरु र अनुकुलन कार्यहरुसंग समवन्धित पनि छन् । चितवन अन्नपूर्ण भूपरिधि र तराई भूपरिधि दुबैमा समुदायमा आधारित अनुकुलन योजनाहरुको निर्माणले एकीकृत रुपमा संचालन गर्न उपयुक्त स्थानीय अनुकुलन योजना तयार विशेषतः तराई भूपरिधीमा ठूलो अवसर मिल्ने देखिन्छ ।

हरियो वनको वाँकी अवधिको लागि प्राथमिक सिफारिशहरु

हरियो वनको वाँकी रहेको २० महिनाको लागि तपसीलका सिफारिश गएिको छ :

- हरियो वन परियोजना पछि दिगोपना कायम गर्न सिनर्जी देखिएका एकीकृत स्थानहरु (Sites) वाट पाठ सिक्ने (उदाहरणको रुपमा जलवायु परिवर्तन अनुकुलन सम्वन्धी नीति र सामुदायिक वन उपभोक्ता समूहहरु वीच संजाल गठन) र वढावा दिने ।
- यस्ता आशिंक रुपमा सफल भएका ठाँउहरु जहाँका कार्यहरु कमै एकीकृत र सफल भएका देखिन्छन् त्यस्ता ठाँउहरुमा काम नगर्ने । अथवा त्यस्ता ठाँउहरुमा पूरा प्याकेज (Package) मै एकीकृत रुपमा काम गर्ने (उदाहरणको रुपमा फेरी गर्ने वा सुशासनका कार्यहरुलाई सहयोग गर्ने, क्लाक (CLAC) हरुलाई सुदृढीकरण वा पुनः संचालन गर्ने, उपयुक्त प्राविधिक सहयोगको सुनिश्चितता गर्ने) ।
- ती ठाँउहरु जहाँवाट नदी तटीय क्षेत्र (Basin) सम्वन्धी कार्यनीति संचालन गर्न संभाव्य देखिन्छ त्यस्ता ठाँउहरुमै श्रोत र गतिविधीहरु केन्द्रीत गर्ने । यसरी नदी तटीय क्षेत्र (Basin) सम्वन्धी कार्यनीति हुदै रणनीति विकास गर्ने ।

- स्थानीय अनुकुलन योजना तयार गर्न समुदायमा आधारित अनुकुलन योजनालाई तल्लो तहको योजना वनाउने औजारको रुपमा प्रयोग गर्ने र यसलाई गाँउ विकास समितिको योजनाको मूलप्रवाहमा समावेश गर्ने । संघीय मामला तथा स्थानीय विकास मन्त्रालयले तयार गरेको वातावरण मैत्री स्थानीय शासन खाका (प्रारुप) लाई प्रयोग गर्ने ।

भविष्यको कार्यक्रमका लागि सिफारिशहरु

साविकका उपयुक्त अनुभवहरु र आयोजनाहरुको सिकाईलाई समावेश गर्ने : तराई भूपरिधिको अनुभवहरुवाट प्राप्त सिकाईहरुलाई चितवन-अन्नपूर्ण भूपरिधिको डिजाइन र कार्यान्वयनमा उपयोग गरेको खास प्रमाणहरु हामीले भेटाउन सकेनौ । यूएसएआइडी को तर्फवाट पनि तराई भूपरिधिमा लगानी भएको १० वर्षको Global Conservation साझेदारी कार्य अन्तरगत लगानी भएता पनि यसवाट प्राप्त सिकाईहरुका प्राप्त उपयोग नभएको देख्दा आश्चर्य लाग्यो । यति हुँदा हुदै पनि यूएसएआइडी को सगुन (Strengthened Actions for Governance Utilization of Natural Resources - SAGUN) को चाहि सिकाई भएको पायौ ।

फिल्डका कार्यहरु र ठाँउहरुको छनौटमा स्पष्ट रणनीति हुनु पर्ने : कार्यक्रमका उपलब्धिहरु संग छानिएका कार्यहरु र ठाँउहरु वीच स्पष्ट सम्वन्ध हुनु पर्दछ । केही राम्रा मोडेलहरुवाट प्राप्त हुने फायदाहरु र धेरै ठाँउमा छरिएर गरिने कार्यहरु विच छनौट हुनु पर्ने देखिन्छ । यदि परियोजनाले आफना कामहरु पहिले नै धेरै ठाँउहरुमा छरेर गर्ने हो भने वहाँहरुले यस्तो उद्देश्य र खतरावाट छरिने श्रोत र यसैसंग सम्वन्धी कार्य/स्थानहरुको सफलता वारे प्रष्ट हुनु जरुरी छ । एकीकृत कार्यहरु विकासका निम्ति भविष्यमा संचालन गरिने कार्यहरु र दिगोपन हुने मोडेलहरु कसरी विकास गर्न सकिन्छ भन्नेवारे यो परियोजनाले आफनै कार्यक्रम रणनीति र खाका वनाउनु पर्ने हुन्छ । उदाहरणको लागि चितवन-अन्नपूर्ण भूपरिधिका कार्यक्रमहरु छरिएका छन् । तापनि अहिले केही निश्चित ठाँउहरुमा केही रणनीतिक कार्यहरु र श्रोतको लगानी गरेमा उपलब्धि प्राप्त गर्न सकिन्छ र केही मोडेलहरु उपलब्ध हुन सक्दछन् । यस्ता मोडेलहरुले भविष्यमा केही छाप पनि छोड्न सक्दछन् जस्तै जलाधार व्यवस्थापन तथा वातावरण सेवाको भुक्तानी जस्ता कार्यक्रमहरु ।

संलग्न हुने उपयुक्त विज्ञको सुनिश्चितता गर्ने : वहुउद्देश्यहरुको साथै जटिल एवं एकीकृत कार्यक्रम संचालन गर्न वहु-विषयगत विधा र अन्तर विषयगत व्यवस्थापनको आवश्यकता पर्दछ । हरियो वन परियोजना अझैसम्म पनि कुनै जलाधार विज्ञ (अझ त्यसमा पनि पारिस्थितिकीय सेवाको भुक्तानी सम्वन्धी ज्ञान भएको)का व्यवस्था नहुन लाग्छ । हामीहरुलाई हालै एकजना भौतिक संरचना सम्वन्धी विज्ञ लिइएको पनि जरुरी नै लागेको छ किनकि भौतिक संरचनाको निर्माणले भूपरिधिको संरक्षणमा अझ वढी जोखिम ल्याउने प्रष्ट छ । नदी तटीय क्षेत्र, जलाधार र पानीको वहाव क्षेत्रहरु त शुरु देखि नै हरियो वनको स्पष्टत: कार्यक्षेत्र भित्रै पर्दछ । तैपनि यो परियोजनामा उपयुक्त ज्ञान भएको पानी व्यवस्थापन विज्ञ पनि संलग्न भएको पाइएन । फिल्ड तहमा पनि खास कार्यहरु जस्तै विरुवाको छनौट देखि पानी नियन्त्रण गर्ने काममा सहयोग गर्न उपयुक्त प्राविधिक विज्ञको उपलब्धता हुनु पर्दछ ।

समुदायमा आधारित संस्थाहरुको कार्य माथिल्लो तहमा वढाउनमा ध्यान दिने : विशेषत: सामुदायिक वन उपभोक्ता समूहहरु जुन दुवै चितवन-अन्नपूर्ण भूपरिधि र तराई भूपरिधि क्षेत्रमा काम गर्दा प्रवेश द्वार

जस्तै छन् र उपयुक्तताको आधारमा जलाधार उपभोक्ता समूहहरु पनि । समुदायमा आधारित संस्थाहरु औपचारिक रुपल् आफै संजालमा वाधिन सहयोग पुरयाउने नीति तथा प्रक्रिया निर्माण गर्ने कार्यले अर्को पुस्ताको भूपरिधि संरक्षण कार्यलाई सघाउ पुरयाउने छ ।

तलैदेखि आफना परियोजना संचालन गर्न समुदायको क्षमता वढाउन धेरै श्रोत लगानी गर्नु पर्ने : परियोजनाहरुले वा समुदायमा आधारित संस्थाको आफनै संजालले स्थानीय जनताहरुलाई तालीम दिनु पर्दछ र तिनीहरुलाई नै जैविक संरक्षण, वन्यजन्तु संरक्षण, पारिस्थितिकीय प्रणाली, जनस्वस्थ्य, उपयुक्त प्रविधि तथा यस्तै अन्य कार्यहरुमा परियोजनाका "विज्ञ को रुपमा नियुक्ति गर्नु पर्दछ । चितवन राष्ट्रिय निकुन्जको मध्यवर्ती क्षेत्रमा, उदाहरणको रुपमा, स्थानीय व्यक्तिहरुले उपयुक्त तालीम प्राप्त गरेका हरियो वन सम्वन्धी धेरैजसो कार्यहरु आफै गर्ने सक्ने क्षमतावान छन् । उदाहरणको रुपमा संरक्षण क्षेत्र व्यवस्थापन समितिहरु र मध्यवर्ती क्षेत्र व्यवस्थापन समितिहरुले आफनो कर्मचारीहरु राखी धेरै कार्यहरुको व्यवस्थापन गर्न सक्दछन् र उनीहरुले राष्ट्रिय गैर सरकारी संस्था र सरकारी कर्मचारीहरु संग सहकार्य गर्न पनि सक्दछन् ।

शुरु देखि नै सरकारसंगको सम्वन्ध राम्रो वनाउने : केन्द्रीय तहमा भएका निर्णयहरु क्षेत्रीय र जिल्ला स्तरमा संचार हुनु पर्ने देखिन्छ । यस्तो भएमा तल्लो तहमा काम गर्ने कर्मचारीहरुलाई कार्यक्रम प्रति अपनत्व हुने उत्प्रेरणा प्राप्त हुन्छ र हरियो वनका कार्यहरुसंग आफना नियमित कार्यहरु गर्न र समन्वय गर्न सजिलो हुन्छ । भविष्यका कार्यक्रमहरु नेपाल सरकारका प्राथमिकतासंग मेलखाने हुनु पर्दछ । साथै नेपाल सरकारको तल्लो तहवाटै शुरु हुने योजना तर्जुमा पद्धतिसंग सकभर मिल्ने गरी वनाइनु पर्दछ । अन्त्यमा कार्यस्थलमा सफलतापूर्ण संचालन हुने कार्यहरुले नै कार्यक्रमको दिगोपना ल्याउदछ ।

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

This report is a mid-term performance evaluation of USAID/Nepal's Hariyo Ban (HB) project. HB is USAID Nepal's flagship project under the natural resources management and climate change sector and has been active since August 2011. The results of this evaluation will be used by USAID to inform any necessary changes to improve HB implementation as well as the design of a new NRM project.

HB is in its third year of implementation. As HB is a complex project with multiple stakeholders with a large scope, a significant amount of time during the first year was devoted to developing project strategies, developing common understanding among partners and stakeholders, and conducting several studies to inform the project planning. The actual implementation in the field mainly started towards the later part of the first year and has since gained significant momentum in the field-level implementation. The purpose of this evaluation is thus to 1) examine how effective the project's strategies and approaches have been in addressing the NRM and climate change issues and achieving the project goals and objectives, and 2) to identify what needs to change in the project for the remaining period (until August 2016).

Another important purpose of this evaluation is to provide inputs to the upcoming NRM GCC project, which is under design at the moment. The evaluation findings and recommendations will be directly applicable to this new project. The evaluation will answer the questions outlined below.

This evaluation covers the period since the project inception to date.

The main user of the evaluation findings and recommendations will be the USAID/Nepal Mission, particularly the Environment Team as well as the implementing partners (WWF, CARE, NTNC, FECOFUN, and their sub-grantees). The development community that is working in the area of biodiversity, sustainable landscapes, and climate change will also benefit from this evaluation. USAID/Nepal will use the findings and recommendations to make changes to HB in collaboration with its implementing partners and also share lessons learned with other stakeholders. Furthermore, the evaluation will be used to inform the ongoing design for an NRM GCC project.

The full Statement of Work can be found in Annex A.

1.2 EVALUATION QUESTIONS

This evaluation addressed six evaluation questions:

1. Which Hariyo Ban (HB) strategies or approaches currently underway need more time to reach a successful outcome, and which could be replicated or expanded in the future based on their success to date?
2. How effective have the project's partnerships with the Government of Nepal (GoN) and local communities been in terms of implementing activities and delivering results?
3. What synergies or challenges can be observed due to the combination of multiple high-level objectives (biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, and climate adaptation) within a single project?
4. Does evidence exist that the project's approach to integration led to improved outcomes?

5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the project's unique approach to climate adaptation planning and implementation (CAPI)[2] at the community level, as opposed to the higher-level Local Adaptation Plan of Action (LAPA) process implemented elsewhere?
6. What key gaps and challenges remain in terms of accomplishing the stated objectives of Hariyo Ban?

The Evaluation Team's approach to these questions (and sub-questions developed) can be found in the Final Evaluation Plan (Annex B).

[2] Please note that the use of CAPI seems to be erroneous as the generally accepted term is Community Adaptation Plan of Action (CAPA).

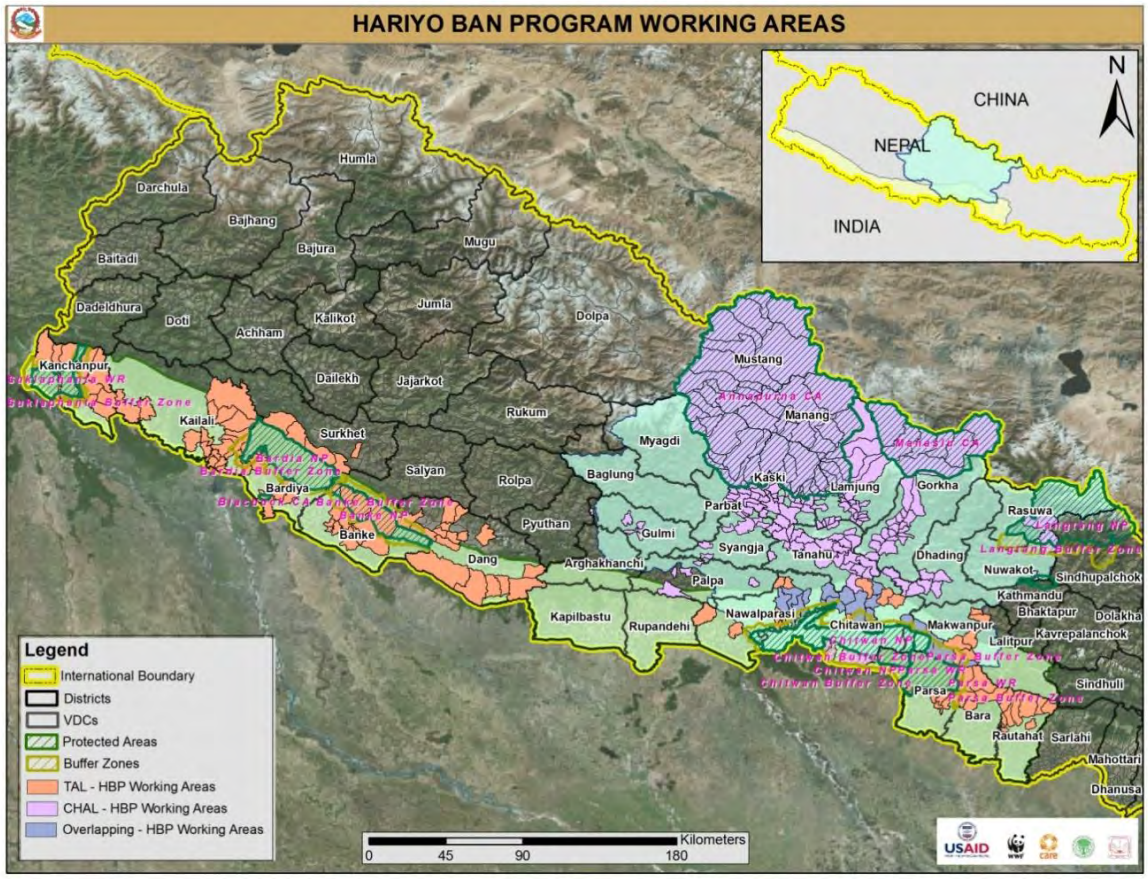
2. PROJECT BACKGROUND

Hariyo Ban (HB), Cooperative Agreement No. AID-367-A-11-00003, is a five-year project with a total budget just over USD 29.9 million that began in August 2011. The overall goal of HB is to reduce adverse impacts of climate change and threats to biodiversity in Nepal. Over the five- year period, the project focuses on the following objectives:

1. Reduce threats to biodiversity in target landscapes.
2. Build the structures, capacity and operations necessary for effective sustainable landscape management, with a focus on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) readiness.
3. Increase the ability of targeted human and ecological communities to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change.

The project area includes two major landscapes in Nepal, namely, the Chitwan-Annapurna Landscape (CHAL) and Terai Arc Landscape (TAL). A map of the project area can be found in Exhibit 1.

Exhibit 1. Map of Hariyo Ban Working Area



2.1 INTERMEDIATE RESULTS

In order to achieve the project goal and objectives, the HB project has three main components:

Biodiversity Conservation
(IR 1: Biodiversity conserved)

The Biodiversity Conservation Component focuses on reducing threats to species and ecosystems at landscape level. The focal species include tiger, rhino, elephant, grey wolf, snow leopard, gharial, musk deer, red panda, swamp deer, giant hornbill, dolphin, etc. The program will adopt a threats-based approach to biodiversity conservation. The landscape conservation approach will continue to link protected areas through biological corridors to meet the ecological requirements of focal species. Provision for land and water corridors, sound river basin management, and climate refugia will be incorporated into landscape conservation design, and strategies developed to facilitate species movement, hydrological flows, and continuation of other ecosystem functions.

Sustainable Landscapes—REDD+ Readiness
(IR 2: Greenhouse Gas [GHG] emissions reduced and sequestration enhanced)

Deforestation and forest degradation are the major sources of GHG emission in Nepal. REDD+ presents an opportunity to address the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation through sustainable landscape management, at the same time enhancing the wellbeing of forest-dependent communities including minority and socially excluded groups. During the initial years, this program supported development of national policies for REDD+ Readiness, initiating capacity building on GHG emission monitoring, identifying and addressing drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in both CHAL and TAL, and initiating a feasibility study of payments for environmental services (PES) in both landscapes.

Climate Change Adaptation
(IR 3: Capacity to adapt to adverse impacts of climate change improved)

Climate change poses one of the greatest threats to sustainable development in Nepal, as climate hazards are increasingly posing adverse impacts on vulnerable human as well as ecological communities. Human vulnerability to climate change is linked with poverty rates, reliance on rain-fed agriculture, lack of basic services, and limited livelihoods alternatives as well as gender inequality and social exclusion. Climate change is projected to reduce the livelihoods assets of vulnerable people, especially those who are dependent on biodiversity and ecosystem services (access to food, water, and shelter), as well as increasing disasters.

Hariyo Ban will enable better understanding of the nature of adaptation priorities for people and ecosystems; develop processes for community-led adaptation that are rooted in local institutions and linked with ecosystem services; identify equitable, inclusive, and cost-effective actions for integrated adaptation approaches; and explore how best to link with bottom-up and top-down adaptation efforts in Nepal.

2.2 PROJECT AREA

The HB project is implemented in two nationally important biodiverse landscapes: Chitwan-Annapurna Landscape (CHAL) and Terai Arc Landscape (TAL). The two landscapes cover 29 districts and intersect at Chitwan, Makwanpur, Palpa, and Nawalparasi districts. The Hariyo Ban Program has local-level activities in 23 districts (11 in TAL and 15 in CHAL, with Chitwan, Nawalparasi, and Makwanpur as common overlapping districts). By third year, Hariyo Ban was working in 211 VDCs (CHAL-88; TAL-123), and five Municipalities (CHAL-1; TAL-4).

2.3 IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

Four partner organizations—WWF, as the prime awardee, with CARE, NTNC, and FECOFUN as sub-grantees—comprise the HB Partnership. The roles and responsibilities of each partner is listed in Exhibit

2 below. Each organization has their primary responsibilities, but due to the integrated nature of Hariyo Ban program, they will provide inputs to all components.

Exhibit 2. HB Partner Roles and Responsibilities

Hariyo Ban Partner	Role
World Wildlife Fund-US (WWF)	Prime awardee Technical leadership Program management and reporting, grant management, and monitoring & evaluation Natural resource, biodiversity conservation, and ecosystem-related activities Lead on biodiversity and sustainable landscape components
CARE	Lead on climate change adaptation component
National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC)	Protected area and buffer zone management
Federation of Community Forestry Users Nepal (FECOFUN)	Mobilizes participation of Community Forest User Groups (CFUG) Issues-based advocacy and governance

3. EVALUATION METHODS & LIMITATIONS

3.1 EVALUATION METHODS

In order to conduct the mid-term performance evaluation of HB, ECODIT assembled a team of knowledgeable, experienced, and accomplished Nepalese and American forestry and environment experts who are well versed with the latest conditions of the NRM sector in Nepal. The team completed the evaluation within a nine-week timeframe, using methods that ensured gender and social dimensions were considered and emphasized. The methodology included a rapid review of project literature and team mobilization to: 1) prepare the evaluation itinerary (Task 1); 2) collect data through site visits, key informant interviews (KIIs), and focus group discussions (FGDs). These data were analyzed and used to complete the first draft of the Evaluation Report (Task 2) and 3) complete the Final Evaluation Report and share findings, conclusions, and recommendations based on the inputs from USAID as well as the listening sessions conducted by the team (see Annex E for summary of listening session feedback).

As outlined in the Statement of Work (see Annex A), the evaluation addressed six questions to determine the relevance and effectiveness of project approaches and partnership arrangements to date. These questions and specifics for addressing them are detailed in Annex C, with specific questions for KIIs and FGDs developed for each evaluation sub-question. In general terms, the team approached the evaluation of the questions as outlined Exhibit 3.

Exhibit 3. ECODIT Team's General Approach to Evaluation Questions

Data Needed	Project approaches, outputs, outcomes, and impacts. Government documents and data. Opinions and perceptions of stakeholders.
Data Collection Methods and Tools	Desktop reviews of secondary data, KIIs, FGDs, site visits, field observation used pre-structured document review, data collection, interview and agenda protocols.
Data Sources	Primary: Information collected during KIIs and FGDs with community beneficiaries, stakeholders, project staff, USAID/Nepal officers, GoN officials, and during site visits and field observations. Secondary: Reports, policies, agreements, documents, workshop summaries, quarterly and annual project reports; project PMP, including baseline data; GoN reports; statistical and financial data; GIS data; forest inventory data; actions, decrees, meeting minutes, by-laws of CFUG and NRM groups; media reports.
Methods of Analysis	When collecting information from individuals and groups, the team used a triangulation strategy to increase the validity of responses. The team used standardized protocols to facilitate the triangulation strategy and the quantitative analysis of data. Project achievements against goals were analyzed. Data disaggregates included gender, ethnic group, and district, to the extent possible.
Geographic Scope	The team visited 14 districts to conduct the evaluation (two more than originally planned). These sites represent a geographic diversity (Far Western, Midwestern, and Western regions) as well as landscape diversity (CHAL and TAL). The districts are: Kaski, Lamjung, Tanahu, Gorkha, Chitwan, Makwanpur, Nawalparasi, Bara, Rautahat, Dang, Banke, Bardiya, Kailali, and Kanchanpur.

Our data collection methodology included:

- Desktop review of secondary data, including HB project documents and progress reports, GoN documents, and related scientific and technical reports and data prepared by donors and implementing partners in Nepal to understand and assess implementation progress towards HB project objectives. A document review and data collection protocol was utilized that allowed for quantitative and objective analysis as much as possible given the limited time of the evaluation work.
- Semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs) with relevant stakeholders, GoN officials, and implementing partners, using a standardized KII protocol (Annex C) and a modified KII for government stakeholders (Annex C). With input from USAID/Nepal and the Hariyo Ban core team, we identified and prioritized a list of key informants (Annex D). Interviews were used to understand attitudes and impressions on HB processes and performance and more specifically on its partnership mechanisms of both HB partners and the GoN officials and field staff involved in the partnerships. This helped explain project and partnership successes and/or shortcomings, and identify specific models for improvement and scaling up in the future.
- Focus group discussions (FGDs) with community leaders, beneficiary groups, women's groups (such as cooperatives), CBOs, and field-level project staff. FGDs were conducted using a standardized checklist-based questionnaire. The aim was to explore unanticipated or less-apparent issues, and provide context for largely qualitative and insightful analyses and understanding (Annex C). FGD participants were drawn from districts and sites in which HB activities are being implemented, with primary focus on the clusters, corridors, sites, and districts where most activities have occurred to date.
- Site visits and field observations were conducted in 14 districts (itinerary and site summaries located in Annex C) and utilized a structured data collection protocol to observe how HB activities operate on the ground and to understand and assess key constraints and challenges as well as opportunities during the course of implementation.

Our data analysis methodology, as mentioned above, included project and knowledge product review, interviews, and site observation protocols to enable quantitative and qualitative analysis of findings. This approach allowed the team to compare and ascertain trends based on factors such as gender or social/ethnic group/caste. It also allowed for an examination of geographic trends as well as an identification of emerging themes.

3.2 EVALUATION LIMITATIONS

The Evaluation Team faced a number of limitations in carrying out the evaluation, especially as its purposes are manifold, from recommending improvement in the remaining project period to providing inputs to the upcoming NRM GCC project design. The first limitation was the six-week field visit during which the team had to cover two large landscapes spread across almost 37 percent of Nepal's geographic area. The team observed sample activities in 12 out of the 15 districts in which HB has focused its activities. The second limitation was the collection of quantitative data that required a systematically drawn sample survey of project beneficiaries. HB is a complex project involving four implementing partners and a host of partners belonging to government organizations (GOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), academic institutions, and private sector entities at different levels. Recognizing these complexities and challenges, the team decided to collect quantitative information largely from the secondary sources and gave more stress to qualitative assessment using the standard tools of KII and FGD. The third limitation was fully comprehending the overly complicated results framework of HB, wherein three sometime contradicting objectives of biodiversity conservation (largely biological), sustainable landscape (mix of socio-political-economic, bio-physical, and environmental) and climate change adaptation (largely local, behavioral, and technical) are being attempted.

Obviously, there are trade-offs, timeframe, and other limitations involved. Given these, the team used its contextual understanding, experienced learning, and multidisciplinary skills to come up with the best analysis of the situation possible and suggest recommendations. The team reviewed project-generated outputs and initial outcome indicators but has not attempted to assess outcomes and possible impacts, as we believe that is the task of the final evaluation. However, the team acknowledges the limitations of our success in fully deciphering the multidimensional, multisectoral and multilevel challenges HB faces in implementing its activities and achieving progress.

4. FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, & RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 FINDINGS

4.1.1 FINDINGS FOR EVALUATION QUESTION 1

Evaluation Question 1: Which Hariyo Ban (HB) strategies or approaches currently underway need more time to reach a successful outcome, and which could be replicated or expanded in the future based on their success to date?

Sub-question 1.1: What strategies and approaches are currently being used by HB?

HB is a large and complex project, covering nearly 40 percent of Nepal, and consists of many different activities, from site-level activities—such as alternative energy, income generation, governance, and awareness—to national and international policy activities, such as the National Biodiversity Strategy and REDD+. The complexity of the project and landscape is reflected in the number of different ways that HB uses the terms "strategies" and "approaches." There are strategies and approaches for each objective, each of the two landscapes, each of the cross-cutting themes, and each of the key threats, drivers, and vulnerabilities.

For the purposes of this mid-term evaluation, we will primarily consider strategies and approaches in terms of the three objectives and three cross-cutting themes (Exhibit 4) and the two landscapes, CHAL and TAL. We want to note that with a project of this size and scope, capturing it in its entirety would be very difficult. Given the emphasis in the evaluation on visiting field sites and key informant interviews, the findings result primarily from what we saw in the field from a select number of sites (see Annex E for details) and from what stakeholders chose to share with us about the project.

Exhibit 4. Overall goal, objectives/strategies, and cross-cutting themes

Overall HB goal
To reduce adverse impacts of climate change and threats to biodiversity in Nepal.
Overall Objectives/Strategies
Reduce threats to biodiversity in target landscapes.
Build the structures, capacity, and operations necessary for effective sustainable landscapes management, especially reducing emissions from deforestation & forest degradation (REDD+) readiness.
Increase the ability of target human and ecological communities to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change.
Overall Cross-Cutting Themes
Livelihoods
Gender equality and social inclusion
Internal governance of natural resource management groups

Within each landscape, the strategies and approaches are as follows.

CHAL overall strategy:

Create a foundation for CHAL including formal recognition as a landscape by GoN, support for the production of an official landscape strategy, and establishment of a base on which sound and climate-smart river basin/landscape conservation and development can be built in the future.

CHAL approach:

- Increase understanding of landscape through surveys, studies and piloting.
- Select three sub-basins to work in.
- Identify and tackle key threats, drivers, and climate vulnerabilities.
- Maintain/restore north-south connectivity and promote large blocks of forest for conservation, adaptation, and REDD+.
- Promote river basin approach at multiple scales, with appropriate institutions.

TAL overall strategy:

Support the first TAL strategy, complementing and enhancing ongoing efforts; and support formulation and initial implementation of a second strategy that is climate-smart, realistic, and takes account of Nepal's rapid socio-economic-political development.

TAL approach:

- Support TAL strategy to create original assemblages of key wildlife species in their original ranges.
- Support previously underfunded corridors and selected protected areas with major focus on reducing threats/drivers.
- Promote climate-smart approaches.
- Support development of subnational REDD+ project.
- Review effectiveness of TAL through landscape studies.
- Provide inputs to development of new TAL strategy.

Sub-question 1.2: Which strategies and approaches are yielding positive results and why?

Objectives

Based on the results of field site visits and key informant interviews, there is widespread agreement within the Evaluation Team, the HB partners, and key stakeholders that biodiversity conservation (Objective 1) and climate change adaptation (Objective 3) are the most successful, whereas sustainable landscapes (Objective 2) is the weakest.

Objective 1 (biodiversity conservation) shows the most success because it is well operationalized and builds on a long history in Nepal. Two of the four HB partners, WWF and NTNC, are experienced in biodiversity conservation, and they have contributed in many ways to Nepal's history of success in biodiversity conservation. Thus, HB is contributing to an already successful, internationally recognized, community-based approach to biodiversity and forestry conservation.

Objective 3 (adaptation) is the next most successful objective. HB has taken an innovative two-fold approach to "climate-smarting," focusing on adaptation that helps to make biodiversity and ecosystems and humans and their communities more resilient to the impacts of climate change. Like Objective 1, Objective 3 also has a strong partner, CARE, which is responsible in large part for HB's success due to its expertise and experience in CCA (CARE helped develop many of the key tools used to achieve this objective) and because it worked in several of the CHAL districts prior to HB. It also has established partnerships with the government. The success of this objective is also due to the fact that communities are integrating Community Adaptation Plans of Action (CAPAs) and Local Adaptation Plans of Action (LAPAs) with local resource management plans. This integration is happening in community forests outside of protected areas and in the Annapurna Conservation Area. With increasing awareness of the impacts of climate change, communities are initiating activities to adapt to these impacts.

Objectives 1 and 3 are also successful because they complement each other well in terms of activities in the field and synergies found between them. For example, it has been relatively easy for the partners and stakeholders to integrate "climate-smarting" into biodiversity conservation and community forestry activities through CAPAs.

Objective 2 (sustainable landscapes) is less successful than the other two objectives because its success, to a great extent, relies on global and national policy formulation, changes, and agreements, such as REDD+, over which HB has limited control. On the policy side, some progress has been made in REDD+ as the Emissions Reduction Project Idea Note (ERPIN) for TAL has been developed and approved by the World Bank. However, the Emission Reductions Program Document (ERPD) has yet to be developed to really implement the REDD+ in TAL. HB has now seconded one of its staff to the REDD Cell of the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MoFSC) to help the government in the preparation of ERPD for TAL. The activities of Objective 2 that are successful at the community level overlap with activities of Objective 1 that contribute to forest conservation, such as improved cook stoves, household biogas plants, and income-generating activities.

Cross-cutting themes

Although all four partners seem to value and understand the critical importance of the three cross-cutting themes, they have had uneven progress in integrating them with program objectives and activities.

HB has been very successful in creating a process for strengthening the internal governance of natural resource management groups in both landscapes. CARE had previously developed three community-tested tools—the Participatory Governance Assessment (PGA), Participatory Well-being Ranking (PWBR), and Public Hearing and Public Auditing (PHPA)—to improve the internal governance of community forest user groups (CFUGs) and conservation area management committees (CAMCs) in the Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) and buffer zone community forests (BZCFs).These tools were developed by CARE under the USAID-funded SAGUN (Strengthened Actions for Governance in Utilization of Natural Resource) program. PWBR is also being used to identify the most vulnerable (poor and socially marginalized members of the group) households for awareness raising and livelihood interventions. However, sustained practice of governance by NRM groups will be a challenge to sustain post-HB, and FECOFUN's role in this will be critical.

Progress has been made on gender equality and social inclusion (GESI), but more at the central level than in the field. For example, NTNC has hired its first GESI person due to its involvement in HB. Although there is enormous opportunity with these partners and their experiences and resources to make progress on GESI, there seems to not yet be any quantifiable results for GESI. Some partners, particularly NTNC in the buffer zones and protected areas, do not seem to have integrated GESI to the extent that they could. We note that the GESI policy concerning protected areas is not as supportive as it is in community forestry, but the lack of supportive policy should not limit what the HB partners do in protected areas to support GESI strategies.

The least successful component in the cross-cutting theme is livelihoods. HB documents note that one reason for this lack of success is that there were fewer opportunities for green enterprises in the target areas due to lack of suitable non-timber forest products (NTFPs) and/or markets to support them. We want to highlight the difficulty of linking livelihood improvement to biodiversity conservation, as documented by the USAID-funded Biodiversity Conservation Network. In HB, many of the livelihood interventions consist of channeling revolving funds (direct payments or grants channeled through cooperatives from HB) for livestock (goat, pig, poultry) and vegetable farming. However, goat-raising can damage forests and grasslands, and, while HB supports stall feeding and fodder plantations, it is not always occurring in areas where communities are choosing to subsidize goats. It can also be difficult to establish sustainable market linkages. For example, vegetable farming is market sensitive and is not as profitable because cheaper products can be imported from India. HB also has a skill-based training component to train people in skills such as electricity, plumbing, and carpentry that will enable them to gain employment. Unfortunately, the impact of these trainings was not yet known at the time of this evaluation. All of these factors weaken the livelihood component of HB in both of the landscapes. In addition, the team found that these activities can cause tension within communities because the amount of support is too small for all

the deserving households to benefit because there is only enough money in the revolving funds for a few households.

Landscapes

In general, the biodiversity conservation objective is yielding more positive results across TAL than the other two objectives, while climate change adaptation is more successful in CHAL. Biodiversity conservation in TAL, with an approach focused on protected areas and corridors, is successful because of Nepal's long experience working in TAL, which allowed HB to quickly achieve concrete progress by supporting ongoing activities while incorporating some new, more innovative ones, such as supporting networking of CFUGs. Ecosystem restoration in terms of forests, grasslands, and wetlands in TAL is making headway and also contributing to meeting the objectives of maintaining and promoting the resiliency of the natural ecosystem. Forests and grasslands are regenerating due to grazing, fire control, and community-governed regulations. Community-based anti-poaching units (CBAPUs) have also been formed in most of the community-based forest management areas (inside and outside of protected areas and buffer zones), leading to the reduction of illegal poaching of wildlife in these areas. HB has also contributed to generating knowledge about the landscape that is contributing to the new TAL strategy.

It was also relatively easy for the partners to integrate components of Objectives 2 and 3 into the activities that were already occurring under Objective 1. One of the most vivid examples of success that the team saw was in terms of biodiversity conservation. In Kanchanpur District, a community forest (200 ha) is being managed by 530 former bonded laborers' (Kamaiya) households. This forest is becoming pristine, and endangered trees (like *Bijaya sal*) are now naturally emerging in this totally conserved forest.

Although HB is integrating Objectives 2 and 3, as well as the cross-cutting themes, into the Objective 1 approach, we caution that, to some extent, partners' prior experiences in TAL may make them overconfident about how well they are integrating certain aspects, such as adaptation, GESI, and governance, into their activities. For example, NTNC has been slow to incorporate the governance tools into their work in TAL.

CHAL is a much newer landscape and does not yet have an overall strategy for intervention. HB has contributed to establishing basic information about the landscape that can be used to develop a strategy. In general, in CHAL, the landscape concept and working framework are too broad, partners are inexperienced, coordination among the partners is weak, and different norms are used by different partners. The Evaluation Team also heard that there is a perception that HB sites are located only in accessible areas. CHAL activities are organized around river basins, and HB has chosen to work primarily in three watersheds of the Seti, Daraudi, and Marsyangdi rivers, which are each large areas. Unlike in TAL and the protected areas in CHAL, there are no policies, partnerships, or models of success in place for river basins, and it is taking some time to get activities and partnerships in place. Although a patchwork of activities have been initiated in these watersheds, as one of the HB team members said, "they are just dots of interventions which need to be linked and consolidated" in the remaining project period of HB and beyond. Many activities are just now gaining momentum, such as some of the PES activities.

Sub-question 1.3 How can successful strategies and approaches be replicated or expanded (e.g., from one district to another, within the same district)?

This is a complicated question to answer as many of the most successful strategies and approaches undertaken by HB are already replications of previous programs that were successful. For example, most of the activities being carried out under the strategies and approaches of Objective 1 are not new, but carry on work from TAL and from the protected areas in CHAL. For Objective 2, biogas and improved cook stoves are established approaches to decreasing wood use. Many of the successful activities under Objective 3 are also replications of previous approaches. For example, Community Learning and Action Centers (CLAC) were previously used by CARE, and CAPAs were first developed by the Livelihood and

Forestry Program (LFP) supported by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DfID). Other successful activities of HB that predated HB, and which HB is supporting replication of, are the sub-watershed management activities in Hadi Khola in Makwanpur District (first begun by WWF) and the broomgrass planting in Tanahu (first started by the DFO while he was posted in Palpa District).

One area that HB has instigated new activities is in "climate-smarting", or incorporating climate change, into planning. One new activity is "climate-smarting" protected area management plans. Protected area management plans are now being required to incorporate a chapter on climate change. The Manaslu Protected Area recently completed (with HB's help) the first protected area management plan to do this.

The above activities are already in the process of replication. However, one emerging successes that could be replicated is the scaling up of CFUGs into networks, such as the Goral Conservation Area and the Gyaneshwor forest. This approach would need to be driven by the communities themselves, but would be more quickly replicated with support from HB, which could identify potential sites and raise awareness and capacity of groups. One example of a site that is almost at this stage but would benefit from support from HB is the Namuna Community Forest (and the associated Vulture Restaurant). This CFUG is informally networking with a handful of nearby community forests. For example, they are sharing wetland and grassland management strategies and have negotiated a group rate with local resorts for use of their community forests for tourism as one group. An example of a group of CFUGs that is in the earlier stages of networking (at this point, they have annual meetings together) but that might benefit from coordinating activities is the 30 CFUGs in the Jum Dada Jhapri CFUG, Tanahu District, area.

Sub-question 1.4: Which strategies and approaches are proving less successful to date and what modifications/interventions can be introduced to accelerate their progress?

Objective 2's success relies very heavily on creating REDD+ policies, which are not within the control of the partners. REDD+ is the weakest activity in IR 2. Although HB has contributed greatly to moving REDD+ forward, especially in the international context, national progress is slow.

Although HB may not be able to make much progress on Objective 2 in terms of REDD+, PES schemes have potential. Progress on PES schemes has been slow, and the activities in this area are diverse and exploratory, but there is potential if activities were more targeted and some functional small-scale models could be established. For example, Hadikhola in Makwanpur, although not an example of PES, is a good model for upstream/downstream linkages. Experiences from smaller areas can be consolidated before bigger PES projects are taken up for implementation. PES at Phewa Tal in Pokhara also seems to have the potential to be established within the life of HB. However, it may be challenging to show success during the life of HB for some of the PES activities. For example, good progress is being made in the Marhyangdi area with communities and government. However, it is unclear how HB's activities can address the larger issues of the dam construction and lack of enforcement of environmental compliance.

We also suggest that more understanding among the stakeholders of why sites are chosen for HB activities would strengthen them on the ground. The process of choosing sites to work in during a given year appears somewhat ad hoc to communities and government stakeholders. The year-by-year planning at the site level contributes to this problem of people not seeing or understanding the big picture and their overall role in HB.

4.1.2 FINDINGS FOR EVALUATION QUESTION 2

Evaluation Question 2: How effective have the project's partnerships with the Government of Nepal (GoN) and local communities been in terms of implementing activities and delivering results?

The four consortium partners each brought distinct types of expertise and existing sets of relationships with GoN agencies on behalf of HB. The HB team and GoN officials interviewed felt that without these existing relationships, it would have been even more difficult to get the project activities implemented in

collaboration with GoN line agencies. However, both the GoN and HB partners agree that it took some time for HB to develop its working partnership with GoN ministries and line agencies through management structures, especially steering committee and working groups.

Sub-question 2.1: What partnerships exist between the project and the GoN and local communities?

Partnerships with government agencies

HB's partnership mechanisms with the GoN exist at different levels, from policy to implementation functions. At the top level, the partnership arrangement is through the Program Steering Committee (PSC) chaired by the Secretary, Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation (MoFSC). Members of the PSC include the Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (MoSTE); the Directors General (DGs) of the Department of Forests (DoF), the Department of Soil Conservation and Watershed Management (DSCWM), the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC), and the Department of Forest Research and Survey (DFRS); USAID officials as observers; and other partner organizations that provide overall guidance and feedback to the program. The PSC endorses an annual work plan, monitors program results, ensures program alignment with GoN policies and priorities, and promotes and facilitates synergy with other national programs and relevant sectors. These annual plans have to be approved by USAID. The PSC meets once a year.

In order to support the role of the PSC, a Working Group chaired by the Joint Secretary of Planning Division of MoFSC has been created that provides the GoN's inputs in planning, monitoring, and implementation of program activities in consultation with concerned departments, consortium partners, and other related stakeholders.

HB is currently in the process of developing a separate memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MoFALD), which is responsible for coordinating decentralized activities at the district and Village Development Committee level. HB also has formal partnership mechanisms with two GoN departments within MoFSC. HB has signed an MOU with DSCWM, and WWF and NTNC had preexisting relationships with DNPWC. Mechanisms with DoF, DFRS, and Department of Plant Resources (DPR) have not been formalized.

At the Regional Directorate level, there are separate arrangements for TAL and CHAL due to the latter landscape being largely contained within the Western Development Region (one of five in Nepal). The Regional Forest Director coordinates all the planning and monitoring activities, including that of donor-funded projects (such as Hariyo Ban, the Multi-Stakeholder Forestry Programme, and the Ecosystem-based Adaptation project) in its area of jurisdiction. On the other hand, TAL falls within four development regions and no formal mechanisms exist between TAL and their Regional Directorates. This has been compensated for by a mechanism under which a forester is deputed by the Department of Forests to coordinate program activities outside of protected areas, and also a DNPWC official is appointed to coordinate program activities with the protected areas (PAs). This mechanism was established between GoN and WWF even before HB.

At the district and PA management unit levels, a diverse range of mechanisms, from MOUs to letters of exchange/contract, are executed to operationalize the partnerships. Due to the preexisting arrangements largely created under the TAL project, partnerships with protected areas, such as Chitwan and Bardia National Parks and some districts and municipalities are well-defined and working.

HB partners have also developed partnership arrangements with different GoN agencies based on the activities being implemented. For example, CARE Nepal has an MOU with the DSCWM. Under this partnership, implementation of an integrated Sub-Watershed Management Plan for five critical sub-watersheds within Daraudi, Seti, and Marsyangi watershed areas are being carried out in Kaski, Tanahu, and Lamjung districts.

In order to increase GoN and local NGO involvement and to build further flexibility in the program implementation, a special provision called Windows of Opportunity (WOO) was designed to fund innovative activities through the government and NGOs to complement the core programs and objectives of HB. Half of the total fund that is allocated for WOO is being disbursed through NGOs, and the other half through GoN and its line agencies. WOOs have been used to improve the GoN partnership and promote innovation in project activities. The GoN WOOs have been used at the central and field levels to support government staff and projects. Many of the funds disbursed at the central level have supported senior staff to make international trips to view other relevant projects or attend conferences. At the field level, for example, HB gave a sub-award to the DFO of Tanahu District for a grant-based partnership through the WOO. The objective was to produce and plant seedlings of the endangered champ tree (*Michaelia champaca*) and broomgrass species to be planted, both in community leasehold forests and private plantations. This partnership has greatly contributed to the restoration of a critical corridor, rehabilitated shifting cultivation areas, and turned bare land dominated by invasive species into a massive broomgrass plantation area that provides not only income to poor households but also acts as source of forage for wildlife and livestock, increases biodiversity, and improves soil conservation on steep and degraded slopes.

Partnership arrangements at community level

HB's partnerships with local communities primarily occur with CFUGs and with other natural-resourced based CBOs, such as soil conservation committees, collaborative forest management committees, buffer zone management committees, conservation area management committees, leasehold forestry groups, and buffer zone community forest user groups. One common feature of HB's community-level partnerships is that they are all with natural resource-based formal CBOs.

Sub-question 2.2: What influence did partners have on activities implemented?

Government partners

HB's partnerships with GoN agencies at the district level ranges from very effective (e.g., DFO Tanahu) to less effective (e.g., District Soil Conservation Office (DSCO Gorkha). These variations can be somewhat attributed to different personalities. Some of the government staff perceive that, since the financing mechanism does not go through the government, it is not their responsibility to actively work together with HB partners. The other reason may be that a formal mechanism (such as the one that exists at the MoFSC level) has not been institutionalized at the district level.

Local communities

Community groups such as CFUGs have influenced and supported HB activities through their participation and contribution in mechanisms that HB uses to work with communities. For example, through their participation in CLAC, women and marginalized groups are able to identify their priority activities that HB then helps support. In CAPAs, communities identify and implement priority actions for adaptation.

Partnership with NGOs, academic institutions, and youth

HB partners work with different types of NGOs to implement activities on the ground through subcontracts. The Evaluation Team interacted with a number of NGOs and academic institutions both in CHAL (Pokhara and Bandipur) and TAL (Dang, Kailali, and Kanchanpur) to understand the nature of HB relationships with NGOs. The purpose of these partnerships is often either to implement the activities using community-based natural resources management (CBNRM) tools or to disseminate and share project-generated information to wider audiences. For example, NGOs (such as the Machhapuchre Development Organization in Phewa Watershed and the Community Forestry Coordination Committee in TAL) helped HB partners facilitate and implement the activities by functioning as an intermediary organization working on behalf of the particular HB partner. Academic institutions, such as the Institute of Forestry (IOF) in Pokhara have organized high-level conferences and meetings.

Sub-question 2.3: Did sites benefit from having collaboration with partners?

HB sites where multiple HB partners work together are found more likely to show positive results and outputs that contribute to multiple outcomes. This is mainly due to complementary and synergistic effects and is discussed in more detail in Evaluation Question 4 below.

Community partnerships

At each site, we found a mix of partners. Some sites had a primary HB partner implementing activities whereas others had all four partners actively working together. In general, regardless of the number of partners at a particular site, HB's partnerships with local communities are generally good and show positive results. Descriptions of a few of these partnerships follow.

Goral Conservation Area, Nawalparasi: At this site, HB's partnership is with the local NGO, Mahabharat Biodiversity Concern Society, with whom HB has a service subcontract. This relationship is a good example of a partnership between a local NGO, the local community, and HB in launching an activity with multiple benefits, including species conservation, landscape conservation, sub-basin conservation of Kerunge Khola, and income generation from the broomgrass cultivation.

CFUG at Dhikurpokhari, Kaski: This site is one of the successful examples of the partnership (WWF, CARE, and FECOFUN) with CFUGs, located upstream of Harpan Khola of Phewa lake. This site included a CLAC and active women's participation; resource (seed money) mobilization for income-generation activities; preparation of a CAPA including climate vulnerability; protection of a forest from grazing and illegal harvest of forest products; and establishment of a community-based anti-poaching unit.

However, not all partnerships with local communities are successful. For example, HB's partnership-based activities with two CFUGs (Raniban and Naule Charchare) at Bhadaure Tamagi VDC in Kaski District demonstrate poor understanding of partnership challenges. A drinking water project aimed to supply water to a school and Dalit community was completed, but water supply is not maintained due to demand for both drinking water and irrigation. The community forests are also not well protected from open grazing animals. The CLAC has not been operational since very few women were able to participate when the first 16-week sessions were organized.

This site had a number of ongoing donor interventions. These included the PEACE Program (a Canadian NGO project), Ecosystem-based Adaptation (a multi-donor project), and Panchase Protection Forest (MoFSC/GoN). The community was overburdened with the projects' demands and meetings. One participant in the focus group discussion said, "We have 35 meetings in 30 days!" We assume the reason for working here despite the number of other projects is that it is one of the six VDCs that form part of the Phew Tal Watershed and, thus, part of the Phewa Tal PES project that HB is supporting. We note the need for better planning, coordination, and monitoring as well as modification in schedules and activities as per local needs and agreement.

Sub-question 2.4: How do these partnerships correlate with the ability of the project to implement activities and deliver results?

Government partnerships

The partnerships with the government agencies are critical for the success and long-term sustainability of HB activities. Where partnerships with the government are functioning well (e.g., Tanahu, Chitwan NP, and Bardia NP), the activities have been easier to implement and delivery of results is quicker. The impact of good government relationships is most clearly seen in the different performances of activities in TAL and CHAL. As Joint Secretary of MFSC, Mr. Krishna Acharya noted, the partnerships in TAL began in 2000, and the partnership mechanisms with the MoFSC and other stakeholders are clear and functioning. However, as CHAL is a new landscape, working mechanisms have not yet been established.

Thus, in the case of TAL, HB's relationships with government agencies is built on existing relationships that partners had already formed, and the HB activities are well integrated with the government-endorsed landscape plan. The government agencies in TAL have greater ownership of the HB-initiated activities as TAL strategy was jointly endorsed by MoFSC and WWF.

In comparison, the CHAL landscape has been referenced in the National Biodiversity Strategy and other government plans, but does not yet have a government-endorsed strategy and action plan. The relationships between HB and the government in this landscape have not yet been developed at all levels, from the landscape to community level, with an aim of achieving sustainability and ownership. This gap of partnership with the government has somehow been mitigated by the Regional Forest Director, who seems to have taken leadership in coordinating activities, including that of HB at the regional level.

The team observed that at the site level where relationships with the GLAs are strong, the activities are generally better implemented and delivery of results are better. However, where the partnership is weak, output quality and timeliness are not as good.

There are a number of challenges faced by HB partners in implementing partnership mechanism functions. Although signing high-level MOUs might be a good output, it does not necessarily translate into good delivery of results in the field. For example, despite the MOU with the DSCWM, the DSCO in the Gorkha District is reluctant to work with HB because it is not satisfied with the process of work planning, design, and implementation. Particular issues that the DSCO raised with the Evaluation Team are: an overly bureaucratic process, delays in communication and approval, and USAID's heavy compliance demands.

However, activities that build the capacity of the GoN are recognized and appreciated by senior GoN officials. A recent training on REDD+ Guidelines for the REDD Cell staff, MoFSC, DoF, DNPWC, and District Forest Offices was highlighted by GoN staff. Other training for government staff has included nursery management and seedling production, global positioning system (GPS) training to junior staff, fire-fighting training, CFOP revision and amendments, climate change adaptation plans, and supply of equipment (GPS, camera, laptops).

There are limitations regarding the ability of HB to implement activities and deliver results in collaboration with GLAs because funds do not support the government and because HB activities do not always align with GLA priorities. For example, there are mixed results from partnerships, through sub-awards, with DFOs. The Kalali DFO said that, unlike Multi-Stakeholder Forestry Programme (MSFP), funding for activities related to "Scientific Forest Management" is not forthcoming from HB. The Lamjung Local Development Officer said that HB is more likely to choose easier activities rather than locally needed activities that have been identified in the five-year plan of Lamjung District.

Local community

Both in TAL and, to some extent, in CHAL, the government and local community groups have received support from HB to participate in a number of training and workshops that have helped better implement the project activities. In particular, training of trainers (TOT), local resource person (LRP) training, facilitating CLACs, CAPA/LAPA preparation, formal training workshops, support to Community Forestry Operation Plan preparation and revision have resulted in more lasting relationships since they create awareness on wider issues, support diverse needs of communities, and develop partners' technical capacity to implement the activities at community level.

4.1.3 FINDINGS FOR EVALUATION QUESTION 3

Evaluation Question 3: What synergies or challenges can be observed due to the combination of multiple high-level objectives (biodiversity conservation, climate change adaptation, and climate change adaptation) within a project?

Synergies can occur at different scales and loci. For this evaluation, we conceptualize synergies arising from individual activities, among activities at the site level, among the three project objectives (described here and also briefly in Evaluation Question 1), and among the HB partners (described in more detail in Evaluation Question 4).

Sub-question 3.1: What site-implemented activities aimed at meeting more than one high level objective?

Individual activities

Although it is difficult to exhaustively list particular activities that meet multiple objectives, we provide some examples below.

- Restoration of forests and grasslands through grazing and fire control have helped increase biodiversity, conserve forests, and mitigate carbon loss.
- Improved cook stoves and biogas both help to conserve forests and biodiversity and mitigate carbon loss by reducing the need for fuelwood. They also provide social benefits. During the Evaluation Team's site visits, women told us that biogas and improved cook stoves generate multiple benefits for them, including less use of and dependence on fuelwood; time saved on collecting (less) fuelwood; and health benefits due to the absence of smoke in the house.
- Broomgrass plantations, such as in the degraded area of Tanahu District and the Goral Conservation Area in Nawalparasi, are restoring ecosystems and connectivity, providing habitat for wildlife, reducing natural resource use, and providing income to poor and marginalized people who had relied on slash and burn agriculture.

Activities that aim to meet more than one objective but conclusive results may not yet exist include skills training and revolving funds.

- HB undertook skills training, such as plumbing and electrical work, for beneficiaries, working on the assumption that training of marginalized and low-income groups will decrease these groups' reliance on and extraction of natural resources, but it is not yet known if this is true.
- Revolving funds in community forestry user groups helps to support biodiversity conservation, improve and increase forest habitat, and decrease natural resource use through improved livelihoods. These revolving funds are channeled through user group member-based saving and credit cooperatives. Most of the funds are used to support livestock (mainly goats, pigs, and poultry) or off-season vegetable farming. Promotion of these cooperatives has helped to ease access to credit in the rural areas. It is not yet known if and under what circumstances these livelihood activities actually reduce resource use and what the impact of increased livestock is on the environment, especially if not integrated with stall feeding.

Synergies among activities at site level

The Evaluation Team saw at certain sites, especially where HB is aiming to meet all three objectives, that HB activities are a synergetic package that stimulates positive feedbacks among activities. For example, linking awareness and empowerment through well-functioning CLACs, strengthening good governance through the governance tools, promoting equitable resource allocation of CFUGs funds, supporting biodiversity conservation through anti-poaching units and native species replanting, mitigating carbon loss through biogas and improved cook stoves (note that these activities also contribute to biodiversity), and building the capacity of communities to adapt to climate change (through CAPAs) are mutually reinforcing in the best cases. Many of the synergies occur because activities are implemented by community-based organizations (CFUGs, BZUCs, CAMCs, and CBAPUs) with the support of the four main partners.

Often, the initial entry point for HB in community groups is to create awareness and reflection through CLACs (informal classes of 25 women and sometimes a few men from the lowest ranking sub-groups of

the community for a period of 16 weeks). Based on the outcomes of these classes, programs/activities are formulated including various types of ecosystem restoration (forest, grassland, and water), community-based climate change adaptation, improvement in the internal governance of these community-based organizations, and income- generating activities.

Some of the best examples of sites that showed synergies among objectives that the Evaluation Team visited are described in Exhibit 5.

Exhibit 5. Examples of HB activities with synergy

Location	Synergistic activities
Barandabar Corridor, Chitwan District	Protection forest declared, solar fencing built, wildlife and human conflict reduced, and some climate adaptation activities carried out.
Broomgrass plantation, Tanahu District	Shifting cultivation and invasive species controlled through broomgrass plantation, income of the communities increased.
Bhakarjung CFUG, Kaski District	Forest conserved, anti-poaching activities carried out, climate adaptation plan prepared and some of its activities carried out.
Jum Dada Jhapri CFUG, Tanahu District	Conserved forests, livelihood activities (e.g., leaf plate making), annual meetings with 30 other nearby CFUGs, adaptation plan prepared and some of its activities carried out.
Jyoti CFUG in Gadwa, Dang District	River bank conservation with plantation, forest and grassland rehabilitation, income from the sale of grass is increasing[3], climate adaptation activities.
Pashupati CFUG in Kamdi, Banke District	Forest restoration by controlling theft of fuelwood from outsiders (even from India), received some support under LAPA.
Sadabahar CFUG in Kamdi, Banke District	Increased grassland and established demonstration site (with bamboo, asparagus, and citronella plantation), CAPA prepared and some of its activities implemented.
Sarashwoti CFUG in Rajapur, Bardia District	Plantation forest, CAPA prepared, suppressed alien species, NTFPs planted such as Pipla, rattan, and bamboos.
Neulapur BZCFUG, Bhurigau, Bardia District	Various forest restoration activities carried out including bamboo planting, solar fencing to reduce human wildlife conflict, CAPA prepared and some of its activities carried out, efforts to link CAPA and LAPA.
Janahit Mahakali CFUG in Bani, Kanchanpur District	Forest restoration with new natural and artificial regeneration of *Bijaya sal* in the area along with the neighboring community forest (Jan Jagriti) by 530 ex-Kamaiyas (free bonded labor) now having 4–5 kattha of land, CAPA prepared and some of its activities carried out.
Gyneshwor BZCFUG, Chitwan District	Plantation, electric fence, conservation of rhino and other wildlife from Chitwan National Pak, ecotourism site.
Namuna BZCFUG, Nawalparasi District	Vulture conservation, tourist site, restoration of wetland and grassland, electric fence, skills training.
Goral Conservation, Nawalparashi Distict	Community mobilization and support from a local NGO, homestay, biodiversity conservation, broomgrass.

However, at some sites, activities look more like "business as usual," and synergies do not seem to have sparked among activities. Sites in this category included: Raniban Chharchare in Kaski, Khalte-Gangate Sub-Watershed in Mahadeva, CFUG in Dang, and Sundevi BZUC, Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve in Kanchanpur.

Sub-question 3.2: What are the benefits of implementing these activities across multiple objectives?

Biodiversity conservation (through ecosystem restoration) is generating benefits at the household, community, and public level. Access to fuelwood, fodder, and timber collection to households and communities is easier. In some cases, grass collection has been easier. Abundant grass has regenerated in

[3] Also published in the National Newspaper (KANTIPUR) on February 6, 2015.

the Jyoti CFUG and adjoining community forests. They are generating income from the sale of grass. Climate-resilient activities and income-generating activities have helped them to diversity and increase income sources.

In general, although impact is inconsistent across sites, CLACs have empowered women and marginalized groups. For example, women and others have learned basic literacy so they can sign their names for official purposes. Biogas and improved cook stoves have helped many women in reducing the time they spend collecting fuelwood and also has reduced their harmful exposure to smoke from indoor cooking with fuelwood.

Communities are now generating income from the sale of forest products and by enforcing rules they designed themselves. The income generated is reinvested into activities that benefit the ecosystem and also communities' livelihood through income-generating activities. Communities are also establishing saving and credit cooperatives and are taking leadership positions in these institutions. HB is helping them to mobilize the money through their own saving and capital provided through a revolving fund.

Meeting multiple objectives at a project level may be encouraging synergies in other important ways at sites. For example, the linking of the three objectives may mean that "business as usual" activities, such as biogas and improved cook stoves, are being pitched to communities in a more integrated fashion. We had many focus groups tell us that biogas provides multiple benefits (e.g., improved health, less wood use, greater ease of cleaning cooking pots). If people recognize multiple benefits, this could strengthen their support for it. In the bigger picture, the objectives, if integrated, can demonstrate that the conservation of forests is not just good for communities to extract resources, it is also good for biodiversity and for mitigating and adapting to climate change.

Sub-question 3.3: What challenges occurred from implementing activities across multiple objectives?

HB has two landscapes that are different in bio-physical features, socio-economic condition, previous history of support in biodiversity conservation, and the rationale of designating them as landscapes.

TAL is an established east-west landscape in the terai, whereas CHAL is a newly designated north-south landscape located in the hills and mountains. TAL is designed as a landscape based on the movement of tiger and rhinoceros in the area and beyond. The designation of CHAL is based on the flow of water along the river basin. TAL has had support from WWF for many years, whereas HB is the first project operating at landscape level. NTNC has working in the CHAL area for a long time, but only in the Annapurna and Manaslu conservation areas. CARE has some previous experience working in some of the districts of CHAL through SAGUN but in a very scattered manner. FECOFUN has worked in all parts of Nepal for many years, but separately and outside of the PAs.

Implementing a new project with multiple objectives in the new landscape (CHAL) of such a large area itself is a challenge. Activities selected in CHAL are not as integrated as in TAL. The selection of sites for intervention does not seem to be based on river basin geography as they are scattered along the river basins. The sporadic activities implemented at a site level in CHAL are successful in integration, but their linkage at the watershed/river basin level has yet to be strengthened. Nonetheless, the project has sensitized climate vulnerabilities in the area and climate adaptation-related activities are better implemented than in TAL.

Interventions on Sustainable Landscape Management are facing challenges as the workable policy on REDD+ has not been formulated by the government. The project has helped to prepare ERPIN for TAL and developed a forest carbon baseline for CHAL. However, a detailed proposal has yet to be formulated for final submission to the World Bank. The project is providing further assistance to the REDD Cell of MoFSC to work on the project formulation.

Despite the awareness activities that have been conducted, local communities' awareness of REDD+ was very limited at the sites that the Evaluation Team visited. The team notes here, though, that the benefits of awareness raising at the community level for something that does not yet have a concrete policy framework and/or tangible benefits is questionable and potentially raises expectations unnecessarily. In terms of payments for ecosystem services (PES), while groundwork has been laid and supported by HB, real implementation at sites such as Phewa Lake and the middle Marshyangdi will take more time.

Because the scale of HB operation is so large, resources are thinly distributed. This is more so in CHAL area where the interventions at the landscape level are in the initial stages and the project is just beginning to find a way to synchronize its activities in a coherent way. In contrast, TAL has a long history of intervention, and HB is contributing to filling the gaps in an established approach. The challenges also lie in mobilizing government line agency field staff (except, for example, the Tanahu DFO and PA staff) in carrying out activities in a coherent way.

Sub-question 3.3: Which high-level objectives show synergies?

Biodiversity conservation, climate change adaptation, and improved governance of natural resource management groups show synergies. Restoration of forest, grassland, and wetlands helps to provide multiple benefits (products needed for livelihood, water and soil conservation benefits, ecotourism benefits, climate resiliency). Similarly, initiatives to increase climate adaptation also demands the restoration of ecosystem, and increased and diversification of income sources. Improved governance helps to conserve biodiversity and climate adaptation through rule-based resource management.

Biodiversity conservation is generating more forests and greater capture of carbon through better growth (higher growing stock) of the forest.

Sub-question 3.4: How might challenges be overcome to meet multiple objectives?

Prioritized planning at the corridor and watershed level and joint level monitoring of these activities could help to mitigate some of the challenges. Having a watershed management specialist could be helpful in selecting watersheds for integrated interventions in the CHAL area. Extending the duration of the project, at least in CHAL, would help in consolidating the program activities and linking them to achieve synergy.

There is a lack of HB strategy for interventions in CHAL, so it would be helpful to develop a strategy ensuring that activities are undertaken in a more coherent and integrated manner. Since most of the activities under CHAL seem to be concentrated in Seti, Daraudi, and Marsyandi watersheds in a fragmented and isolated manner, they need to be linked to have a synergetic effect.

Support to biodiversity conservation is primarily provided through WWF and NTNC. CARE provides support for the improvement in the internal governance of these forest groups through such programs as Participatory Governance Assessment (PGA), Public Hearing and Public Auditing (PHPA), and Participatory Well-Being Ranking (PWBR). These governance reforming tools were developed while CARE was previously implementing the SAGUN program under USAID funding. CARE is also assisting communities in climate change awareness (mostly related to adaptation) and in the preparation of CAPAs.

4.1.4 FINDINGS FOR EVALUATION QUESTION 4

Evaluation Question 4: Does evidence exist that the project's approach to integration led to improved outcome?

Sub-question 4.1: What is the project's approach to integration?

Joint planning by the four partners at the landscape level is the starting point of integration in the field. In the CHAL area, that planning process is further shared with all the other stakeholders and line agency staff at the regional level in the regional planning meeting organized by the Regional Forest Director in

Pokhara. The TAL area is located in four development regions, and the process of integration in planning at these four regional levels seems to be *ad hoc*.

The four partners voluntarily decided to work together under the umbrella of HB before the project was awarded to them. In contrast, the Multi-Stakeholder Forestry Program (MSFP), funded jointly by three donors, took more than one year to select the six national NGO partners to work in the field. Thus, compared to MSFP, HB is better designed and more efficient in selecting the right partners in Nepal.

The four consortium partners had not jointly worked together before, although some of them had worked together. For example, WWF had worked with CARE in Dolpa District before. WWF has been working together with NTNC in protected areas for over three decades. CARE and FECOFUN had worked together in SAGUN (funded by USAID). It took about a year to mobilize HB staff and understand the expectations and working practices of each partner. WWF and NTNC were, by their mandate and orientation, more interested in the bio-physical aspects of biodiversity conservation, whereas CARE and FECOFUN were more oriented towards human dimensions of conservation and development. To add to all these factors, climate change adaptation was a new topic for the two national partners (but not for WWF and CARE). Thus, it took a while to devise a common modality of working together in the field. Moreover, FECOFUN was a new partner in all this set up, with its focus on advocacy.

FECOFUN seemed to be hesitant to work with WWF and NTNC, since they each had a reputation of working closely with the government and FECOFUN is primarily an advocacy-based organization often in conflict with the government. In fact, the chairman of NTNC is the Minister of MoFSC, and most of its members are the secretaries of the Government of Nepal. Thus, in order to establish a working relationship, FECOFUN and WWF signed a six-point agreement before bidding for the project. One of the stringent points of the agreement was that WWF would not support the expansion of protected area in the area under HB.

The advantage of HB is that each of the partners in HB has its own strength. In our discussion with the partners, the common denominator of implementing the program was comparative advantage of expertise and experience of each partner, and the cross-learning from each other and its application in the field. For example, FECOFUN is learning more about biodiversity conservation. NTNC is using governance framework developed by CARE in ACAP area. FECOFUN and NTNC are learning climate change adaptation from CARE in order to sensitize forest users on climate change adaptation. The knowledge, experience, and comparative/competitive advantage of each partner is used jointly at the community and ecosystem level to implement the program in a systematic manner.

There are also some differences in where partners work, with NTNC primarily working in the protected areas, while FECOFUN is working outside of the protected areas. However, FECOFUN had also worked in Neulapur BZCF for some time, and NTNC works in some corridor areas outside of buffer zones, such as the Goral Conservation Area in Nawalparasi. The other advantage of working together is that every partner is working with the local community through CFUGs, CAMCs, BZUCs, and BZCFUGs. At many sites, although not all, the expertise and skill of each partner is used in an integrated manner to achieve the objectives of the project.

The partnership with other organizations has been further expanded in the conservation of Phewa Lake while designing a PES committee to protect the lake against excessive sedimentation for its watershed. The other stakeholders involved include the Hotel Association, the Pokhara sub-municipality, six VDCs that constitute the Phewa Tal Watershed, the DFO, the DSCO, and NGOs. Similarly, in developing a PES for Madya-Marsyangdi Hydro Power Project (MMHPP), a national NGO was commissioned to undertake a feasibility study of the area. Moreover, a local NGO (RCDC, Rural Community Development Centre) implemented a PES awareness program in 21 VDCs. A five-member technical committee has been formed to work further on the PES model suitable for MMHPP. However, a lack of appropriate policy at the government level hampered the implementation of PES. Even if a policy was developed, it would take a

long time to fully implement the PES mechanism since the watershed is too large, a new hydro-power company is constructing another hydro-power project above the MMHPP, and debris is being deposited along the river.

Sub-question 4.2: Has the project observed better than expected outcomes that can be attributed to integration approach?

It took about a year for the HB partners to understand the working modality and style of each partner as well as to generate knowledge about CHAL upon which to base HB's approach. However, slowly, the working modalities have been synchronized or nearly so. Now, they are generally working together in most of the areas in a coordinated fashion. The combination of partners with their integrated approach seems to be most successful at sites where the partners are working together to leverage their specific expertise. Some sites that are good examples of partner synergies are Janahit and Jailaxmi CFUGS, Goral Conservation Area, and Dikurpokhari. Many of these sites are also described in Question 3 concerning site synergies.

In many cases, an integrated approach has had the best success where HB is supporting local organizations to scale up and network across the landscape, such as in the Goral Conservation Area and the Gyaneshwor Community Forests in Chitwan. The success is further amplified if funds are leveraged and activities are integrated with those of other partners as evidenced in Mukta Kamaiya Community in Krihanpur VDC, Ward No. 2 in Kanchanpur, and also the broomgrass plantation area being cultivated by Sidhathani Village in Tanahu District.

However, there is potential for more and better integration. For example, in general, protected areas in TAL are proceeding pretty much as usual and not integrating new activities or approaches from the other partners, such as governance and GESI, to the extent that they could. However, we note that in ACAP, where community management is a very sensitive issue, NTNC is integrating the governance tools and LAPA into its approach.

Another issue is that although planning is jointly decided at the landscape level, monitoring of activities is not jointly carried out by the partners in most of the cases. Thus, learning is patchy, and it needs to be strengthened.

The integrated approach could also achieve better outcomes if better linked to local priorities. For example, the Local Development Officer (LDO) of Lamjumg said that HB picks up the easier activities in an ad hoc manner. Each District Development Committee has its own five-year plan, but there is no coordination nor even any referral to these plans. Also, local institutions exist that could be incorporated into HB's approach. For example, under the local governance mechanism, there is a provision for having a Community Awareness Centre (CAC) in each of the Village Development Centre (VDC), but there is no linkage of CLAC with CAC at the village level.

Additional support from HB to communities supported by other donors has a marginal or even adverse effect. In Naule Chharchhare CFUGs, the communities are so overwhelmed with outside support that they say they have "35 meetings in 30 days," and the messages conveyed to them through these multiple organizations is just too much. This site also had one of the least successful CLACs because of women's inability to participate due to time constraints. However, where donors are coordinating at larger scales—for example, the understanding between HB and MSFP to support the renewal of CFOPs—outcomes are good.

In sum, when the activities are well designed and sequenced appropriately, and the partners' roles are well defined, there is a synergy in collaboration. Otherwise, the collaboration can lead to diminishing returns. Fortunately, it seems the cases of productive collaboration under HB with positive returns are many compared to the ones with negative return cited above.

4.1.5 FINDINGS FOR EVALUATION QUESTION 5

Evaluation Question 5: What are the advantages and disadvantages of the project's unique approach to community adaptation plans of action (CAPA) at the community level, in the context of the LAPA process implementation?[4]

General understanding of the HBP's strategies and approaches to climate change adaptation (CCA)

The overall goal of HB is to "reduce the adverse impacts of climate change and threats to biodiversity in Nepal." The climate change adaptation (CCA) component (Objective 3) aims to contribute to achieve this goal by undertaking a number of vulnerability-reducing and resilience-building activities in both TAL and CHAL. To achieve this objective, HB works closely with communities, local CBOs and NGOs, and government partners. The strategies and approaches adopted in designing, planning, and implementing adaptation plans are based on a bottom-up planning process ensuring the conservation and maintenance of local natural resources, especially biodiversity and forest ecosystem services, as a basis for planning CCA. The CCA planning process adopted by HB aims to build local institutional and technical capacity; improve the livelihoods of the most vulnerable people; strengthen the management of CFUGs and cooperatives; raise awareness about climate change issues; and undertakes sound conservation and management of local forests, water, and livelihood resources by integrating ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) and community-based adaptation (CBA) concepts together. The adaptation plans hinge on three critical factors: 1) building local resource base to support livelihoods; 2) developing vulnerable peoples' knowledge, skills, and capabilities; and 3) conservation and sustenance of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

HB establishes links between improved capacity, local livelihoods, and good governance of community-based organizations (CFUGs), and forest and biodiversity conservation (through sustainable forest and landscape management). This approach, it is presumed, helps climate change adaptation and mitigation by generating both adaptation and conservation co-benefits through the integrated nature of project interventions.

Specific approaches to adaptation planning and implementation

HB's general strategy and approach for adaptation planning and design is defined by the framework of combined human-ecological systems wherein it is premised that both human and ecological components are impacted by climate-induced stressors and therefore need an integrated adaptation intervention. The reduction of vulnerability and the enhancement of resilience of this combined system need an integrated ecosystem as well as community-based approaches. Improvement in ecosystem resilience requires better management of forest resources, community empowerment, and livelihood improvement, which is what the integrated adaptation planning approach of HB has tried to achieve. The adaptation plans are prepared by first building the awareness of community on local, national, and global climate change issues. It then involves local people in identification and prioritization of vulnerable groups and sites within the community and identifies options to adapt to the prioritized climatic as well as non-climatic hazards and risks to the combined system. Due to the forestry- and biodiversity-oriented nature of HB, the scale for CCA planning is done at the community forest, sub-watershed, or buffer zone level.

Social mobilization, community empowerment, capacity building, and identifying appropriate livelihood improvement activities for vulnerable groups are considered important prerequisites for successful adaptation for communities. Participatory monitoring of changes brought about by the project both at the forest, watershed, or combined human-environment system level is an important part of the CCA component. A tool that identifies the underlying causes of poverty and vulnerability (UCPV) is used to conduct the vulnerability analysis. Hazards and risks maps, as well as community-level adaptation capacity,

[4] Please note this question has been revised slightly by the Evaluation Team.

are prepared and assessed for an integrated adaptation plan that tries to combine elements of ecosystem-based adaptation (EBA), community-based adaptation (CBA), and disaster risk reduction (DRR) approaches into the integrated plan. This method is considered ideal for a mountainous country such as Nepal, which is facing multidimensional hazards and risks such as floods, fire, erosion, and mudslides, as well as extreme weather events such as heat and cold waves and prolonged drought. These climate-induced drivers are exacerbating the changes brought about by the ongoing socio-economic and political drivers in HB areas.

The assessment of HB's overall approach of planning and implementing integrated CCA is considered an appropriate strategy given the conservation focus of the program, working primarily with NRM groups such as CFUGs. HB has rightly used the local forest governing entities, such as community forest user group (CFUG), Watershed User Committee (WUC), Buffer Zone User Committee (BZUC), and others to plan CAPAs as an example of bottom-up planning process. The CAPAs are planned to be linked up with the VDC- or municipality-level LAPAs.

According to the available records, HB has so far prepared around 327 CAPAs and 45 LAPAs, as shown in Exhibit 6. One-hundred and twenty-four CAPAs and one LAPA in TAL, and 203 CAPAs and 44 LAPAs in CHAL, have been prepared. Of the total, 224 CAPAs (68.5 percent) and 11 LAPAs (25 percent) have been implemented, although at varying degrees of completion.

Exhibit 6. Number of CAPAs and LAPAs prepared, approved, and planned[5]

Year	CAPA			LAPA		
	Prepared	Endorsed	Implemented	Prepared	Endorsed	Implemented
Year 1 (2011–12)	12	9	9			
Year 2 (2012–13)	190	121	74			
Year 3 (2103–14)	111	114	103	30	23	8
Year 4 (2014–15)	14	33	38	15	4	3
Total	327	277	224	45	27	11

The wide variation in the progress between TAL and CHAL area may be due to the strong knowledge, capacity, and presence of a CCA team (CARE) in CHAL as compared to TAL. The difference is also attributed to better management of CAPA planning and implementation activities in CHAL than in TAL. In general, the following factors can be identified for greater progress in CHAL than in TAL: a) CARE's past experience and presence; b) better natural resource management (NRM) groups (CFUG and CAMC); and c) better partnership and synergy among HB partners and between HB and GOs. The regional coordination mechanism in CHAL is also working better. HB staff suggested an additional reason for the difference in progress could be local perceptions in TAL that deforestation and forest degradation in the upstream Churia region are the source of their water and flooding issues rather than climate change.

Sub-question 5.1: What is HB's unique approach of preparing Community Adaptation Plans of Action (CAPAs)?

HB's unique approaches to adaptation planning is based on the use of tools that had been developed and practiced by CARE elsewhere: a) assessing UCPV in the community; b) linking adaptation plan to the resource base (e.g., CFUG-managed forest); c) prioritizing vulnerable groups (women, poor, and Dalit communities); d) giving due recognition to building ecosystem resilience and vulnerable people's rights to

[5] Prepared = Communities participated and supported; Endorsed = CFUG executive committee and General assembly approved; Implemented = Adaptation activities implemented with joint funding and support from HBP, CFUG, VDC and others.

survive; and 5) ensuring good governance in adaptation planning and implementation through bundled tools of PGA, PWBR, and PHPA. CARE has shared these tools with other HB partners, who are using them to prepare CAPAs and LAPAs. This approach also ensures that the concerned community gains ownership of the CAPA and LAPA once it is approved by the general assembly of the community group (e.g., CFUG or other types of user groups). The approach also uses the National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA) priorities and LAPA guidelines (seven-step planning guidelines) as a basis to prepare CAPA and LAPA.

Sub-question 5.2: Why are community forestry user groups (CFUGs) an appropriate institution for planning?

The CFUGs are the most commonly used scale for the CAPA planning adopted by the HB because they: a) are resource-based legal entities; b) meet the criteria for a combined human-ecological system framework; and c) already have functioning management and governing structures. CAPAs are done at the CFUG level also since the HB mostly works with the MoFSC line agencies and CBOs involved in forest management. In some cases, CAPA has also been done if a high concentration of vulnerable groups exists, such as in a micro-watershed (e.g., Gorkha Municipality) and buffer zones in TAL. The criteria for selecting a CFUG site are governed by the HB's framework: biodiversity-important areas (BIAs) including linking north-south or east-west corridor concept, location in the selected river basin, high vulnerability pockets as determined by the Rapid CHAL/TAL Assessment. The Evaluation Team observed that whereas WWF and FECOFUN prepare CAPAs, NTNC prepares LAPAs only, and CARE, of late, prepares both. This difference is primarily because of HB partners' traditional institutional approaches. For example, in CHAL, the NTNC works with CAMCs that are formed at VDC level and, given the low human density in high altitude areas, considers it more appropriate to work at VDC level, so therefore NTNC prepares LAPAs. However, now CARE is also preparing LAPAs based on its reflections and learning. The latest trend among partners is to prepare CAPAs first and then link them with LAPAs, which is considered a sound approach of bottom-up planning.

Sub-question 5.3: What types of training and capacity-building activities of CAPA planning and implementation teams have been carried out?

The CAPA process starts with a 16-week CLAC course with women and marginalized groups that builds awareness regarding climate change vulnerability and impacts, and the need for adaptation and disaster risk reduction within the community. This helps ensure that these people, who are often among the most vulnerable to climate, will be able to participate in and benefit from the CAPA. In the CLAC, the local resource person (LRP), who facilitates the CLAC and also CAPA, presents adaptation as a cross-cutting topic to the community by stressing that the adaptation sectors selected (again, has to be based on the NAPA priority sectors mentioned above) have to be made climate-smart, especially conservation sites, community forests, watersheds, agriculture, and landscape. Once a CFUG is ready to prepare a CAPA, the LRPs or hired experts work with the community by following the six-step process (in line with the LAPA process) that comprises: a) identification of vulnerable sites; b) vulnerability analysis and classification of groups and sites; c) identification of adaptation options; d) prioritization and approval of adaptation plans; e) plan implementation; and f) participatory monitoring, reflection, and learning. A well-prepared plan takes up to six weeks to complete using the six-step process. However, in practice, the CARE-prescribed sequencing and planning are not being used by the HB partners, including CARE itself, due to differential understanding and skills of the LRP and/or consultant hired by the partners. This has resulted in large differences in the quality of the CAPAs and LAPAs, especially in terms of community participation and ownership.

Sub-question 5.4: What are the methods used to prepare vulnerability impact analysis and ranking of most vulnerable to least vulnerable social groups and ecosystems?

The basic information used for CCA planning is the output of the Participatory Well-Being Ranking (PWBR) done at the CFUG level that classifies a given community into four poverty classes: Ka, Kha, Ga, and Gha groups—Ka being the wealthiest and Gha being the poorest. The process then uses the UCPV tool to identify the source and causes of poverty and vulnerability. Thus, two types of products are generally produced by the planning process: a) a hazards and risks map based on recent climatic events, and b) maps of areas inhabited by poorest and marginalized groups. Both bio-physical and socio-economic indicators are used to come up with a combined vulnerability classification that helps in selecting the forest ecosystem site and population group with the highest vulnerability index. This method, in general, has been followed throughout the HB project area. However, the key features found in most of the CAPAs and LAPAs observed is a low level of community participation, ownership, and, most importantly, implementation budget.

Sub-question 5.5: How are CAPAs different from CFUG operational plans and LAPAs?

CAPAs focus on vulnerable groups of users such as landless, Dalits, and those at risks due to climatic hazards, as well as vulnerable forest sites, such as areas at risk from flooding. The focus of the CFUG operational plans, on the other hand, is on forest resources development (afforestation and reforestation), management (including fire control), and good forest governance. However, there are significant synergies and complementarities between the two plans that need further strengthening.

LAPA is considered to be holistic and effective in terms of design and implementation of VDC-level adaptation activities by better coordinating the process. CAPA, due to its focus on forest and biodiversity resources of the community groups (CFUGs, BZUCs), and because it is more participatory, is rather narrowly focused. Both the CAPA and LAPA processes have advantages and disadvantages. Whereas CAPA has higher community ownership due to its planning by legally defined, local institutions such as CFUGs, institutional ownership of LAPA is weak because the GoN recognizes the VDC-level development plans as well as Local Disaster Risk Management Plans (LDRMP). However, CAPA has better access to resources since, in many cases, the CFUG itself allocates resources (e.g., in some cases, up to 35 percent of the CAPA budget is supported by CFUG). This makes CAPAs more able to reduce high vulnerability and build both short- and long-term resilience of forest resources and dependent people. CAPA, therefore, contributes more concretely to the HB objectives of biodiversity conservation, landscape management, and sustainable forest management especially with REDD+ activities, all of which have high adaptation co-benefits. However, both CAPAs and LAPAs are needed to achieve higher synergy, integration, and sustainability of HB's CCA activities.

Although most of the CAPAs have been prepared at CFUG levels, a few of them have also been prepared at the sub-watershed (Khalte Gangate Sub-Watershed User Committee, Gorkha) and Buffer Zone User Groups (e.g., Buffer Zone area of Bardia National Park by Shree Ramnagar BZUC; Sundevi BZUC, Sukla Phanta Wildlife Reserve area). However, if the group preparing the CAPA lacks legal status, such as a watershed user committee, finding resources and establishing linkages with higher-level plans, such as a VDC or municipality LAPA, may pose additional challenges.

Sub-question 5.6: Is there a dedicated community-managed adaptation fund to ensure implementation of most urgent activities identified by the community? If yes, how it is managed?

HB partners provide varying amount of funds to implement CAPAs and require a separate accounting of the expenditure. Depending on the capacity of the community groups, three fund mobilization and management mechanisms have been observed: a) dedicated account; b) managed through by CFUG accounting system; and c) managed by intermediaries, such as the Community Forest Coordination Committee (CFCC) in TAL. However, management of the funds is done with the involvement of the CFUG or other groups by the community and transparency is generally maintained although there are some weaknesses in the management of funds by CFCCs (e.g., Jyoti and Mahadeva CFUGs, Dang). More proactive efforts for empowering CFUGs by the CFCC are felt necessary.

Sub-question 5.7: How are CAPAs linked with higher-level LAPAs and the VDC/municipality plans to ensure that identified vulnerable people and ecosystems are included in the higher-level plans and local planning process?

The planning process of CAPAs is similar to LAPAs—only the scale varies. In fact, CAPA is a good example of a bottom-up planning process as it facilitates the preparation of LAPA. LAPAs, according to the MoSTE guidelines, is more of a framework for local adaptation planning than a plan itself. A number of CAPAs can be integrated into a LAPA. The HB team recognized these potential synergies and linkages, and has been discussing with the MoSTE officials how CAPA can be made an integral part of the LAPA process, especially in locations with high value of biodiversity and ecosystem services. During the course of assessment, it was reported that an in-principle agreement to this effect has already been made by the concerned GoN agencies. CAPAs, therefore, have the potential to be used as planning tools to prepare LAPAs in both HB landscapes. In many cases (e.g., Siddhthani CFUG, Tanahu; Shreeramnagar BZUC, Bardia; and Hardi Khola VDC, Makwanpur), fund-leveraging has been made possible by linking CAPA and LAPA processes. Because forests and biodiversity are the key resources to reducing vulnerability at the VDC level, CAPAs can strengthen the success of LAPAs in HB areas.

Because forests and biodiversity are the key resources to reduce vulnerability at VDC level, CAPAs are used to strengthen the success of LAPAs which HB has been doing. In terms of fund leveraging it is a joint efforts in which the HB partner works with the VDC Secretaries to include CAPA identified activities in the LAPAs and other VDC plans.

Sub-question 5.8: What are the challenges, gaps, weaknesses, and opportunities of CAPA/LAPA activities of HB?

The biggest challenges faced by HB's CAPAs and LAPAs are the high expectation raised in the community groups during the planning process and the limited resources HB has been able to provide to implement the approved CAPAs. In many cases, the most urgent and immediate adaptation and disaster risk reduction needs are not fully met, although HB has been making efforts. The challenge is how to meet the high financial and technological resources required by each CAPA and sustain the community participation. Leveraging financial and technical resources from multiple sources in the ongoing government programs (e.g., Department of Water Induced Disaster Prevention, MoFALD) and donor funded programs (e.g., National Climate Change Support Project, MSFP, EbA) is the most viable option. In fact, in CHAL, HB was designed to work in coordination and collaboration with the MSFP, although there is not much evidence of this happening so far.

As mentioned above, out of the total 327 CAPAs and 45 LAPAs prepared, only 244 CAPAs and 11 LAPAs are being implemented. However, HB has been organizing diverse types of activities to mainstream CAPAs into LAPAs and other plans at the VDC municipality and DDC levels. A total sum of Rs. 10,846,360 has been mobilized from different sources for the implementation of CAPAs in which HB's share is Rs. 6,709,748 (62 percent). Concerned VDCs, municipalities, and other government line agencies have contributed Rs. 2,890,775 (27 percent), and communities Rs. 1,245,837 (11 percent). This type of leveraging approach seems to be partially addressing the high expectations of the community created through the CAPA/LAPA planning process. In the future, more intensified and coordinated actions are needed to address the funding gaps. This will allow HB to address urgent and immediate vulnerability issues and better implement adaptation plans.

Some other gaps observed in the CAPA process are: a) inability to address larger source and types of vulnerability while focusing on site-specific risks and hazards especially in upstream-downstream situation and b) focusing only on "small dots" thus poorly linking them to "bigger dots" in the vulnerability maps of a forest, watersheds, river basin, landscape although the CHAL level rapid vulnerability assessment (VA) was used for selection the CFUGs, However, the top-down i.e., landscape level VA outputs and the bottom-up (CAPA level) VA outputs have to be combined to come up with vulnerability maps which was

not observed. However, in some CAPAs (e.g., Barandabhar corridor, Hardi Khola, and Phewa Tal), this type of gap is being addressed. CAPAs could also be linked to LDRMPs at the VDC level. A more recent GoN policy is to link CAPA and LAPA with the environment friendly local government planning (EFLGP) process promoted by MoFALD. The CAPA and LAPA process of HB can be characterized as a bottom-up vulnerability impact assessment (VIA) and adaptation planning process that provides a good opportunity to bring together the top-down VIA process at the landscape and river basin levels to the bottom-up VIA process at community forest and sub-watershed scales. However, for this process to be of practical significance, the top-down process has to be more based on scientific assessment, drawing knowledge from global and regional models and scenarios, and the bottom-up process should be informed by historical local vulnerability and community-based perception and knowledge, including indigenous and local knowledge.

Sub-question 5.9: What are the lessons learned, what activities seems to be doing well, which are having difficulties, and what is the way forward?

Preparing CAPAs before LAPAs by HB has helped leverage resources and achieve coordination with the VDCs and municipalities at a number of locations (Shree Ramnagar, Hardi Khola, Chandrapur, and Lamki). In Dahakhani VDC, Chitwan, six CFUG-based CAPAs led to one LAPA. The HB team was also able to mainstream LAPA with the district-level Disaster Reduction Management Plan in Gorkha and Tanahu. However, the ownership of LAPA has been a problem because at the VDC there are multiple plans and a dearth of elected bodies. Also, the DFOs prefer the CAPAs since they are forest based. One lesson drawn from the CCA component of HB is that linking CAPA and LAPA processes with the larger VDC-level plans can better leverage resources. This also helps communities to implement priority CAPA activities. In general, the HB team reported that the CAPA/LAPA activities are doing well in the following aspects: a) promoting a strong science base, b) robust use of threats and drivers to identify vulnerable sites and groups, and c) locally prioritized interventions. The elements that are not being successfully mainstreamed are: a) broader thinking, b) joint planning, c) tackling non-traditional threats, and d) establishing linkage with VDC- and municipality-levels plans. Nevertheless, the HB team has been constantly learning from the CCA process, particularly how adaptation can contribute to both conservation and development outcomes.

4.1.6 FINDINGS FOR EVALUATION QUESTION 6

Evaluation Question 6: What key gaps and challenges remain in terms of accomplishing the stated objectives of Hariyo Ban?

Sub-question 6.1: Which objectives are on target to be met?

Sub-question 6.2: Which objectives have fallen behind proposed targets?

Sub-question 6.3: What are potential causes of delay in meeting stated objectives?

Project gaps and challenges

Overall, the project suffered delays because it took almost a year for the project to organize and begin to harmonize the institutions' thinking, processes, and approaches. A great deal of time was spent on partners getting familiar with each other, figuring out how to work together and conducting baseline work. Although the partnership between the four consortium organizations is one of its great strengths, it is also one of its greatest challenges (see Evaluation Question 4). Other issues have also slowed down the project, including delays in the sub-award process for WWF funds in the first year, introduction of compliance requirements such as the Environment Mitigation Monitoring Plan (EMMP) in the second year, and the revision of WOO guidelines and new construction guidelines in the third year.

In terms of meeting objectives, as discussed under the first evaluation question, the project has shown good progress on Objectives 1 and 3, with Objective 2 showing less progress. The causes for delay in

making progress in Objective 2 include its emphasis on REDD+ policies, over which HB has little control, and its goal of creating new systems for payments for ecosystem system services (PES). PES is a rather new concept in Nepal and is taking a while to gain traction and clarity at policy as well as practical levels. The other components of Objective 2, which are familiar activities at the community level, such as installing biogas and improved cook stoves, are progressing well.

In term of cross-cutting themes, HB is achieving success in improving the internal governance of natural resources management groups, mainly because there is strong policy support at the local level, but also because CARE and FECOFUN have a history of working together on this theme. Both livelihoods and GESI have weaknesses. Improving livelihoods requires locally tailored approaches and adequate resources, and successes are difficult to scale up. For GESI, some partners have not integrated it into their activities to the extent possible and many activities are at the central level, such as mainstreaming GESI in four national government policies on biodiversity conservation, REDD+ and climate change adaptation.

In terms of two landscapes, CHAL has the least achievement, mainly because—besides being large, fragile, and remote—it is the newest landscape being supported by outside donors without any strategy jointly agreed with the government. TAL has a long history and has a jointly agreed strategy worked out between the government and WWF.

Sub-question 6.4: Can challenges be overcome in order to achieve project objectives?

We summarize our response to this question in terms of overall program activities, in terms of strengthening community-based organizations, HB's relationship with GoN, improvements in the CAPA process, and lessons from TAL.

Overall program activities

We believe that one of the challenges facing HB in the next 20 months is to develop and strengthen upstream and downstream linkages both in the TAL and CHAL landscape in critical basin/sub-basin areas. HB needs to show the visible results and to produce a convincing vision and model for scaling up sub-basin-level work.

We recommend a commitment of more resources and expertise at those sites where it seems feasible to have a working model in place by end of the HB program. Given the fragile nature of terrain and ecosystems as well as varying degree of inaccessibility, a clearly focused sub-river- and catchment/watershed-based framework is needed to carry out focused work with a long-term ambition of connecting critical landscapes in the north-south trajectory in CHAL. Instead, HB seems to have taken the entire CHAL into perspective and used top-down and bottom-up approaches that do not always address the critical threats, drivers, and vulnerability at the site. Focusing on few sub-river basins with high biodiversity values, such as Phewa Tal Watershed and the Panchase Protection Forest, might be a better approach to take.

It seems important to have some models of functioning PES projects before the project ends. However, HB does not seem to have a clear model for how to do PES given the wide range of approaches we saw in CHAL. We recommend that HB put the necessary focus and resources on key sites that could come to fruition before the end of HB. This leads to the suggestion that HB start from smaller watersheds and then move to larger watersheds to replicate successes from the small watersheds following a structured scaling up and scaling out models.

We find a gap in understanding of the upstream-downstream linkages from water, biodiversity, and climate change perspectives in the HB team. One indicator that the expertise is lacking for this component is that the Evaluation Team found no evidence of an experienced watershed expert at HB at the central or Pokhara Cluster Office. Such a person could push the conceptual, institutional, and programmatic

components of a watershed approach in the field. We, therefore, recommend that HB hire a watershed expert.

We also recommend more emphasis on providing appropriate and contextual technical expertise at the site level. Although approaches (such as community-based conservation, participatory governance, targeting vulnerable communities and sites) are strong, we saw at some sites a basic lack of technical expertise, especially for PES backstopping and water-induced disaster reduction/management (e.g., Ranikhola in Barandabar corridor, Sadabahar CFUG, Banke, and Khalte-Gangate sub-watershed, Gorkha), and nursery/seed/seedling selection and plantation (e.g., Ranikhola in Barandabar corridor, Sardikhola in Kaski, and Chandrapur, Rautahat). Close collaboration with concerned DFOs and rangers is recommended.

Another area that needs special attention and focus is policies relating to the scaling up of CFUGs and associated CAPAs into networks or community conservation areas (CCAs) and LAPAs. These networks have the potential to be legacies for HB.

Strengthening community-based organizations

We heard in the key informant interviews and observed in the field that activities focused at the community level are very strong and synergistic in some sites and more patchy in others. Community-based capacity building is one of the most successful approaches for conservation in Nepal and the feedback from the listening sessions emphasized stakeholders' feelings that emphasis on communities is one of the most important aspects of HB (see details in Annex E). We recommend that HB in the last months of the program continue to focus on activities that build the capacity of communities and their organizations, such as governance, GESI, and income-generating activities, at HB sites where these activities to date have been patchy or not well implemented, or are not sustainable over time. HB should ensure that more integration of activities takes place at these sites, and that the right HB partners are involved at each site to ensure this.

Because livelihood improvement strategies and activities act as a strong incentive mechanism to ensure sustained and involved participation of local communities in conserving biodiversity, promoting sustainable forest management (SMF), and mobilizing community members for collective actions, HB-supported livelihood activities need to devise more demand-driven, tailored, and sustainable activities. We observed that at some sites improved cook stoves, bio-gas, and livestock raising and vegetable farming have been initiated without considering the package of local factors that make these activities successful. For example, improved cook stoves and biogas make sense only where there is not an easy supply of fuel wood, where family sizes are smaller, and where simultaneous banning of open grazing and promotion of fodder tress/grasses and stall feeding systems are implemented. We recommend that in the remaining period, livelihood activities are consolidated, critical gaps filled, continuity and sustainability assured, and broader partnership with programs funded by GOs and donors built.

One of the biggest gaps is in the cross-cutting area of GESI. Although there is enormous opportunity for these partners, with their experiences and resources, there is yet no quantifiable results for GESI, and some partners, particularly NTNC in the buffer zones and protected areas, do not seem to have integrated GESI to the extent that they could. However, we note that NTNC hired their first GESI person as a result of their involvement in HB. Also, the success of the CLACs is patchy, and we heard often that 16 weeks is not long enough and that success depends on a good local resource person (LRP). It also appears that a "one-size-fits-all" approach may be too common at the field level. One clear example is the way CLAC has been conducted with what seems to be fixed content. We were surprised to hear the same phrase, nearly verbatim, from a large number of CLAC participants we met during our site visits, "We know how to say our name now and put our signature." Although these are important skills, this may also signify a lack of true empowerment or understanding. We were aware that one of the desired outcomes of CLACs was the implementation of post-CLAC activities, but in our discussions with CLAC attendees, these

activities were rarely mentioned or discussed. It may be helpful for HB to consider Pact's Women's Empowerment Program in Nepal, which was carried out about a decade ago and, due to is success, was subsequently used as a model around the world.[6]

Relationship with GoN

Another challenge that HB has faced is its poor relationship with the Government of Nepal (please see Evaluation Question 2). Although the relationship with the central government agencies seems to have greatly improved since HB began, there are many challenges remaining for the GoN to take responsibility and ownership of HB programs and successes. This relationship is hampering the year-to-year results at the field level and also will be a challenge for ensuring the sustainability of HB activities after funding ends. At the end of five years, the target indicators may show HB was successful, but without ownership by the government, HB activities are not likely to be continued beyond the life of HB.

HB needs stronger working relationships with GoN and GLAs. At minimum, HB should share its program and annual plans with GoN and GLAs and ensure that all relevant MoFSC, MoSTE, and MoFALD departments are included in the HB Working Group. Ideally, HB activities need to be integrated with GoN's planning cycle and mainstreamed in GoN plans and programs by having joint planning and monitoring. Procedures or mechanisms need to be put into place to ensure transmission of the agreed planned activities (at the central level) to the relevant GLAs at regional/district levels so that GoN field offices and staff can coordinate their other activities with the planned activities of HB.

For the remaining period of HB, we recommend focusing on strengthening coordination and collaboration with GoN at sites where GoN ownership is necessary for sustainability of site-level activities. Depending on the site, GoN ownership may need to be strengthened with different sets of GoN ministries and departments. We recommend for each site the necessary GoN unit be identified and worked closely with to ensure GoN ownership. This is true of not only sites, but activities also, such as policies and PES. For example, the partnership with MoSTE should be formalized if HB really wants to influence climate change policy. We recommend that HB develop a partnership strategy so that all the four partners follow agreed and similar processes.

However, we caution that, although it is easy to recommend that HB plan and coordinate in a more integrated fashion with GoN and line agencies, the tremendous transaction costs should be taken into account. With the rapid turnover of GoN staff, HB needs to strategically decide where and when coordination is necessary to achieve outcomes and have sustainable impact. We suggest that sites have strategic plans for where and when they need to coordinate with GoN and line agencies to achieve better outcomes and to make the activities last beyond the life of HB.

Improvement of CAPA process

The emphasis in this mid-term evaluation on one particular activity, the CAPA process and its links to LAPA, highlighted a number of possible ways to improve the CAPA process in particular and CCA in general.

Recognizing the uniqueness of HB's CAPA approach, CAPAs should be mainstreamed into LAPAs and into VDC- or municipality-level plans in a prioritized manner. Indeed, a number of newly formed municipalities are already doing it on their own. The integrated approach that HB is using where the critical components of ecosystem system-based adaptation and community-based adaptation (EbA and CBA) are included in the preparation of CAPA and LAPA is in the right direction. However, the LAPA process should be integrated with the VDC-level Local Disaster Risk Management (LDRM) plans using the

[6] One reference about this project that describes the reasons for its success and differences from other programs is: http://www.onecountry.org/story/nepal-novel-project-mixes-literacy-and-microfinance-reach-thousands

framework of environment-friendly local government (EFLG) planning of the MoFALD. This will ensure the institutional mainstreaming and fund leveraging for CAPAs and LAPAs.

Participatory monitoring in the implementation of CAPA/LAPA is critical. To achieve this, clear and locally understandable indicators to measure and monitor vulnerability reduction and resilience enhancement need to be defined. The newly introduced Environment Mitigation Monitoring Plan (EMMP) needs to be truly participatory and uniformly used by all HB partners for which suitable training and capacity building of local government agencies (LGAs) and partner NGOs and CBOs is necessary.

Fund mobilization and in-kind support leveraging from VDCs, CFUGs, LGAs, MSFP, NCCSP, EbA, and others need to be priorities so that the most immediate and urgent vulnerability issues and adaptation measures are taken care of after the endorsement of the plan by the concerned CBOs, VDCs and municipalities. This will enhance community participation, local ownership, and continuity after HB ends.

Windows of Opportunity (WOO) funding for GoN should be strategically and selectively used to support and complement CAPA/LAPA interventions as a large number of CAPAS and LAPAs are either non-implemented or under-implemented due mainly to lack of adequate funds. For example, WOO has the potential to address issues such as shifting cultivation (e.g., broomgrass in Tanahu) but also fill the critical funding gaps of the GoN partners.

When fixing priority adaptation activities, more attention should be given to income-generating and livelihood improvement activities. As with the other activities, leveraging resources from other poverty reduction, livelihood, water supply, and clean energy improvement schemes of government organizations (e.g., Poverty Alleviation Fund [PAF], Appropriate Energy Promotion Centre [AEPC], Rural Drinking Water Support Fund [RDWSF] etc.) is necessary to scale up and sustain CAPA/LAPA activities.

A lack of meaningful joint planning and monitoring among HB partners and between HB and the GoN line agencies is an identified issue that is vitally important in CCA planning as well. A clear division of responsibilities among HB partners based on recognized capacity (for example, CARE has expertise and coordinating role in managing the CCA component) seems to be missing in the current CCA planning, resulting in poor sequencing of activities and weak coordination. WWF has proven experience and expertise on REDD+; NTNC has experience with community-based conservation; and FECOFUN is experienced in community mobilization and CFUG capacity building. This was recognized by the HB design, but partnership and coordination among the partners is still unequal, the norms are not uniform, communication is patchy, and, as a result, coherence, collective will, and programmatic approach are lacking, which is affecting CAPA and LAPA implementation. Improving the relationship between partners based on the proven expertise and capacity of each, and allocating activities accordingly (for example, CARE has a good training-of-trainers program for preparing LRPs), will bring increased efficiency, effectiveness, and relevance to the performance of HB. This will also help improve the partnership with the line agencies due to the expected improvement in the quality of work of HB in the future.

Lessons from TAL

Whereas TAL evolved from originally being an NGO project to being a government-sponsored landscape, we found little evidence that lessons were learned or applied to strategize and shape CHAL programs and activities. We acknowledge that the landscapes are very different in many ways and, therefore, we are not suggesting that the model should be same, only that learning from TAL may be useful.

Lessons that could have been learned from TAL include the following:

- How to create governing institutions at landscape scale.
- How to coordinate among partners.
- How to manage transaction costs.
- How to work with communities.

- How to prioritize sites.
- Most effective approaches to working with communities in terms of multiple partners and sequencing of activities.

We also wish to note that although TAL may not have officially adopted a "complex" approach, it appears to be moving in this direction. Given that the overarching goal of TAL is to create an east-west corridor that would link protected areas across the terai, this marks a rather large failure in many ways. What are implications of this failure for CHAL? We believe that explicitly acknowledging this and other lessons learned in TAL would help to focus the efforts in CHAL and other landscapes that the GoN is considering.

4.2 CONCLUSIONS

Progress in the three HB objectives is generally good, particularly at the site and output levels. The community-based activities, such as biodiversity conservation and NRM groups' capacity building, are showing success. The activities for meeting different objectives are generally integrated as they are mutually compatible and the funding streams allow for flexibility in meeting community and site-based needs. The weakest objective is 2 because it is working on a yet-to-be defined framework and largely relies on policy success with REDD+ and PES mechanisms, although the community-based activities—such as awareness raising, improved cook stoves, biogas, and income generating activities for the poor—are successful.

Partnerships with GoN have been difficult because HB is funded through NGOs, with little to no direct support for the government. It took some time to establish the program-level partnerships with the central government. Although government representatives participated in the original design and development of the program with USAID, this did not ensure ownership of the program by the GoN due to various reasons, including weak communication strategy of HB with GoN partners. The higher-level coordinating mechanism with the nodal ministry— MoFSC through the Steering Committee and Working Groups—seems generally to be functional. At regional and district levels, the coordination mechanism is unclear, patchy, and based on personal rapport and relationships. Only in the Western Development Region, where CHAL is located, are HB activities relatively well coordinated. Partnership and collaboration are generally working at the cluster and site levels, although they are more clear and effective in TAL than in CHAL, but need more coordination and integration.

Partnerships with communities and CBOs are generally good and build on a long history of work with CFUGs and BZUCs by all the partners. In some cases, CFUGs are starting to network to achieve multiple objectives.

Synergies are occurring, particularly between Objectives 1 and 3, which lend themselves fairly naturally to integration. At the site level, many synergies are seen. One of the resounding successes is the creation, strengthening, and expansion of savings and credit cooperatives, which have an impressive amount of capital for extending soft interest loans to members. This, in fact, is one resource that can help continue livelihood activities.

The HB consortium partners are producing better outputs and outcomes because of complementing expertise and capacity of the partners. The synergies can be seen both among the partners, in terms of sharing knowledge and tools, and at the ground level, in terms of more integrated activities and collaboration to work together with communities. However, the transaction costs required of such partnerships are easy to underestimate, as it appears they were in HB, especially at the beginning of the program. A program with four diverse partners and other multiple NGOs, CBOs, and GoN partners requires a tremendous amount of coordination, convening capacity, and management skills, which must be balanced with progress on the ground. Joint planning, monitoring, and reflective learning at all levels can ensure more synergy and complementarities.

Experience of partners played a key role in HB success. However, partners may be overconfident in their experience. For example, some components are not integrated as much as they might have if the partners weren't basically carrying on "business-as-usual" activities with some tweaks.

CAPAs are a good complement to LAPAs, providing a community-based set of vulnerabilities and adaptation activities focused on most vulnerable community groups and forest/biodiversity sites. The large number of CAPAs in both TAL and CHAL is considered an opportunity to develop integrated and implementable LAPAs in future, especially in TAL.

Over the next 20 months, we recommend that HB do the following:

- Learn lessons from integrated sites that are showing synergies to ensure their sustainability after HB (e.g., policy for CCAs and CFUG networking).
- Either phase out patchy or less integrated and successful sites or work to bring them the full package of activities (e.g., re-do or support governance activities, strengthen or re-run CLACs, ensure appropriate technical backstopping).
- Develop a clear strategy for strengthening and/or reframing the water basin approach by focusing resources and activities at sites that have potential to show how the water-basin approach can work (e.g., focus on strong and workable PES sites).
- Use CAPAs as bottom-up planning tool to prepare LAPAs and mainstream both into VDC-level plans using the MoFALD framework of environment friendly local government planning (EFLGP).

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section we provide some overall recommendations for HB as well as future USAID-supported natural resource programs. Specific recommendations for the remaining period of HB are given in Evaluation Question 6.

Incorporate lessons from appropriate previous experiences and projects. We could not find evidence of lessons being learned and applied to the design and implementation of CHAL based on TAL's experiences. From the USAID side, this is particularly surprising as USAID had invested in TAL through the Global Conservation Partnership for 10 years. We did see lessons from the SAGUN project being incorporated. Thus, we hope that the new water program that USAID is designing will leverage the water experiences of TAL and CHAL and build on the lessons learned.

Have a clear strategy for choosing activities and sites. Selection of activities and sites should be clearly linked to program outcomes. The benefits of a few good models should be weighed against trying out a variety of activities at many sites. If HB chooses to initially spread its work over many sites and activities at the beginning, it should be explicit about the purpose and dangers of spreading resources thin and the consequences for activity/site success. The program should also have a programmatic strategy and framework for how to develop integrated activities that can be models for future activities and sustainable over time. For example, HB spread itself thin in CHAL. However, now some strategizing and investment of resources into certain sites might bring them to fruition and provide models that can be legacies, such as watershed management and PES opportunities.

Make sure the right experts are involved. A complex and integrated program with multiple objectives requires multidisciplinary inputs and interdisciplinary management. It is surprising that there is no watershed expert, preferably with experience in payments for ecosystem services, in HB. We are aware that an infrastructure expert was recently brought on as infrastructure emerges even more clearly as a threat to the landscape. However, river basins, watersheds, and catchments were explicit operational units of HB from the outset, yet there were no water management experts with relevant knowledge

involved in the project. Make sure the right expertise even exists at the field level to provide appropriate technical backstopping for specific activities, from seedling choice to water control.

Focus on scaling up community-based organizations (CBOs), especially CFUGs, which are the intervention point of both TAL and CHAL, and also for watershed user groups, where appropriate. The creation of policies and mechanisms to facilitate CBOs to formally network to reach multiple objectives is the next generation of landscape conservation.

Invest more resources in building community capacity to run their own projects from the ground up. Local people should be trained and hired as the project "experts" in biodiversity, wildlife, ecology, public health, appropriate technology, etc., either by projects or by the CBO networks themselves. In buffer zone around Chitwan, for example, they have the capacity to be doing most of the HB activities with local groups and people if training were available. For example, the CMUCs and CMBZ could have their own staff to manage many activities and work in collaboration with national NGOs and government staff.

Get the relationship right with the government from the beginning. Decisions made at the central levels need to be transmitted to the regional and district levels, so that GoN staff at the lower levels will have incentives to own the program, and also coordinate their regular other activities with that of HB. Future programs should be aligned with the GoN's priorities and engage with the GoN's planning process at the local level to the extent possible. Ultimately, it is the successful implementation of activities in the field that will ensure the sustainability of programs.

ANNEX A: STATEMENT OF WORK

C.1 Purpose

The purpose of this contract is to conduct a midterm performance evaluation of USAID/Nepal's Hariyo Ban (HB) project. HB is USAID Nepal's flagship project under the natural resources management and climate change sector which began in August 2011. The results of this evaluation will be used by USAID to inform any necessary changes to improve HB implementation and to inform the design of a new natural resources management project.

C.2 Hariyo Ban Project Information

General overview
Hariyo Ban (HB), Cooperative Agreement No. AID-367-A-11-00003, is a five-year project with a total budget of USD 29.9 million. The project started in August 2011. The overall goal of HB is to reduce adverse impacts of climate change and threats to biodiversity in Nepal. Over the five year period the project focuses on the following objectives:

1. Reduce threats to biodiversity in target landscapes;

2. Build the structures, capacity and operations necessary for effective sustainable landscape management, with a focus on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) readiness; and,

3. Increase the ability of targeted human and ecological communities to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change.

The project area includes two major landscapes in Nepal namely, the Chitwan-Annapurna Landscape (CHAL), and Terai Arc Landscape (TAL).

Project components
In order to achieve the project goal and objectives the HB project has three main components:

Biodiversity Conservation *(IR 1: Biodiversity conserved)***:** The Biodiversity Conservation Component focuses on reducing threats to species and ecosystems at landscape level. The focal species include tiger, rhino, elephant, grey wolf, snow leopard, gharial, musk deer, red panda, swamp deer, giant hornbill, dolphin etc. The program will adopt a threats-based approach to biodiversity conservation. The landscape conservation approach will continue to link protected areas through biological corridors to meet the ecological requirements of focal species. Provision for land and water corridors, sound river basin management and climate refugia will be incorporated into landscape conservation design, and strategies developed to facilitate species movement, hydrological flows and continuation of other ecosystem functions.

Sustainable Landscapes - REDD+ Readiness *(IR 2: Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, reduced and sequestration enhanced)***:** Deforestation and forest degradation are the major sources of GHG emission in Nepal. REDD+ presents an opportunity to address the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation through sustainable landscape management, at the same time enhancing the wellbeing of forest-dependent communities including minority and socially excluded groups. During the initial years, this program supported development of national policies for REDD+ Readiness, initiating capacity building on GHG emission monitoring, identifying and addressing drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in both CHAL and TAL, and initiating a feasibility study of payments for environmental services (PES) in both landscapes.

Climate Change Adaptation (*IR 3: Capacity to adapt to adverse impacts of climate change improved)*

Climate change poses one of the greatest threats to sustainable development in Nepal, as climate hazards are increasingly posing adverse impacts on vulnerable human as well as ecological communities. Human vulnerability to climate change is linked with poverty rates, reliance on rain-fed agriculture, lack of basic services and limited livelihoods alternatives as well as gender inequality and social exclusion. Climate change is projected to reduce the livelihoods assets of vulnerable people, especially those who are dependent on biodiversity and ecosystem services (access to food, water and shelter), as well as increasing disasters.

Hariyo Ban will enable better understanding of the nature of adaptation priorities for people and ecosystems, develop processes for community led adaptation that are rooted in local institutions and linked with ecosystem services, identify equitable, inclusive and cost effective actions for integrated adaptation approaches, and explore how best to link with bottom up and top down adaptation efforts in Nepal.

Project area coverage

The HB project is implemented in two nationally important bio-diverse landscapes defined by the Government of Nepal (GoN): CHitwan-Annapurna Landscape (CHAL); and Terai Arc Landscape (TAL). The two landscapes overlap in Chitwan and Nawalparasi Districts of the central terai region. The CHAL extends from the Annapurna and Manaslu Conservation Areas southwards down through the mid-hills to connect the Chitwan National Park through the Barandabhar forests. Within the CHAL landscape, HB activities focus on the subwatersheds of the Marsyangdi and Seti Rivers as well as the lower part of the Kali Gandaki connecting to Chitwan and Nawalparasi. The HB project covers six districts in CHAL - Gorkha, Tanahu, Lamjung, Kaski, Chitwan and Nalwalparasi – which constitute the three sub-watersheds.

In TAL, the HB project covers Chitwan, Banke and Bardia National Parks and Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve; their respective buffer zones; Khata, Basanta and Barandabhar Corridors; and Dovan and Lamahi Bottlenecks. The districts that the HB project covers within the TAL landscapes include Chitwan, Nawalparasi, Rupandehi, Kapilbastu, Dang, Banke, Bardia, Kailali and Kanchanpur.

Project implementing partners and roles

Four partner organizations – WWF, as the Prime, with CARE, National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC) and Federation of Community Forestry Users Nepal (FECOFUN) as sub-grantees comprise the HB Partnership. As Prime WWF provides technical leadership and is accountable for program management and reporting. WWF is mainly responsible for natural resource, biodiversity conservation and ecosystem related activities and leads the biodiversity and sustainable landscape components. As a prime, WWF is also responsible for grant management and monitoring programmatic progress and impacts. CARE leads the climate change adaptation component while contributing to various elements across the program. FECOFUN is responsible for mobilizing its huge network of Community Forest User Groups CFUG) for effective participation in the design, implementation and monitoring of the program. It is also responsible for issue based advocacy and ensuring good governance among NRM groups. NTNC is responsible for activities related to protected areas and buffer zone management. Each organization has their primary responsibilities, but due to the integrated nature of Hariyo Ban Program, they will provide inputs to all components.

Project context and issues

The state of biodiversity and the environment in Nepal is closely intertwined with the wellbeing of Nepali people. Hariyo Ban program is developed on the same premise and contains a mix of conventional and innovative strategies that weaves the three objectives of biodiversity conservation, sustainable landscapes and climate adaptation into a single program that benefits biodiversity and people.

By any standard, Nepal is a biologically and culturally diverse country. Nepal has 118 ecosystems and 35 forest types that provide habitat for 9.3% of birds, 4.5% of mammals, 2.6% of butterflies, and 2.0% of all flowering plant species known globally (NBS, 2002).

Approximately 85% of Nepalese live in rural areas and depend on indigenous knowledge and traditional agricultural technology. The natural resource base is closely linked with traditional agricultural technology, and the populations, especially the poor who have few assets, are heavily dependent on forests for their subsistence livelihoods. Forests fulfill their water, fuelwood, fodder, non-timber forest products, and timber needs. Despite the importance of forests in maintaining ecological balance and supporting livelihoods and economic development, Nepal's forests cover is reducing over the years. Drivers of forest loss and degradation include high dependency on forests and forest products; unsustainable harvesting; forest fires; encroachment; overgrazing; resettlement; and infrastructure development. Underlying causes include increasing demand for land; landlessness; lack of alternative livelihood options; inefficient use of resources; agriculture expansion; market failure; weak law enforcement and governance; new economic growth prospects; and ad hoc policies and processes. Poverty and population growth play a critical underlying role.

In both the landscapes of CHAL and TAL Hariyo Ban works with climate vulnerable communities and natural resource management groups (including Community Forestry User Groups (CFUGs), Buffer Zone Community Forestry User Groups (BZCFUGs), Sub-watershed Management Committees, and Community Conservation Area Management Committees. The program particularly focuses on poor and excluded groups including women, Dalits and highly marginalized janajatis, who play a key role as the custodians of natural resources and whose livelihoods largely depend on natural resources.

At national level, four key ministries, namely Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation (MoFSC), Ministry of Environment (MoE), Ministry of Local Development (MoLD) and Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MoAC) and four key departments - Department of Forests, Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservations, Department of Soil Conservation and Watershed Management, Department of Forest Research and Survey are the major stakeholders as well as beneficiaries of Hariyo Ban program.

An important feature of Hariyo Ban is the combination of multiple funding streams (biodiversity, GCC-Adaptation and GCC-Sustainable Landscapes) in a single program, with multiple high-level objectives corresponding to these three types of funding. Hariyo Ban is implementing a variety of activities, some funded with only a single funding source and others using blended funding; in some cases activities were implemented in the same geographies with the same stakeholders while in other cases these were quite distinct. This has presented both opportunities and challenges in program design and implementation, and USAID/Nepal seeks to learn from this experience.

Evaluation rationale and purpose

HB project is in its third year of implementation. As HB is a complex project with multiple stakeholders with a big scope, a significant amount of time during the first year was devoted to developing project strategies, developing common understanding among partners and stakeholders, and conducting several studies to inform the project planning. The actual implementation in the field mainly started towards the later part of the first year and has since gained significant momentum in the field level implementation. The purpose of this evaluation is thus to examine how effective the projects strategies and approaches have been in addressing the NRM and climate change issues, achieving the project goals and objectives and finally to identify what needs to change in the project for the remaining period until August 2016.

Another important purpose of this evaluation is to provide inputs to the upcoming NRM GCC project which is under design at the moment. The evaluation findings and recommendations will be directly applicable to this new project. The evaluation will answer the questions outlined in section C.4 below.

This evaluation covers the period since the project inception to date.

Audience and intended uses: The main user of the evaluation findings and recommendations will be the USAID/Nepal Mission, particularly the Environment team, the implementing partners (WWF, CARE, NTNC, FECOFUN and their sub grantees). The development community, that is working in the area of

biodiversity, sustainable landscapes and climate change will also benefit from this evaluation. USAID/Nepal will use the findings and recommendations to make changes to the HB project in collaboration with its implementing partners and also share lessons learned with other stakeholders. Furthermore, the evaluation will also be used to inform the ongoing design for a NRM and Climate Change Project.

Evaluation questions

The evaluation seeks to answer the following questions:

Which Hariyo Ban strategies or approaches currently underway need more time to reach a successful outcome, and which could be replicated or expanded in the future based on their success to date?

How effective have the project's partnerships with the Government of Nepal and local communities been in terms of implementing activities and delivering results?

What synergies or challenges can be observed due to the combination of multiple high-level objectives (biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and climate adaptation) within a single project? Does evidence exist that the project's approach to integration led to improved outcomes?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of the project's unique approach to climate adaptation planning and implementation at the community level, as opposed to the higher-level LAPA process implemented elsewhere?

What key gaps and challenges remain in terms of accomplishing the stated objectives of Hariyo Ban?

Evaluation design and methodology

The evaluation design must consist of quantitative and qualitative methods that provide for a strong analysis to address the evaluation questions in section C.4. The design must describe in detail what data will be collected for answering each question, what method will be used to collect these data, who will provide the data and how the data will be analyzed to arrive at findings, conclusions and recommendations. The Mission expects the Offerors to propose creative suggestions in terms of methods of data collection, beneficiary and stakeholders' engagement in the evaluation process, selecting samples for data collection and analysis of data. The Offeror must complete the evaluation design matrix in Attachment 4. The successful Offeror's methodology will be adopted in the task order.

Tasks

The Evaluation Team will perform the following tasks in order to complete the evaluation. The tasks maybe modified based on the successful Offerors proposal and also during finalization of the evaluation plan through team planning meeting.

Task One: Prepare for Evaluation

Prior to Arrival in Nepal:

Review background materials. Prior to arrival in-country, the Evaluation Team must review background materials on HB project provided by the Mission such as the project award document, work plans, monitoring and evaluation plan, semi-annual and annual performance reports and other related technical documents. See section C.8 for a list of possible documents for review.

Hold conference call with HB evaluation staff at USAID/Nepal. If the contractor has any question about the evaluation, the HB project or the logistics matters related to this evaluation, the Evaluation Team may hold a conference call with the COR who will coordinate the participation of other members of USAID/Nepal staff.

Conduct interviews with relevant POCs in Washington. The Evaluation Team leader will interview relevant people from PPL, NRM/GCC team in Washington as suggested by the COR**.** The interview may be conducted in person or over phone.

After Arrival in Nepal:

Conduct an in-briefing. Upon arrival in Nepal, the Evaluation Team must meet with key USAID staff in the NRM and GCC team, Program and Project Development Office, and the Front Office to provide context for the HB evaluation and prepare for the team planning meeting. The COR will arrange the schedule for these meetings.

Conduct a team planning meeting with USAID and HB staff. The evaluation Team Leader will lead a team planning meeting at the U.S. Embassy, facilitated by the COR who will also manage logistics for this event. During this meeting the Evaluation Team will meet with USAID/Nepal and HB senior staff who will answer any remaining questions the Contractor may have, including clarify team members' roles and responsibilities and developing a final schedule for data collection, analysis and report writing.

Deliverables for Task One

Final Evaluation Plan. Based on the inputs from team planning meeting, the Contractor will submit for final USAID/Nepal approval its evaluation plan for carrying out this evaluation. The final evaluation plan will include the methodology, a list of stakeholders to be consulted as part of any key informant interviews, focus group discussions, surveys, etc. The evaluation plan will include a detailed timeline for carrying out the evaluation and a breakdown of which party is responsible for coordinating logistics for the various in-country tasks. The evaluation plan must clearly document any changes made as a result of the team planning meetings including revised evaluation questions. The evaluation will be managed by a staff member in Program and Project Development Office (PPD). While the COR and HB will assist the Evaluation Team to arrange the necessary logistics to implement the final evaluation plan, the Contractor is responsible for the costs associated with in-country travel, accommodations and other logistics for the Evaluation Team members.

C.6.2 Task 2: Collect Data, Conduct Analyses, and Complete First Draft Evaluation Report

Based on the Final Evaluation Plan, the Contractor must complete data collection work, analyze the quantitative and qualitative data collected, and prepare the first draft report. The data collection must take place both in Kathmandu and the project districts and project sites as agreed in the evaluation plan. The population data collected during the evaluation must be disaggregated by sex. During the analysis phase, the Contractor must analyze the differential impacts on male and female project participants.

Deliverables for Task Two

First Draft Evaluation Report

The first draft evaluation report must include the following sections. The Contractor may suggest additional content or changes to format which are subject to COR approval.

List of Acronyms

Executive Summary

Evaluation Purpose and Evaluation Questions

Project Background

Evaluation Methods and Limitations

Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Annexes:

1) Statement of Work,
2) Evaluation Methods and Limitations,
3) Data Collection Instruments,
4) Sources of Information (list of persons interviewed, bibliography of documents reviewed, databases, etc.),
5) Disclosure of any Conflicts of Interest,
6) Statement of Differences (if applicable), and
7) Final evaluation plan.

For additional guidance on the format of the report and how the report will be reviewed by USAID, see Attachment 5 "Checklist for Assessing USAID Evaluation Reports".

C.6.3 Task 3: Complete Final Evaluation Report and Share Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

The Contractor must complete the following subtasks to produce the HB evaluation document:

Present preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations. The purpose of this presentation and discussion is to gather initial feedback from key USAID/Nepal staff and HB staff.

Hold three listening sessions with beneficiaries and stakeholders. Listening sessions are a way to report back to people who provided data for the evaluation. The main purpose of these sessions are to present draft evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations to a representative group of beneficiaries and stakeholders and solicit their feedback.

The Contractor must include a summary report of the listening session as an annex to the evaluation report. The Contractor may also revise its draft findings, conclusions and recommendations based on these sessions. Of the three listening sessions, the Contractor will organize and host one in Kathmandu and two outside the valley at sites where the Evaluation Team will collect data during the evaluation. The Contractor will gather information on whether the stakeholders agree with the findings, conclusions and recommendations, whether or not they have additional or alternate conclusions and recommendations, or whether they have additional information to share about the project. The Contractor must cover all associated costs for the three listening sessions including, for example:

a. Four round trip tickets for the Evaluation Team members who will form pairs, each pair making one trip to conduct a listening session outside of Kathmandu.
b. One-day rental of three venues, including a projector if required – one in Kathmandu, two outside the valley.
c. Transportation and meal costs for participants as applicable.

Incorporate Mission feedback and submit final report. Revise first draft report to include both stakeholder feedback from listening sessions and feedback from USAID/Nepal. Produce a final report in accordance with the outline described in section C.6.3.a.1.

Deliverables for Task Three

Submit Final Evaluation Report for Mission to review. Produce the final report in accordance with the outline described below:

The final evaluation report must include the following sections. The Contractor may suggest additional content or changes to format which are subject to COR approval.

List of Acronyms

Executive Summary

Evaluation Purpose and Evaluation Questions

Project Background

Evaluation Methods and Limitations

Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Annexes:

1) Statement of Work,
2) Evaluation Methods and Limitations,
3) Data Collection Instruments,
4) Sources of Information (list of persons interviewed, bibliography of documents reviewed, databases, etc.),
5) Disclosure of any Conflicts of Interest,
6) Statement of Differences (if applicable),
7) Summary of Listening Session Feedback,
8) Final evaluation plan,
9) Raw data from both the data collection period and listening sessions,
10) Nepali translation of the Executive Summary.

Electronic copies of Final Evaluation Report and Oral Presentation. The Contractor must provide the COR with electronic versions of the final report in both MS Word and searchable PDF format via email.

Oral presentation and discussion. The presentation will include an oral presentation and discussion with all team members and other interested parties at USAID. The presentation and discussion will include specific recommendations for USAID/Nepal on how to improve the HB and any potential future projects in NRM and GCC areas. The Contractor must take notes during this discussion and provide them to the COR in Word format. The Contractor must provide the COR with a CD-ROM and hard copy version of the PowerPoint presentation in advance of the presentation. The notes, Power Point presentation, and the act of giving the presentation itself would constitute fulfillment of the deliverable.

C. 7 Evaluation Team

The contractor must field a team composed of 3-4 individuals comprising a range of skills directly relevant to the purpose of the Hariyo Ban evaluation. As a group, the team must have among them at least six years of experience in biodiversity conservation, climate change, and rural development activities which seek to improve local livelihoods. At least one person (preferably the Team Leader) will be an evaluation specialist with at least seven years of designing and implementing quantitative, qualitative or mixed-methods evaluations of conservation projects. At least one individual will have knowledge and experience specifically related to planning and implementing rural climate change adaptation or mitigation activities in developing countries. One of the team members should have experience with gender and social issues in development, preferably in Nepal. The team should be composed of the following:

Team leader/Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist: The Evaluation Team leader is responsible for the final deliverables. S/he must have a postgraduate degree, such as a Master's degree or PhD. The Evaluation Team leader must have at least seven years of experience leading and/or evaluating biodiversity conservation, climate change or related development projects.

Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Specialist: This person will provide subject matter expertise and must have experience conducting project/program evaluations or working on Evaluation Teams. S/he must possess at least a master's degree in natural resources management, climate change and have at least five years of demonstrated experience working on conservation and rural development projects, and at least 2 years of demonstrated experience in designing and conducting evaluations for natural resources or international development projects.

Local Evaluation Team members – Additional team members (1-2) with at least five years of experience in biodiversity, natural resources management, climate change projects in Nepal as members of the Evaluation Team or project management team. These individuals should be proficient in Nepali and English. They should have experience working with a range of stakeholders, including a keen understanding and experience in working with the government of Nepal and at the community levels.

USAID staff members from Washington or Nepal may accompany the Evaluation team for all or part of their work. The COR will notify the contractor about such participation in advance.

C. 8 Documents for review

USAID/Nepal will provide following documents to the Team leader for review:

- Project Description Document,
- M&E plan,
- Progress reports,
- Chitwan Annapurna Landscape: A Rapid Assessment,
- Climate Change Impacts on the Biodiversity of the Terai Arc Landscape and Chitwan Annapurna Landscape,
- Identifying Barriers to Dalit and Janajati Women's Successful Leadership in Community Based Forest Management in Nepal,
- Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Mainstreaming Strategy for HB Project,
- Chitwan Annapurna Landscape: Drivers of Deforestation and Forest Degradation,
- Baseline Study of Hariyo Ban Program.

C. 9 Timeline for the Evaluation

The following is a tentative timeline for the evaluation tasks, the detailed timeline will be developed during team planning meeting and as part of finalizing the evaluation plan.

Tasks	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10
Sign contract	*									
Review Background materials	*									
Hold conference call with HB evaluation staff at USAID/Nepal	*									
Conduct interviews with relevant POCs in Washington	*									
Conduct an in-briefing		*								
Conduct a team planning meeting with USAID and HB staff		*								
Submit final evaluation plan		*								
Collect evaluation data in Kathmandu and outside at the project districts and sites		*	*	*	*	*				

Tasks	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10
Analyze data, submit First Draft Evaluation Report to COR for review							*	*		
Present preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations								*		
Hold three listening sessions with beneficiaries and stakeholders								*		
Incorporate Mission feedback and submit final report									*	*

ANNEX B: FINAL EVALUATION PLAN

Methodology and Tools for Timely Completion of Tasks: ECODIT recognizes the complex nature of the HB project, due to multiple funding streams with multiple high-level objectives corresponding to three components: 1) biodiversity conservation; 2) sustainable landscapes—REDD+ readiness; and 3) climate change adaptation. The project also operates within a vast geographic scope in numerous districts across two biodiverse landscapes that extend from the terai across the Lower and Middle Hills to the mountains of Nepal. Given the impact that the state of biodiversity and the environment has on the wellbeing of the Nepali people, the HB project and any successor NRM programs in Nepal can greatly contribute to USAID's objectives as stated in the Agency's 2014–2018 Nepal Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS).

For the midterm performance evaluation, ECODIT proposes a team that is extremely knowledgeable of the Nepalese environment and conditions, and a methodology to complete evaluation tasks within a nine-week timeframe that ensures gender is considered and emphasizes rapid mobilization to 1) prepare for the evaluation (Task 1); 2) collect data, conduct analyses, and complete the first draft of the Evaluation Report (Task 2); and 3) complete the Final Evaluation Report and share findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

As provided by USAID, the evaluation will address six questions to determine the effectiveness of project approaches and partnerships to date. These questions and specifics for addressing them are detailed in Appendix A, Evaluation Design Matrix, with specific questions for key informant interviews and focus groups discussions explicated for each evaluation sub-question in Appendix B. In general terms, the team will approach the evaluation of the questions per Exhibit 1.

Our data collection methodology will use:

- Desktop review of secondary data including HB Project documents and data, Government of Nepal (GoN) documents and data, and related scientific and technical reports and data prepared by donors and implementing partners in Nepal to understand and assess implementation progress towards HB project objectives. A document review and data collection protocol will be utilized that allows for quantitative analysis.
- Semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs) with relevant stakeholders, GoN officials, and implementing partners, using a standardized interview protocol to allow for quantitative analysis (Appendix C). Interviews will be used to understand attitudes and impressions of the HB project and its partnerships, help explain project and partnership successes and/or shortcomings, and identify specific models for replication in the future.[7] With input from USAID/Nepal and the WWF Hariyo Ban we have identified and prioritized a list of key informants (Appendix D).
- Focus group discussions (FGDs) with community leaders, beneficiary groups, women, and local organizations. Focus groups will utilize a standardized agenda to explore unanticipated or less apparent issues, and provide context for quantitative analyses (Appendix E). FGD participants will be drawn from districts in which the HB project is being implemented, with primary focus on the districts where most activities have occurred to date.
- Site visits and field observations will be conducted in at least nine districts and utilize a structured data collection protocol to observe how the HB project operates on the ground and to

[7] The ECODIT team welcomes input from HB project staff on stakeholders to interview and/or participants to engage through FGDs, but likely candidates include: implementing partners (WWF, CARE, NTNC, FECOFUN, and their sub-awardees); government partners, including the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation (MoFSC), Ministry of Environment (MoE), Ministry of Local Development (MoLD), and Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MoAC); four key national departments (Department of Forests, Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservations, Department of Soil Conservation and Watershed Management, Department of Forest Research and Survey); community groups (BZMC, CBAPU, CFUGs, BZCFUGs), Sub-watershed Management Committees; and Community Conservation Area Management Committees (with emphasis on women, Dalits, and highly marginalized janajatis).

understand and assess day-to-day challenges to implementation. Please see Appendix F for the proposed itinerary.

Our data analysis methodology, as mentioned above, will standardize document review, interview and site observation protocols to enable quantitative analysis of findings, to allow comparison and ascertain trends based on factors such as gender, ethnic group/caste and/or district, and to identify emerging themes and trends and answer the evaluation questions. We will utilize parametric and non-parametric statistics, and benefit/cost and return on investment (ROI) analyses to quantify HB project impacts, and deviations in impacts between gender and geographic regions within the project's major landscapes.

Exhibit 1. ECODIT Team's General Approach to Evaluation Questions[8]

Workplan with Roles, Responsibilities, and Timeline for Implementation: ECODIT proposes a four-member team to conduct the evaluation. Exhibit 2 outlines team members' roles and responsibilities. Appendix B presents the Level of Effort (LOE) Plan. ECODIT will conduct the evaluation over a nine-week period, starting on January 5, 2015. A detailed implementation timeline for all evaluation tasks and deliverables is provided as Appendix B.

Exhibit 2. ECODIT Team Roles and Responsibilities

Team Member	Proposed Roles and Responsibilities
Team Leader, M&E Specialist, and Biodiversity Conservation Expert	• Liaise with USAID COR • Provide overall technical project management, evaluation design, and day-to-day staff direction, including assigning individual data collection, analysis, and writing duties • Serve as principal analyst and author of all deliverables • Plan evaluation framework and methodology and lead data analysis • Design collection instruments, with significant input from team members • Provide technical inputs on biodiversity conservation, rural development, and gender concerns • Report to the Home Office (HO) Project Manager
Climate Change (CC) Adaptation and Mitigation Specialist	• Provide technical input on climate change adaptation and mitigation and evaluation protocols • Contribute to refining evaluation design to Nepal's local context • Assist with ground-truthing, data analysis, and report drafting • Support the team leader by establishing contact with relevant government officials and stakeholders, and in scheduling meetings in Kathmandu and elsewhere
Forestry and NRM Specialist	• Provide technical input on biodiversity conservation, PES, environmental economics and evaluation protocols • Assist with data collection and analysis, understanding local context, logistics management, and report drafting
Rural Development and Social Inclusion Specialist	• Provide technical input on rural development, gender, and cultural contexts in Nepal, and on evaluation protocols • Assist with data analysis and report drafting • Lead coordination of team logistics (e.g., arrange accommodations, transportation, and other logistics for site/field visits, as needed)

[8] Please see Exhibit 3 in main report.

APPENDIX A: EVALUATION DESIGN MATRIX

Please see the final Evaluation Design Matrix in Annex C of the main report.

APPENDIX B: FGD AND KII QUESTIONS FOR EACH EVALUATION SUB-QUESTION

Please see the final FGD and KII questions in Annex C of the main report.

APPENDIX C: LIST OF KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS BY PRIORITY

Please see the final list of Key Informants interviewed in Annex D of the main report.

APPENDIX D: SEMI-STRUCTURED KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

Please see Annex C in the main report.

APPENDIX E: SEMI-STRUCTURED SURVEY FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Please see the survey for focus group discussions in Annex C of the main report.

APPENDIX F: PROPOSED ITINERARY

Please see the final itinerary in Annex C of the main report.

ANNEX C: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Evaluation Design Matrix

Evaluation Questions	Key Elements of the Questions (Sub-questions)	Data Needed for Answering the Question/Sub-questions	Data Collection Tools/ Instruments	Sources of Data (Primary and Secondary)	Methods of Analysis*
1. Which Hariyo Ban (HB) strategies or approaches currently underway need more time to reach a successful outcome, and which could be replicated or expanded in the future based on their success to date?	• What strategies and approaches are currently being used by the HB project? • Which strategies and approaches are yielding positive results and why? • How can successful strategies and approaches be replicated or expanded (e.g., from one district to another, within the same district)? • Which strategies and approaches are proving less successful to date and what modifications/interventions can be introduced to accelerate their progress?	Strategies and approaches and current outcomes for each strategy that HB is using to a) reduce threats to species and ecosystems at landscape level; b) implement sustainable landscape management to reduce drivers of deforestation and forest degradation while enhancing the wellbeing of forest-dependent communities including minority and socially excluded groups; and c) address climate hazards that increasingly pose adverse impacts on vulnerable human as well as ecological communities.	Review literature and data using pre-structured guides; conduct standardized interview surveys; hold FGD using questionnaires and discussion guides; perform site visits and field observations using pre-prepared forms.	Primary: Information collected from project staff; GoN and USAID officials; and the project's community members, beneficiaries and stakeholders through interview surveys, FGDs, and questionnaires. Secondary: Reports; policies; agreement/MOU documents; workshop summaries; quarterly and annual project reports; project PMP, including baseline data; GN reports; statistical and financial data; GIS data; forest inventory data; actions, decrees, meeting minutes, by-laws of CFUG and NRM groups; media reports.	Use transcribed FGD proceedings; compiled interview findings; and reports to identify emerging themes and trends. Statistically compare changes in data over time.

2. How effective have the project's partnerships with the Government of Nepal (GoN) and local communities been in terms of implementing activities and delivering results?	• What partnerships exist between the project and the GoN and local communities? • What influence did partners have on activities implemented? • Did sites benefit from having collaboration with partners? • How do these partnerships correlate with the ability of the project to implement activities and deliver results?	Official partnership agreements/MOUs between HB and GoN or communities. Baseline data and current results from performance reports. Perceptions of effectiveness from those involved in partnership and key project beneficiaries.	Review literature using pre-structured guides; conduct standardized interview surveys; hold FGD using questionnaires and discussion guides; perform site visits and field observations using pre-prepared forms.	Primary: Information collected from project staff; GoN officials; and the project's community members, beneficiaries and stakeholders through interview surveys, FGDs, and questionnaires. Secondary: Quarterly and annual project reports; agreements/MOUs between GoN and community partners; workshop summaries; project PMP, including baseline data; GoN reports; statistical and financial data; GIS data; actions, decrees, meeting minutes of CFUG and NRM groups.	Use partnership agreements/MOUs and performance reports to determine partner expectations versus outcomes. Compare types of partnerships across sites. Compare success of partners in meeting project objectives. Identify factors that contribute to successful or ineffective partnerships.
3. What synergies or challenges can be observed due to the combination of multiple high-level objectives (biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and climate adaptation) within a single project?	• What site implemented activities aimed at meeting more than one high-level objective? • What are the benefits of implementing these activities across multiple objectives? • What challenges occurred from implementing activities across multiple objectives? • Which high-level objectives show synergies?	List of sites where activities aim to meet multiple high-level objectives. Baseline and performance indicators and results for each objective. Perceptions from project staff and project beneficiaries regarding synergies and challenges observed in each site.	Review literature using pre-structured guides; conduct standardized interview surveys; hold FGD using questionnaires and discussion guides; perform site visits and field observations using pre-prepared forms.	Primary: Information collected from project staff; GoN and USAID officials; and the project's community members, beneficiaries and stakeholders through interview surveys, FGDs, and questionnaires.	Use performance report assessments and data to identify and compare outcomes in sites with activities in one high-level objective versus those with multiple objectives. Use insights from KIIs and FGDs to

	• How might challenges be overcome to meet multiple objectives?			Secondary: Quarterly and annual project reports; workshop summaries; project PMP, including baseline data; GoN reports; GIS data; actions, decrees, meeting minutes of CFUG and NRM groups.	identify perceived synergies with high-level objectives and address challenges associated with multiple objectives.
4. Does evidence exist that the project's approach to integration led to improved outcomes?	• What is the project's approach to integration? • Has the project observed better than expected outcomes that can be attributed to integration approach?	HB's stated approach to integration. Data from current project results versus baseline data collected. Perceptions of success (and success factors) of the integration approach from project implementers and beneficiaries.	Review literature and data using pre-structured guides; conduct standardized interview surveys; hold FGD using questionnaires and discussion guides; perform site visits and field observations using pre-prepared forms.	Primary: Information collected from project staff; GoN and USAID officials; and the project's community members, beneficiaries and stakeholders through interview surveys, FGDs, and questionnaires. Secondary: Quarterly and annual project reports; workshop summaries; project PMP, including baseline data; GoN reports; statistical and financial data; GIS data; actions, decrees, meeting minutes of CFUG and NRM groups.	Use project reports to review HB approach to integration. Use latest performance reports to determine HB outcomes to date. Document degree of influence integration approach had on positive outcomes.
5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the project's unique	• What are the key differences between the community-level approach implemented	HB and LAPA strategies and approaches to CAPI. Results of activities undertaken utilizing each strategy and	Review literature using pre-structured guides; conduct	Primary: Information collected from project staff; GoN and USAID officials;	Use reports to identify key differences between HB and

approach to climate adaptation planning and implementation (CAPI) at the community level, as opposed to the higher-level LAPA process implemented elsewhere?	by HB as opposed to the LAPA process? • What are the key aspects of the HB/LAPA approaches to CAPI that have been particularly successful in achieving outcomes? • What are the key aspects of the HB/LAPA approaches to CAPI that have been particularly challenging?	data from results versus baseline. Information from CAPI implementers regarding perceived challenges.	standardized interview surveys; hold FGD using questionnaires and discussion guides; perform site visits and field observations using pre-prepared forms.	and the project's community members, beneficiaries and stakeholders through interview surveys, FGDs, and questionnaires. Secondary: LAPA and HB strategy documents; project quarterly and annual reports; project PMP, including baseline data; GoN reports; statistical and financial data; GIS data; actions, decrees, meeting minutes of CFUG and NRM groups.	LAPA processes. Use reports, KIIs and FGDs to identify key aspects of HB/LAPA approaches that achieve CAPI outcomes. Compare successes and shortcomings of activities implemented using the HB community-level approach versus LAPA to identify things that work well or need improvement.
6. What key gaps and challenges remain in terms of accomplishing the stated objectives of Hariyo Ban?	• Which objectives are on target to be met? • Which objectives have fallen behind proposed targets? • What are potential causes of delay in meeting stated objectives? • Can challenges be overcome in order to achieve project objectives?	Data from performance reports indicating current results versus baseline data. Information from HB implementers regarding perceived challenges.	Review literature and data using pre-structured guides; conduct standardized interview surveys; hold FGD using questionnaires and discussion guides; perform site visits and field observations using pre-prepared forms.	Primary: Information collected from project staff; GoN and USAID officials; and the project's community members, beneficiaries and stakeholders through interview surveys, FGDs, and questionnaires. Secondary: Project background surveys and assessments, quarterly and annual reports; project PMP, including baseline data;	Use project baseline date, implementation plans, quarterly reports and KIIs and FGDs to identify and compare stated objectives at project outset versus stated current targets and assess whether or not project objectives can be attained. Document, possibly as short case studies, noteworthy

				statistical and and financial data; GIS data; forest inventory data; actions, decrees, meeting minutes of CFUG and NRM groups.	successes and challenges at site level.

* Data will be disaggregated by sex, ethnic group/caste, and district, as feasible.

FGD and KII Questions and Sub-questions

Questions 1 and 6: Which Hariyo Ban (HB) strategies or approaches currently underway need more time to reach a successful outcome, and which could be replicated or expanded in the future based on their success to date?

Sub-questions	FGD Questionnaire	KII Questionnaire
What strategies and approaches are currently being used by the HB project? (secondary sources)	From secondary sources	From secondary sources
Which strategies and approaches are yielding positive results and why?	What do you consider the greatest strengths/benefits of Hariyo Ban? Which of the activities have yielded the most positive results? Why do you think these are most successful?	Of the three goals of HB, which is the most successful to date? Which is the least successful to date/needs improvement? (Please rank on a scale of 1–4.) How successfully has HB integrated cross-cutting themes (livelihoods, GESI, governance) into its goals? (Please rank on a scale of 1–4.) For successful ones: Why do you think those aspects are most successful?
How can successful strategies and approaches be replicated or expanded (e.g., from one district to another, within the same district)?	Could these be replicated or expanded to other sites? What activities can be done in other communities—next village?	For the successful ones, could these be replicated or expanded to other sites?
Which strategies and approaches are proving less successful to date and what modifications/ interventions can be introduced to accelerate their progress?	What do you consider the greatest weaknesses/challenges of Hariyo Ban? Which activities need improvement or show least progress? What activities did not work well? What activities had the most barriers? What could be done to improve their progress?	For weak ones (identified above): Why do they need improvement? What could be done to improve their progress?

Question 2: How effective have the project's partnerships with the Government of Nepal (GoN) and local communities been in terms of implementing activities and delivering results?

Sub-questions	FGD Questionnaire	KII Questionnaire
What partnerships exist between the project and the GoN and local communities?	From secondary sources	Which agencies (GoN, community group) have signed in MOU for the partnership? What are the roles and responsibilities of each partner? What are common objective of partnership?
What influence did partners have on activities implemented?	In which activities were this community people involved in HB as a partner?	Which activities have been effectively implemented by the partners?

Did sites benefit from having collaboration with partners?	What benefits communities receive/ experience from the HB (tangible and intangible) as a partner? Who benefited most in the communities from HB and how?	What benefits did the community or group get? What site specific improvements have been observed so far? How do you rate the benefits (1–4 scale)?
How do these partnerships correlate with the ability of the project to implement activities and deliver results?	NA	What tangible and/or intangible results have been produced by the partners?

Question 3: What synergies or challenges can be observed due to the combination of multiple high-level objectives (biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, and climate adaptation) within a project?

Sub-questions	FGD Questionnaires	Key Informant Questionnaire
What site implemented activities aimed at meeting more than one high-level objective?	NA	What activity or program demonstrates multiple (more than one) outcomes or benefits?
What are the benefits of implementing these activities across multiple objectives?	What are the types of benefits from the activity/program? What is the perception of the people (CFUGs, etc) about attaining these multiple benefits with one intervention (activity)? Is it possible? Under what condition? What arrangements are needed to achieve it? To whom the additional benefits of synergy accrue? Marginalized community, poor, women, or to wider beneficiaries including those living further away?	What are the linkages or steps or processes through which the synergy is attained?
What challenges occurred from implementing activities across multiple objectives?	What are the challenges or obstacles in implementing activity/activities/program leading to multiple outcomes?	What types of challenges (obstacles) have you encountered in implementing activities that yield multiple outcomes (benefits) or synergy?
Which high-level objectives show synergies?	NA	Which objective (among the three objectives) is crucial (important) to attain multiple outcomes? Have they seen in any other project or area that demonstrates this synergy? What is the most important factor (external or internal) that leads to multiple outcomes or benefits? – Technology – Organization – Community mobilization – Scarcity of products/services – Financial resources

How might challenges be overcome to meet multiple objectives?	How can these factors be mitigated to attain synergy? Is it possible? If yes how? If not why not?	How can these challenges (obstacles) be mitigated?

Question 4: Does evidence exist that the project's approach to integration led to improved outcomes?

Sub-questions	FGD Questionnaire	Key Informant Questionnaire
What is the project's approach to integration?	NA	What is the process through which the organizational/institutional integration takes place? Is the process initiated by the partner/s? or other organizations or individuals? Has it been documented?
Has the project observed better than expected outcomes that can be attributed to integration approach?	Are there any sites that you know where the project has integration (organizational or institutional) of more than one program activity leading to improved outcome?	Are there any other examples around, which show improved outcomes due to integration? Through the HB project? Through other programs? What are the challenges in promoting integration? How can we mitigate the obstacles?

Question 5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the project's unique approach to climate adaptation planning and implementation (CAPI) at the community level, as opposed to the higher-level LAPA process implemented elsewhere?

Sub-questions	FGD Questionnaire	KII Questionnaire
What are the key differences between the community-level approaches implemented by HB as opposed to the LAPA process?	How is the CAPA linked with LAPA and other VDC level plans? Have you established community managed Adaptation Fund to support CAPA at CFUG level?	Why community forestry (CFUG) is suitable institution for planning CAPA rather than LAPA? What are the linkages of CAPA with ongoing CFUG activities such as OP revision/preparation?
What are the key aspects of the HB/LAPA approaches to CAPA that have been particularly challenging?	How are the CAPA activities different from regular CFUG activities such as operation plan preparation and revision? What trainings and capacity-building activities have been carried to implement CAPA?	How and in which aspects has an adaptation practice of community forestry or watershed or Leasehold groups CAPA addresses better? How can CAPA linked to LAPA to make LAPA effective?
What are the key aspects of the HB/LAPA approaches to CAPA that have been particularly challenging?	How did you prioritize the vulnerability of poor, Dalits, IPs, and other vulnerable people in CAPA? Is CFUG based CAPA is addressing local climate change issues better than LAPA?	How and in which aspects has an adaptation practice of community forestry or watershed or Leasehold groups CAPA addresses better? How can CAPA linked to LAPA to make LAPA effective?

Key Informant Interview Questions

Name:
Title:
Organization:
Relationship to HB:
HB partners:

Introduction: Describe HB overall goal, partners at site

The overall goal of the Hariyo Ban Program is *to reduce adverse impacts of climate change and threats to biodiversity in Nepal*.

These are the partners at this site in this program: xx, based on information from WWF

The objectives of the program are: to reduce threats to biodiversity in target landscapes to build the structures, capacity, and operations necessary for an effective sustainable landscapes management, especially reducing emissions from deforestation & forest degradation (REDD+) readiness to increase the ability of target human & ecological communities to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change.

Evaluation Question 1

Of the three goals of HB, which is the most successful to date? Which is the least successful to date/needs improvement? Please rank on a scale of 1–4, with 1 being very successful (more than expected), 2 successful (as expected), 3 disappointing (less than expected), and 4 not at all.

For successful ones:

- Why do you think those aspects are most successful?
- Could these be replicated or expanded to other sites? (Which strategies?)

For weak ones:

- Why do they need improvement?
- What could be done to improve their progress?

For weak ones:

- Why do they need improvement?
- What could be done to improve their progress?

Three cross-cutting themes: Has HB successfully integrated these cross-cutting themes into its goals? Please rank on a scale of 1–4, with 1 being very successful (more than expected), 2 successful (as expected), 3 disappointing (less than expected), and 4 not at all.

- Livelihoods
- Gender equality and social inclusion
- Internal governance of natural resource management groups

For successful ones:

- Why do you think those aspects are most successful?
- Could these be replicated or expanded to other sites?

For weak ones:

- Why do they need improvement?

- What could be done to improve their progress?

Evaluation Question 2

- Which agencies (GoN, community group) have signed in MOU for the partnership?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of each partner?
- What are common objective of partnership?
- Which activities have been effectively implemented by the partners?
- What benefits did the community or group receive?
- What site-specific improvements have been observed so far?
- How do you rate the benefits (1–4 scale with 1 very highly, 2 somewhat, 3 a little, and 4 not at all)?
- What tangible and/or intangible results have been produced by the partners?

Evaluation Question 3

- What activity or program demonstrates multiple (more than one) outcomes or benefits?
- What are the linkages or steps or processes through which the synergy is attained?
- What types of challenges (obstacles) have you encountered in implementing activities that yield multiple outcomes (benefits) or synergy?
- Which objective (among the three objectives) is crucial (important) to attain multiple outcomes?
- Have they seen in any other project or area that demonstrates this synergy?
- How can these challenges (obstacles) be mitigated?
- What is the most important factor (external or internal) that leads to multiple outcomes or benefits?
  - Technology
  - Organization
  - Community mobilization
  - Scarcity of products/services
  - Financial resources
  - Any other
- How can these factors be mitigated to attain synergy? Is it possible?
  - If yes how?
  - If not why not?

Evaluation Question 4

- What is the process through which the organizational/institutional integration takes place?
  - Is the process initiated by the partner/s? Or other organizations or individuals?
- Has it been documented?
- Are there any other examples around, which show improved outcomes due to integration?
  - Through the HB project?
  - Through other programs?
- What are the challenges in promoting integration?
- How can we mitigate the obstacles?

Evaluation Question 5

- Why is community forestry (CFUG) a suitable institution for planning CAPA?
- What are the linkages of adaptation plan with ongoing CFUG activities such as OP revision/ preparation?
- What are the post-capacity building/training activities?

- What are the limitations, gaps, and challenges in preparing CAPAs and implementing them as compared to LAPA?
- How and in which aspects has an adaptation practice of community forestry or watershed or Leasehold groups CAPA addresses better?
- How can CAPA linked to LAPA to make LAPA effective?

KII Checklist for Discussion with Government

Broader Evaluation Question: How effective have HB's partnerships with GoN been in terms of implementing activities and delivering results?

Specific questions:

1. What are the arrangements between MoFSC and HB to work in partnership, collaboration, and cooperation in TAL and CHAL areas? Are they similar? If not, what are difference between TAL and CHAL?
2. Are there any broad policy or guidelines circulated by the MoFSC to guide its line agencies at regional and district levels to work in partnership with the HB program in TAL and CHAL? (e.g., Guidelines given to the Depts. to sign MOU between them and the HB lead partner, WWF, and other partners, such as CARE; the DoSWC has signed a MOU with CARE-Nepal to run the HB.)
3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of HB's partnership approaches with the MoFSC and how can the weaknesses be improved?
4. What are the key achievements in terms of the awareness building, capacity building, and training of the personnel of the MoFSC and its line agencies?
5. How HB is integrating or complimenting with other programs under the MoFSC? (e.g., In some districts where HB is running, other donor funded programs such as MSFP and EbA are also running; how does the MoFSC line agencies ensure that no duplication of activities happen and different types and amounts of support and subsidies [Bio-gas] are given which creates misunderstanding among the people?)
6. What in your views are the major achievements of HB and how can they be continued and further built on? (e.g., Wildlife corridor connectivity, Landscape approach, and REDD+)
7. Which aspects of HB have showed the most successful collaboration with the GoN?
8. How has HB contributed to MoFSC's program on climate change and forestry, specifically in adaptation and mitigation through forestry?

Focus Group Discussion Survey

Group name: Location:

Evaluation Question 1

- What do you consider the greatest strengths/benefits of Hariyo Ban?
- What do you consider the greatest weaknesses/challenges of Hariyo Ban?
- Which of the activities have yielded the most positive results?
- Why do you think these are most successful?
- Could these be replicated or expanded to other sites? What activities can be done in other communities—next village?
- Which activities need improvement or show least progress? What activities did not work well? What activities had the most barriers?
- What could be done to improve their progress?

Evaluation Question 2

- What benefits did communities receive/experience from HB (tangible and intangible) as a partner?
- Who benefited most in the communities from HB and how?

Evaluation Question 3

- What are the types of benefits from the activity/program?
- What is the perception of the people (CFUGs, etc.) about attaining these multiple benefits with one intervention (activity)?
- Is it possible? Under what condition? What arrangements are needed to achieve it?
- To whom the additional benefits of synergy accrue? Marginalized community, poor, women, or to wider beneficiaries including those living further away?
- What are the challenges or obstacles in implementing activity/activities/program leading to multiple outcomes?

Evaluation Question 4

- Are there any sites that you know where the project has integration (organizational or institutional) of more than one program activity leading to improved outcome?

Evaluation Question 5

- How is the CAPA linked with LAPA and other VDC-level plans?
- Have you established a Community-Managed Adaptation Fund to support CAPA at CFUG level?
- How are the CAPA activities different from regular CFUG activities such as operation plan preparation and revision?
- What trainings and capacity-building activities have been carried to implement CAPA?
- How did you prioritize the vulnerability of poor, Dalits, IPs, and other vulnerable people in CAPA?
- Is CFUG based CAPA is addressing local climate change issues better than LAPA?

Evaluation Team's itinerary

Day	Date	Location	Team	Remarks
1	18-1-2015	Pokhara	Both	
2	19-1-2015	Panchase	Both	
3	20-1-2015	Pokhara	Both	strike day
4	21-1-2015	Tanahu	Split	
5	22-1-2015	Tanahu	Split	
6	23-1-2015	Lamjung	Split	
7	24-1-2015	Lamjung	Split	
8	25-1-2015	Sauraha	Both	Team 2 leaves for Nepalgunj after TAL meeting
9	26-1-2015	Padampur	Team 1	
		Banke	Team 2	
10	27-1-2015	Rautahat	Team 1	
		Bardia	Team 2	
11	28-1-2015	Bara/Ruatahat	Team 1	
		Lamki	Team 2	
12	29-1-2015	Rautahat	Team 1	
		Dhangadi	Team 2	
13	30-1-2015	Bharatpur	Team 1	
		Kanchanpur	Team 2	

ANNEX D: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

USAID and HB partner informational meetings

Date	Name	Designation	Organization
12 Jan 2015 Meeting at USAID Office	Mr. Netra Sapkota	NRM & GCC Program Specialist	SEED/USAID Kathmandu
	Mr. Shanker Khagi	Environmental Engineer	SEED/USAID Kathmandu
	Mr. Gautam Bajaracharya	M & E Specialist	SEED/USAID Kathmandu
	Mr. John Stamm	Head of SEED	SEED/USAID Kathmandu
	Mr. Murari Adhikari	M&E Specialist	USAID Kathmandu
	Ms. Bronwyn Llewellyn	Environment and Energy Team Leader	SEED/USAID Kathmandu
	Mr. Ram Gurung	AAA Specialist	OAA/USAID Kathmandu
	Mr. Prakash Gnyawali	M&E Specialist	USAID Kathmandu
	Ms. Maneka Gurung	Program Assistant	SEED/USAID
	Ms. Sadhana Suman Yadav	Intern	SEED/USAID
14 Jan 2015 Meeting at HB Office with HB core team	Ms. Judy Oglethorpe	Chief of Party	WWF/HB, Kathmandu
	Mr. Sandesh Singh Hamal	Deputy Chief of Party	CARE/HB, Kathmandu
	Dr. Shant Raj Jnawali	Biodiversity Coordinator	WWF/HB, Kathmandu
	Dr. Rajendra Lamichhane	M&E Specialist	WWF/ HB, Kathmandu
	Ms. Sabitra Dhakal	GESI Coordinator	CARE/HB, Kathmandu
	Mr. Kapil Khanal	PO-WOO	Hariyo Ban/WWF
	Mr. Keshav P. Khanal	Sustainable Landscape Coordinator	Hariyo Ban/WWF
	Ms. Richa Bhattarai	Communication Officer	Hariyo Ban/WWF
	Ms. Shova Shilpakar	Finance Officer	Hariyo Ban/WWF
14 Jan 2015 Meeting at HB Office with HB partners	Mr. Ganesh Karki	Chairperson	FECOFUN, Kathmandu
	Mr. Bhim Prakash Khadka	Vice-Chairperson	FECOFUN, Kathmandu
	Mr. Krishna B. Khadka	Team Leader	FECOFUN, Kathmandu
	Mr. Birkha B. Shahi	Secretary	FECOFUN, Kathmandu
	Mr. Shiv Raj Bhatta	Director- FP	WWF Nepal
	Mr. santosh Mani Nepal	Sr. Director	WWF Nepal
	Mr. Dhan Rai	Deputy Director	WWF Nepal
	Mr. Dev Raj Gautam	Team Leader	CARE Nepal/HB, Pokhara
	Mr. Ganga Jung Thapa	Executive Director	NTNC, Kathmandu
	Dr. Naresh Subedi	Sr. Coordinator	NTNC, Kathmandu
	Mr. Thakur Chauhan	FSCC Advisor	CARE Nepal, Kathmandu
	Dr. Shant Raj Gnawali	Biodiversity Coordinator	WWF/HB, Kathmandu
	Mr. Sandesh Singh Hamal	Deputy Chief of Party	CARE/HB, Kathmandu
20 Jan 2015 Meeting at Pokhara with HB partners	Mr. Ashok Subedi	Conservation Officer	NTNC-ACAP, Pokhara
	Mr. Kalidas Subedi	Chairperson	FECOFUN, Kaski
	Ms. Judy Oglethorpe	Chief of Party	WWF/HB, Kathmandu
	Mr. Dev Raj Gautam	Team Leader	CARE Nepal/HB, Pokhara
	Ms. Subhekchha Sharma	Program Assistant	Hariyo Ban/WWF
	Mr. Hari Krishna Bhattarai	PA	Hariyo Ban/WWF
	Mr. Lila Jung Gurung	Program Officer	Hariyo Ban/WWF
	Mr. Dinesh Dhakal	FAO-WWF/CHAL	Hariyo Ban/WWF
	Ms. Nabina Bajracharya	M&E Associate	Hariyo Ban/WWF

24 Jan 2015 Meeting at Bharatpur, Chitwan with HB partners	Mr. Shyam K. Shah	Program Manager	TAL-PABZ, Chitwan
	Mr. Parmanand Garg	Program Assistant	NTNC-BCC, Chitwan
	Mr. Pradeep Budhathoki	PCM	TAL/WWF, Sauraha
	Mr. Mahendra Shakya	PA	TAL/WWF, Sauraha
	Mr. Surbir Pokharel	Chairperson	FECOFUN, Chitwan
	Mr. Nunita Chhatkuli	FPC	FECOFUN, Chitwan
	Mr. Chiranjibi P. Pokheral	PC	NTNC-BCC, Chitwan
	Mr. Sandesh Singh Hamal	Deputy Chief of Party	CARE/HB, Kathmandu
	Mr. Shekhar B. Adhikari	FC	CARE/HB, Chitwan
	Mr. Surendra Ranpal	FPA	WWF/HB, Chitwan
	Mr. Ram B. Mijar	FO	CARE/HB, Chitwan
	Mr. Anil Kumar Rai	M&E Associate	WWF/HB, Kathmandu

List of the FGD

SN	Date of FGD	Name of the Group	Site (District, VDC/Municipality)	No. of participants
1	19 Jan 2015	Bhakarjung CFUG	Dhikurpokhari VDC, Kaski	12
2	19 Jan 2015	Naule Chharchhare CFUG	Bhadaure Tamagi, Kaski	25
3	21 Jan 2015	Sardikhola CAMC	Sardikhola VDC, Kaski	19
4	21 Jan 2015	Leasehold Groups (Broom Grass)	Chimkeshwari VDC, Tanahu	22
5	22 Jan 2015	Sidhathani CFUG, (Old)	Dharampani VDC, Tanahu	24
6	22 Jan 2015	Jum Danda CFUG	Bandipur, Tanahu	10
7	23 Jan 2015	Vijay Laghubitta Bittiya Sansthan	Sundar Bazar, Lamjung	11
8	23 Jan 2015	Khalte Gangate Micro-Watershed Group	Gorkha Municipality, Gorkha	33
9	24 Jan 2015	Ranikhola CFUG	Dahakhani, Chitwan	25
10	25 Jan 2015	Bhimwali CFUG	Padampur, Chitwan	19
11	25 Jan 2015	Mahadeva CFUG	Gobardiha, Dang	8
12	25 Jan 2015	Jyoti CFUG	Gadhawa, Dang	12
13	26 Jan 2015	Pashupatinath CFUG	Kamdi, Banke	20
14	26 Jan 2015	Sadabahar CFUG	Phattepur, Banke	23
15	26 Jan 2015	Bachhauli BZMC	Sauraha, Chitwan	13
16	26 Jan 2015	Gyaneshwar CFUG	Mangalpur, Chitwan	5

17	26 Jan 2015	Namuna BZCF/Jatayu Restaurant	Kawasoti Municipality, Nawalparasi	14
18	27 January, 2015	Saraswoti CFUG, Dipanagar	Rajapur Municipality, Ward No. 12, Bardia	34
19	27 January, 2015	Bhimapur Electric Fence Mgt Committee	Bhimapur, Bardia	28
20	27 Jan 2015	Goral Conservation Area Committee	Dhaubadi, Nawalparasi	9
21	27 Jan 2015	Kerunge Khola Committee & CFUG	Kawasoti, Nawalparasi	7
22	28 Jan 2015	Hadikhola BZCFUG	Hadikhola, Makwanpur	6
23	28 Jan 2015	Manharwa Jamun Plantation Group	Manharwa, Bara	7
24	28 Jan 2015	Halkhoriya Collaborative Forest	Gadhimai Municipality, Bara	7
25	28 Jan 2015	Shreeramnagar Buffer Zone User Committee,	Neulapur, Bardia	18
26	28 Jan 2015	Chure Conservation Women Cooperative, (CFUG associated)	Lamki Chuha, Kailali	14
27	28 Jan 2015	FGD with Lamki Municipality	Lamki Chuha Municipality, Kailali	11
28	29 Jan 2015	Rangpur Collaborative Forest	Chandranagar Municipality, Rautahat	3
29	29 Jan 2015	FGD with Chandranagar Municipality Stakeholders on LAPA	Chandranagar Municipality, Rautahat	13
30	29 Jan 2015	FECOFUN, Rautahat	Chandranagar Municipality, Rautahat	4
31	29 Jan 2015	Janahit Mahakali CFUG	Krishnapur, Kanchanpur	16
32	29 Jan 2015	Sundevi Buffer Zone User Committee	Jhallari, Kanchanpur	14

Key informant interviews

No.	Date	Interviewer	Office/Location	Name(s)	Designation
1	20 Jan 2015	Bijay	FECOFUN, Kaski	Mr. Kalidas Subedi	Chairperson
2	20 Jan 2015	Keshav	WWF staff in Pokhara	Mr. Purna Bahadur Kunwar	Field Coordinator
				Ms. Nabina Bajracharya	M/E Associate
				Ms. Shubhechchha Sharma	Program Associate
				Mr. Hari Krishna Bhattarai	Program Associate
				Mr. Lila Jung Gurung	Program Officer
3	20 Jan 2015	Keshav	DFO, Kaski	Mr. Prabhat Sapkota	DFO
4	20 Jan 2015	Teri & Bijay	Hotel Association, Pokhara	Mr. Hari Gaire	Former Chairperson
5	20 Jan 2015	Madhav	IOF Officials on WOO	Mr. Chiranjibi Upadhyay	Dean
				Mr. Bir Bahadur Khanal	Campus Chief, Pokhara
6	20 Jan 2015	Teri	NTNC staff	Mr. Ashok Subedi	ACAP Conservation Officer
7	23 Jan 2015	Madhav and Bijay	DSCO, Gorkha	Mr. Raju Dahal	DSCO
			DSCO, Gorkha	Mr. Sharad Babu Pageni	ASCO
			DSCO, Gorkha	Mr. Raju Bharti	ASCO
			DSCO, Gorkha	Mr. Shatrudhan Sah	Sub-Engineer
			CARE Nepal Gorkha	Mr. Arun Adhikari	Field Coordinator
8	23 Jan 2015	Keshav and Teri	Middle Marsyangdi Hydropower	Mr. Gopal Kumar Yadav	Engineer
				Mr. Madan Sharma	Engineer
			DDC Lamjung	Mr. Bishnu P. Sharma	LDO
			DDC Lamjung	Mr. Khim B. B.K.	PM&AO
			RCDC, Lamjung	Mr. Rajendra Bohora	Program Manager
			RCDC, Lamjung	Ms. Neelam Shreshta	AFA
			RCDC, Lamjung	Ms. Prerna Silwal	PC
			DFO, Lamjung	Mr. Chandra M. Dangol	DFO
			DSCO, Lamjung	Mr. Kabir Bilas Pant	J.T.
			CARE Nepal/HB	Mr. Sandeep Sharma	FO
			DADO, Lamjung	Mr. Surya Kant Sapkota	PPO
			DDC, Lamjung	Mr. Meghendra Pokharel	Program Officer
			Lamjung Chamber of Commerce	Mr. Ram Kuman Shrestha	President, LCCI
9	24 Jan 2015	Teri	TAL, Chitwan	Mr. Shyam K. Shah	Program Manager

10	24 Jan 2015	Bijay	FECOFUN, Chitwan	Mr. Surbir Pokharel	Chairperson
			CARE/HB, Chitwan	Mr. Khem N. Mahato	FPC
			FECOFUN, Chitwan	Ms. Sunita Chhatkuli	FPC
			FECOFUN,Chiwan	Mr. Bishnu Sapkota	FP
11	24 Jan 2015	Madhav	CARE, Chitwan	Shekhar Bdr. Adhikari	Field Coordinator
				Ram Bdr. Mijar	TAL Field Officer
12	25 Jan 2015	Teri and Bijay	CNP, Chitwan	Mr. Kamal Jung Kunwar	Chief Warden
				Mr. Bishnu P. Thapaliya	Asst. Conservation Officer
				Mr. Buddhi Raj Pathak	
13	30 Jan 2015	Keshav and Madhav	DFO, Kailali	Mr. Murari Pokhrel	DFO
			NTNC, Bardia	Mr. Shree Ram Ghimire	SAA
			TAL-CBRP	Mr. Bhaskar Bhattarai	Sr. Officer
			FECOFUN, Kailali	Mr. Dandi Raj Subedi	Focal Person
			CARE Nepal	Mr. Santosh Chaudhary	FO/CARE
			CARE Nepal Dhangadhi	Mr. Jagadish Bhatta	Field Coordinator
			CARE Nepal Banke	Mr. Shyam B. Bhandari	Field Officer
			WWF Nepal/TAL Dhangadi	Mr. Tilak Dhakal	PCM
			TAL-CBRP, Kailali	Mr. Bhaskar Deo Chaudhary	FPA
			TAL, Dhangadhi	Mr. Manoj Chaudhary	M $ EA
			NTNC, Kanchanpur	Mr. Bhubneshwar Chaudhary	NRCA
14	1 Feb 2015	Keshav	FECOFUN, Kathmandu	Mr. Birkha B. Shahi	Secretary
				Mr. Krishna B. Khadka	Team Leader
				Ms.Tulashi P. Adhikari	DCO
				Mr. Ganesh Karki	Chairperson
				Mr. Bhim Prakash Khadka	Vice-Chairperson
				Ms. Bharati Pathak	General Secretary
15	1 Feb 2015	Madhav, Teri and Bijay	MFSC, Kathmandu	Mr. Krishna P. Acharya	Joint Secretary (Planning)
				Dr. Indra P. Sapkota	Under Secretary (Planning)
16	1 Feb 2015	Madhav and Keshav	MOSTE, Kathmandu	Mr. Ram Prasad Lamsal	Joint Secretary

17	1 Feb 2015	Keshav	DSCWM, Kathmandu	Mr. Pem Kandel	Director General
18	1 Feb 2015	Madhav	DF	Dr. Rajan Pokharel	Director General
19	1 Feb 2015	Madhav	DPR	Dr. Yam Bahadur Thapa	Director General
20	1 Feb 2015	Madhav	REDD Implementation Centre	Mr. Narendra Chand	Under Secretary
21	2 Feb 2015	Madhav	WWF, Kathmandu	Mr. Santosh Nepal	Senior Director
22	2 Feb 2015	Madhav	WWF, Nepal	Mr. Ugan Manandhar	Climate Change, International Negotiaiton
23	2 Feb 2015	Keshav	MSFP, Kathmandu	Mr. Ramu Subedi	Chief, Technical Support Unit
24	3 Feb 2015	Teri	WWF/HB, Kathmandu	Ms. Judy Oglethorpe	Chief of Party
25	3 Feb 2015	Madhav	CARE/HB, Kathmandu	Dr. Sunil K. Regmi	CCA Coordinator
26	3 Feb 2015	Bijay	CARE/HB, Kathmandu	Mr. Sandesh Hamal	Deputy Chief of Party
27	4 Feb 2015	Teri	WWF/HB, Kathmandu	Dr. Shant Raj Jnwali	Biodiversity Coordinator
28	4 Feb 2015	Bijay	CARE/HB, Kathmandu	Ms. Sabitra Dhakal	GESI Coordinator
29	4 Feb 2015	Madhav	MoFALD	Mr. Chakrapani Sharma	Under Secretary (Environment)
30	12 Feb 2015	Bijay	WWF/HB, Kathmandu	Mr. Jagadish Kuikel	Livelihood Specialist

List of Documents Reviewed

HB, 2014, *Hariyo Ban Annual Performance Report Year IV* (Oct 2013–June 2014)

HB, 2013, *Hariyo Ban Annual Performance Report Year III* (Oct 2012–Sept 2013)

HB, 2012, *Hariyo Ban Annual Performance Report* Year *II* (1 Oct 2011–30 Sept 2012)

HB, 2011, *Hariyo Ban Annual Performance Report* (26 Aug 2010–30 Sept 2011)

HB, 2013, *Hariyo Ban Program Revised M&E Pla*n

HB, 2013, *Hariyo Ban Revised M&E Matrix*

HB, (Year), *Briefing Paper 5 Participatory Well-being Ranking (PWBR)*

HB, (Year), *Public Hearing and Public Auditing (PHPA)*

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ANNEX E: SUMMARY OF LISTENING SESSION FEEDBACK[9]

Listening Session Summary and Detailed Notes

One listening session was at the NTNC office in Sauraha, Chitwan. Approximately 25 community representatives, 20 Hariyo Ban field staff, and five government staff attended (see below). A second listening session was held in Kathmandu and attended primarily by approximately 25 government representatives and 25 Hariyo Ban representatives (see below).

The purpose of the listening sessions was to report back to people who provided data for the evaluation on the draft findings. As per the TOR, the team asked participants the following questions:

- Do they agree with the findings, conclusions and recommendations?
- Do they have additional or alternate conclusions and recommendations?
- Do they have additional information to share about the project?

It should be noted that the feedback from the groups is based on a relatively short presentation of the team's report that summarized and highlighted key points. The participants did not have access to the full report. In general, we find no major discrepancies between our findings and feedback in the listening sessions. The feedback from each group at each listening session is summarized below followed by detailed notes.

One item we would like to point out is that all of the stakeholder groups in the Chitwan listening session wanted to see more resources and investment in supporting and building the capacity of local communities—one of the key recommendations of our report.

Chitwan Listening Session

Community perspectives

Overall, participants felt the team's findings captured the community perspectives well. However, the CBO partners of HB are not clear about their role and nature of work they should be doing under the HB program. They feel they have been doing what HB team is asking them to do but they feel that HB should be supporting activities that the CBOs and local communities need and not only what HB needs. For example, HB does not fund small community infrastructures, mitigate forest encroachment, or support sustainable utilization of forest products. The role of small-scale community infrastructure and the need to control and regulate encroachment issues are missing in the report, especially in TAL area. They suggest that the report could give more examples of successful community-based activities. They also feel that HB should work more closely with government agencies in implementing forest policies and enforcing regulations. Upstream-downstream management and REDD+ concepts have been introduced but do not seem to be relevant to community. The activities in CHAL lack community perspectives and a great deal of awareness building is needed. They also feel that WOO is an important component of HB, but the CBO has poor access due to its restricted timing and technically demanding.

Short-term recommendations: HB should change their top-down approaches in identifying, planning, and implementing activities under CLAC, LIP, IGA, CAPA, and LAPA. Duplication of activities should be minimized by integrating activities such as CFOP and CAPA; BCC and CLAC; LIP and IGA and PGA, PWBDR, PHPA. Training and capacity development should be done to develop permanent resources of the CBOs and not by bringing outsiders such as LRP or doing irrelevant CLAC, BCC, and CAPA sessions that have created high expectations. The subsidies provided under HB should be increased. For example, currently biogas companies are taking a "big cut" and depriving CBOs of the full benefit of the GoN subsidy. Reward and recognition mechanisms for good conservation and livelihood improvement work of

[9] This Annex serves as the "raw data" required per the Task Order.

CBOs should be introduced. The funding of CAPAs and LAPAs has to be enhanced. HB should better mobilize the support from DFOs and rangers, which is lacking.

Long-term recommendations: The good work CBOs are doing should be continued by addressing local priorities and needs. Capacity development of CBOs should be increased for implementing CAPAs and LAPAs. Infrastructure needs of community should be included and process simplified. CLAC and LRP should be developed as permanent capacity or institutions of CBOs and VDCs. Mechanism of partnership with GOs and GLAs (at district and site levels) should be much improved—in fact, this should made a prerequisite for the conservation work in landscape corridors, protection, and national forests. Conservation is not possible without first addressing livelihood needs, and activities should be planned as per the needs of conservation community. The upstream-downstream strategies and approaches should be community based. Funding for the biogas program should be increased in conservation areas and other clean energy activities introduced.

Government representative's perspectives

Four officials (including one retired warden) participated in the sub-group meeting. The staff discussed and provided feedback primarily on five points:

- HB should better integrate and link with policies on:
  - illegal and overexploitation of stones, boulders, and sand from churiya hills and riverbeds, which is adversely affecting the biodiversity and ecosystem of the area;
  - protection forests, which have recently been declared in Basanta, Kamdi, and Lal Jhadai. HB should work more closely with the Protection Forest Councils based on the provisions of these protection forests;
  - helping CFUGs/BZCFUGs to establish linkages with the field level government agencies so that the groups get assistance from the nearby government offices once the project is terminated; and
  - making communities aware about the use of plastics and their safe disposal along with the other conservation awareness programs.
- The planning process of HB should be based on bottom-up approach so that users and field level government staff have a role in planning the field level activities and interventions. It is now very top down as the field level staff do not know how and where these activities area chosen for implementation.
- More support should be provided to CFUGs to scale up their networking at higher level. FECOFUN should also be provided with more support since it is the organization that directly works with CFUGs in the field. The CFUG networking should not be dictated or directed from outside. Instead, the outside agencies should facilitate the process of CFUG networking.
- CAPA/LAPA are now more bookish. They need to be user friendly and understood by the users. The LRPs should be chosen from the community groups and they should help the communities in preparing the CAPAs.
- Technical assistance to livestock support is missing (livelihood improvement programs and livelihood support includes the provision of support to livestock). HB should provide livestock technical assistance to the community members or help in providing access to the GLAs or private livestock services

HB partner perspectives

HB partners generally agreed with the presentation although they initially questioned the project aspects we said were relatively weaker. With some additional explanation of our findings in the group discussion, they agreed to the use of the relative terms comparing different aspects of the program, such as the relative weakness of Objective 2 and GESI and livelihoods.

Items they felt we had missed:

- More investment to the grassroot-level community
- Habitat improvement
- Follow-up/strengthening
- Capacity building

The participants strongly encourage the use of the partnership model in future projects. Items they recommended for the next phase of the project if it were to continue:

Biodiversity

- Focus on human-wildlife conflict reduction/interaction
- Increase livelihood support and link with technical components
- Scaling up of watershed management plan implemented
- Sustainability of community-based conservation
- Genetic study
- CLAC follow-up/mobilization
- Capacity building/HR/local bodies

Sustainability

- Upstream-downstream linking including PES piloting
- CHAL-level and sub-national level REDD
- River basin approach
- Support TAL level ERPD implementation to the Government
- Capacity building of HR/local community
- Focus on restoration of habitat/sites
- Second gold-standard biogas CER project implementation

Climate Change Adaptation

- Focus on LAP—preparation, mainstreaming, and implementation linking with EFLG
- Increase budget for implementation
- Piloting of green/climate smart municipalities/VDCs
- Local body capacity building
- CAPA integration in CFUG-OP
- Capacity building of multisectoral/thematic team
- Food security and conservation linkage

Cross-cutting

- Scaling-up GESI and livelihoods and governance

Kathmandu Listening Session

HB representatives' perspectives

In general, the partners who spoke (NTNC representatives did not speak) felt that the team's findings had many good points but was too general, missed some areas of HB's good work, and were wrong in some of their findings. They suggested to compare the before and after situation especially in livelihoods, GESI, and governance as well as partnership dynamics. The CARE representatives felt that their approach of integrating conservation and development as well as EbA and CBA did not get a fair assessment in the report. The WWF representatives felt that the partnership with the GoN was good in TAL and that the report missed it; especially there is need to be specific as to where and how.

Regarding synergy, they felt that all the three objectives had synergy, not only 1 and 2. Regarding Objective 2, they agreed that CHAL, being new, lacks a clear strategy, framework, and focus. However, they feel that they have focused on capacity building of the CBOs and REDD+ work as per the ERPIN document. Also, they felt that the work done through CARE and WWF partnership is creating synergy although the partnerships between NTNC and FECOFUN and FECOFUN and WWF are not bringing much synergy. The partners also disagreed that livelihoods component was doing poorly compared to governance. Some partners also felt that the contribution to policy has been missed out.

Short-term recommendations:

1. Improve the livelihood and GESI cross-cutting themes.
2. Build the capacity FECOFUN to improve the capacity of CFUGs.
3. Do more integrated LAPAs and link them to MoFALD's EFLGP framework.
4. Make the monitoring system such as EMMP and PMERL more integrated and participatory.
5. Contribute to GoN policy and improve partnership with GoN.

Long-term recommendations:

1. Conduct more concrete work on river-basin approaches to integrate conservation and development.
2. Fund more work on REDD+, specifically ERPD in TAL and sub-national REDD+ in CHAL.
3. Improve working mechanism with the GoN by giving them resources.
4. Expand climate smarting activities to other sectors, such as agriculture.
5. Conduct more work on genetic study, data base, and integrated approaches.

Government representatives' perspectives

Six officials from MoFSC and its departments provided their views on our presentation. The Planning Chief of the Ministry was of the view that there is a good coordination mechanism between the HB partners and MoFSC at the center and regional levels. However, the field level government staff said during our site visits that the level of coordination between HB and district staff is weak. This is mainly because the decisions made at the center and the regional levels are not communicated or transmitted to the field (district) level through regular government channels. So, officially, the field level staff do not have a mandate on HB's program activities.

Evaluation of HB is based on the outcome of the program objectives and their thematic areas of interventions. If the outcomes are meeting the objectives, then they are "good"; if not, they are not. "Good" or "not so good" results are mainly due to a) partners' support to communities, b) complementarity of interventions to meeting the objectives, and c) level of collective actions performed by the local communities.

Formally, the approach in CHAL is based on interventions/innovations in selected river basins. However, the activities of HB in the field seem to be scattered and not really focused on any particular river basin. Maybe it is due to the short time of the project intervention in CHAL area.

There is no separate organization in CHAL that is embedded in the government's institutional mechanism. This along with the lack of progress in REDD and PES lead us to say that IR 2 is the weakest among the three objectives.

Chitwan Listening Session

NTNC Conference Room, Sauraha, Chitwan National Park, 17 Feb. 2015

A. Community groups

	Discussion topics and key points	Evaluation findings	Short-term recommendation	Big picture recommendations
Where you think we have got it wrong?				
1	Attention to minimum needs of community, not the minimum needs of HB	Urgent and minimum community needs identified by the CBOs (e.g., CFUGs) should be the first criteria to select and fund activities not the ones what HB wants to do; current activity selection practice is top-down	HB should not impose and bind community to implement activities they identify as community needs	Urgent local priority and needs and capacity development of forest and biodiversity dependent community should be the basis for planning new conservation program
2	Infrastructure	Small/community infrastructures are must for meeting HB objectives	Vital role of developing and making resilient community infrastructures to conserve biodiversity and achieve community level adaptation should be recognized	Infrastructure needs of community included
3	Support of the govt. organizations/GLAs	Poor support of MoFSC line agencies at district and local levels to HB activities with CBOs (e.g., Pashupati CFUG, Banke)	Increase and improve support of the govt. agencies to the activities initiated by the CBOs funded by HB (e.g., formalization of the CFOPs of the CFUGs and their registration in the Goral conservation area)	Mechanism of partnership with GOs and GLAs (at district and site levels) must be clear in the design of new program
4	Encroachment in forest and Protected Areas	No mention of the illegal and disorganized settlement of encroachers, especially in TAL area	Planned re-settlement or control of encroachers should be arranged in cooperation with the GOs	Include this issue as a prerequisite of conservation in landscape corridors
5	Sustainable utilization of forest products	Under HB, CBOs have built up huge amount of forest products (both timber and non-timber)	Include sustainable use of forest ecosystem goods and services as	The principle of "conservation through sustainable use for livelihood

			incentive mechanism for both BC and SFM	improvement" must be recognized
6	Forest policy and regulations	Findings do not include weak enforcement of forest regulations	Ensure that DFOs and rangers enforce forest rules in controlling illegal harvesting form CFUG forests and PAs as well as national forests	Illegal harvesting and logging as an issue must be addressed
7	Upstream-downstream	What does it mean to community?	Clearly define upstream-downstream activity to suit the activity that can be done at CBO levels	Localization of upstream-downstream strategies and approaches
What you think we missed?				
1	Not adequate community perspectives	More examples of successful community-based activities	Improve criteria for selecting community-based activities and approaches	Effective capacity building and empowerment/ mobilizations of CBOs prerequisite to start conservation programs
2	Planning and monitoring	Absence of "real" bottom-up and participatory planning (CFOP, CAPA)	Need to improve planning skills of HB team	Align activities according to community needs, priority, and capability
3	Awareness Building and community (CBO) empowerment (CLAC, LRP)	Improve planning (timing and number of classes/ training should be decided in consultation with concerned CBO/s)	Improve teaching content as per local needs and use? Why not train one of the CFUG members as the LRP and develop CLAC as local learning and doing center? This could be legacy of HB	CLAC and LRP should be developed as permanent capacity or institutions of CBOs and VDCs
4	WOO	Poor access of CBOs to WOO grant	Make WOO resources more accessible to CBOs (Why every six months? Why not make it open all the time?)	Better access to WOO type of money to CBOs (Why not own community window similar to GO window?)
5	Fund leveraging	Identify multiple funding sources	HB funds are grossly inadequate to fund CAPAs and LAPAs	Increase funding for all planned activities, especially CCA
6	Biogas/clean energy	Increase subsidy especially to ultra poor; currently, biogas	Make CBOs as eligible units to receive GoN subsidy to biogas or	Funding for biogas program in conservation areas

		companies are taking "big cut" (they get 24,000 Rs. from the MoSTE) and depriving CBOs of the GoN subsidy—up to 27,000 for simple women-headed HH and IPs	HB support to ultra poor increased to 20,000 to all; bring uniformity to the amount given by WWF, CARE, NTNC, and FECOFUN	should be increased and other clean energy activities (solar) funded
7	Reward for good performer/achiever	No reward and recognition mechanism for good conservation and livelihood improvement work of CBOs	Institute annual national award for best CBO (CFUG or BZUC, LHFUG or CoFUG)	If CBOs are important, provide better incentive mechanism for them;
8	REDD+	Poor coverage of high expectation created and lack of any direct activity	Implement activities under REDD+	Clear role and benefit flow of REDD+ to community and activities at CBOs level
	CAPA/LAPA	Improve planning and participation of CBOs	Train LRPs from among the CFUGs/BZUCs for CAPAs and LAPAs	Involve more GoN ministries and Departments in CCA
	Partnerships with GO	Getting support from GOs (DFOs and rangers) too bureaucratic (they ask TA/DA and fees to prepare/revise CFOPs)	Simplify partnership with GOs especially local GoN line agencies; and CBOs should be regularly communicated how HB works with GoN agencies	GoN agencies should be involved from the very beginning in new program

B. Government partners

	Discussion topics and key points	Evaluation findings	Short-term recommendation	Big picture recommendations
Where you think we have got it wrong?				
1	Networking among the CFUGs	Ghoral conservation was initiated by the CFUGs themselves with some support from HB	-HB should work with concerned Regional Directors and DFO to further build up this network -FECOFUN should provide specific support as this is their own organization	Funding should be provided based on the needs/demands of the networked CFUGs and what HB partners want to fund
2	Illegal and over extraction of sand/boulder and stones	This is a serious issue in the conservation of landscape in TAL	Technically and environmentally sound extraction guidelines support be provided to CFUGs/BZUCs to manage the extraction, if allowed	The next project should include specific activity to prevent to regulate and control overexploitation of these products to strengthen

				upstream and downstream linkages
3	Partnership between CBOs and government line agencies (GLAs)	HB should help CFUGs in better working with the GLAs so as to get the GoN services and finance after the exit of HB	HB should work closely with DDC and other line agencies (including agriculture, livestock, women's development offices) in a coordinated manner	Have an explicit provision of working closely with relevant ministries and LGAs from the very beginning
4	Planning from bottom up	CBOs (CFUGs, etc.) are not consulted in the program planning	HB should have a planning process that is based on grassroots consultation and based on the needs of local people	Program design should be based on the local human and ecosystem needs and interests rather than the imposed program; the planning process practiced by the government line agencies should be followed by implementers
5	Weak link between Objective 1 and 2		-Focus on Habitat improvement -Follow-up/strengthen existing good activities	Focus on Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC) reduction through technology and habitat improvement
6	Only policy part of REDD and PES	Need more realistic and practical program	-Technical capacity building of CBOs (carbon/tree measurement) -More investment in institutional development of CBOs (e.g., cooperatives, CLACs)	-Scaling up sub-watershed management plans implemented in an upstream-downstream model of CHAL -Implement sub-River basin approach -Sub-national level REDD schemes -Support TAL level ERPD and Second Gold Standard Biogas CER project implementation
7	All 3 HB objectives/ components have synergy	There are elements in Objective 2—such as Biogas, ICS, APU—that have synergy with Objective1	Continue building synergy through better focus on local needs and integration	-Increase livelihood support to CBOs and link with technical component -Genetic/ecological study of animals -Focus on restoration of habitat
What you think we missed?				
1	Collaboration among CBOs	Collaboration between CFUGs/BZUCs and anti-poaching units (APU) is not good as there is not discussion among the group members and the units	The collaboration should be improved to reduce or eliminate wildlife poaching and bring synergy in BC	Instead of creating more CBOs, consolidate existing ones such as CFUG and BZUC; merge APU with CFUG Executive Committee
2	Technical support and monitoring; mobilize services	As a part of IGA/LIP, poor group's members get subsidized loan to livestock/	Participatory monitoring of the support should be regularly carried out	-Joint planning and monitoring should be a

	of livestock husbandry line agencies	goat husbandry. But HB does not carry out any monitoring of the effectiveness of these support		strong component of future program -Habitat quality and food availability to the animals and its effects on forests and HWC need to be addressed
3	CAPA/LAPA	They are more bookish rather than practical; prepared by experts; no real participation of local CBOs	CAPAs and LAPAs should be written in understandable way by the local people (CFUGs) who have to implement	-LRPs should be better trained so that they can contextualize and integrate all local vulnerability and needs into CAPA -LAPAs need to be integrated with DRR activities at VDC level -Focus on LAPA and mainstream with EFLGP framework -Increase budget for implementation -Local body capacity building -Food security and conservation linkage
4	Broadening environmental subjects	Need to discuss other environmental issues such as rampant use of plastics in PAs that damage biodiversity of the area	CLAC sessions should more focus on local than national and global issues e.g. raising awareness on adverse effect of plastic use in the PAs	Local schools and clubs should be included to impart Environmental Education (e.g., eco-friendly disposal of plastic material and others)
5	Protection forests (PF) of corridors in TAL	Evaluation report should discuss the value of PF such as Basanta, Kamdi, and Laljhadi corridors	Closely work more with the concerned DFO in these corridors as these forests were recently declared as Protected Forests	Working partnership with DFOs (all staff) to closely plan and implement activities such as developing regulations/ guidelines on managing PFs should be included
6	GESI		Scaling up GESI, livelihoods, and governance	
7	Partnership			Partnership model to be continued for larger objective
8	Responding to drivers and deforestation and forest deforestation		More such work	More holistic design

C. Hariyo Ban field staff

	Discussion topics and key points	Evaluation findings	Short-term recommendation	Big picture recommendations

Where you think we have got it wrong?				
1	Strategies and approaches	Objective 2—Only the policy part of REDD+ and PES are weak links to Objective 1 & 2	Biodiversity Conservation: • Focus on human-wildlife conflict reduction/ interaction • Increase livelihood support and link with technical components • Scaling up of watershed management plan implemented • CLAC follow-up/mobilization • Capacity building • HRD of local bodies Sustainable Landscape: • CHAL level and sub-national level REDD • River basin approach • Support TAL level ERPD implementation to the Government Climate Change Adaptation: • Focus on LAPA preparation, mainstreaming and implementation linking with EFLGP • CAPA integration in CFUG-OP • Capacity building of multisectoral/ thematic team	Biodiversity Conservation: • Sustainability of community-based conservation • Genetic study Sustainable Landscape: • Upstream-downstream linking including PES piloting • Capacity building of HR/local community • Focus on restoration of habitats/sites • Second gold standard biogas CER project implementation Climate Change Adaptation: • Increase budget for implementation • Piloting of green/climate smart municipalities/VDCs • Local body capacity building • Food security and conservation linkage Cross-cutting : • Scaling-up GESI and livelihood activities; • Build on good practices in local governance; • Improve partnership model with the CBO; • Build better partnership with GoN
2	Partnership			
3	Synergy	All 3 components have synergy		
4	CAPA/LAPA			
What you think we missed?				

1	Strategies and approaches	• Ground preparation on responding drivers and deforestation and forest degradation • All components have inter-linkages not just 1 and 2 • Evidence: alternative energy, goral conservation by CFUGs, networks, fire line maintenance inside park area	Only in the Missing List: • More investment to the grass roots level community • Habitat improvement • Follow-up/ strengthening • Capacity building	
2	Partnership	Partnership with government agencies is good in TAL	Learn from TAL and develop in CHAL	Build partnership with the GoN form the beginning of the new program design
3	Synergy			
4	CAPA/LAPA	CAPA/LAPA mainstreaming initiatives	Focus more on CAPA implementation and LAPA preparation making part of the local govt. planning process	Integrated LAPA linked to EFLG plans

Comments and Suggestions from the Listening Session in Kathmandu
Shangri La Hotel, Kathmandu, February 18, 2015

Resham Dangi (Joint Secretary-MoFSC)

- SAGUN was working in TAL area (outside PAs) as well as in CHAL area. Why is the synergy weak in CHAL as compared to TAL?
- At the landscape level, interconnectedness of various programs should be seen. It is not enough to look into forestry alone in isolation.
- One should see the roles of various actors in integrating programs at landscape level. One should see also the role of private sector in the landscape approach of integration.
- It would have been more useful had the recommendations been made at the strategic level.
- What are the lessons of TAL related to giving the continuity? Is it institutional or operational modality?
- Role of private sector is important that should be included in the report.

Krishna Acharya (Planning Chief-MoFSC)

- It would be better to know the hierarchy of "good" and "bad" programs or activities in these two landscapes.
- Objective 2 was overambitious. That is why Objective 2 is weak.
- It is not appropriate that the line agency staff "did not know the activities of HB" in the field. Series of planning and progress meetings were held at the regional level where annual plans of all projects/program were discussed. The discussion was led by the Planning Chief (himself) at the regional level.
- Wants to know what programs could be implemented or replicated beyond HB area from the learning of HB.
- Interested to know the working of HB in a particular district. GoN wants to allocate donors to work with the GoN in some particular districts so that other donors do not work on the same districts.
- Did the HB reach into remote or inaccessible area as well?
- While comparing the progress in these two landscapes, we also need to see the long history of intervention and external assistance in TAL as compared to CHAL.
- As reported in this evaluation, livelihood component is weak. OK. But give us recommendations on what needs to be done to increase the performance in "livelihood."
- Needs further elaboration also on "upstream-downstream" relationships and linkages.
- Weakness of data base in TAL. It could be mentioned in the report.
- What about the assessment of WOO. HB has spent about Nrs 100 to 120 million on WOO. Need to measure its achievement also.
- From the perspectives of knowledge, please identify the key lessons.
- What are criteria to say good or weak in the evaluation?
- In the regional workshops, all the programs including HB are discussed, then how can any government office head say that they do not know the HB program?
- Make recommendations that can be applied outside the HB project area.
- How far is the project able to go in remote area?
- In Nepal, there is long history of community-based forestry and their contribution. Thus, those aspects should be taken into consideration while assessing the present interventions.
- Provide explicit recommendations in the steps for improvements of the livelihoods component.
- In recent review of TAL, it has been said that database management is weak; what is the assessment of this HB team?
- What are the impacts of WOO and how effective is its monitoring mechanism?

- Please recommend on key scope what are the findings 1, 2, 3.

Deepak Kharal (DFRS-Joint Secretary)

- On which theory and principles was this evaluation carried out?
- Was the evaluation based on some indicators? What are those indicators?
- What happened to the procedure and practice of evaluation?
- The presentation is too abstract.
- What do you mean by "good success"?
- Need to have a perspective also on what is the effectiveness and sustainability of this program (HB)?
- The presentation says that CBOs are doing very good, but what about the private sector? Private sector would also have performed the same or better had it been given a chance to perform.
- The relationship with the government improved "greatly." What does "greatly" mean?
- Effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, effect/impacts have not been taken into consideration in this evaluation. Please clarify.
- Evaluation is more abstract but not specific to implement in the field.

Yam Bahadur Thapa (DG, Department of Plant Resources)

- He has come late and may not have listened all.
- Presentation seems like a recitation from holy books (reciting like GARUD PURAN).
- What is the role of protected forests? PF now covers about 2 percent of total forests in Nepal.
- Where is the location of "coordination"? The presentation should have highlighted it; the level where the problems exist should be pinpointed.
- HB has given priority to animals only; presentation has neglected NTFPs.
- Nothing has been mentioned about protected forests, which are the part of landscapes.
- Nothing has been included about the progress on indicator in the report.

Lex Kassenberg (CARE, International Country Director)

- What is the starting level of program interventions in these two sites? Many of the activities were already started before in TAL. What is the progress on livelihood, GESI, and governance as compared to the status at the beginning of the HB?
- What are the dynamics of partnership in HB. WWF and CARE were working together before joining hands in HB. What are the additional benefits of bringing NTNC and FECOFUN on board in HB?

Arjun Thapa (Under-Secretary-DSCWM)

- Recommendation does not say anything on "how to move forward."
- For whom are these recommendations made? Who is the stakeholder of this evaluation?
- Recommendations are vague to implement them in field situation.

Fanindra Kharel (Joint Secretary-DNPWC)

- Two things are very important:
  - What is happening in the remote areas?
  - The state of relationship with the government.
- What is the role of HB on impact of infrastructure on environment?
- Are EIAs carried out on these infrastructures?
- HB has produced a report on infrastructure and it is a very good report.
- Manaslu is very remote, but only three people are working there, but a conservation plan has been prepared.

- The evaluation has not visited Manaslu, which is located in remote area

Sunil Regmi (CARE)

- What happens when conservation and development are integrated? We know something about it.
- Not much is analyzed on the relationship in between EbA (ecological system) and CBA (human ecosystem). CARE and FECOFUN are working much (together) on CBA. This also needs to be highlighted.
- Integration is taking place at landscape and site levels. What happens to vulnerability/mitigation at that level?
- Did EMMP work or not in terms of adaptation? EMMP may not work at the higher level; suggestion of making EMMP participatory is good, but did the participatory monitoring done so far work?
- Some strategies might have failed. What are those strategies? Many things can also be learned from failure.
- How conservation and development go together? Which is the prime strategy of the project?
- How EbA and CBA go together? Recommend on this aspects.
- How is the integrated approach? Assess and recommend.
- Recommend on landscape level, if it is working good at community level.
- EMMP has been mentioned. What about participatory at community level?
- The project may have failed in some aspect, then what are the activities that failed and their lessons?

Dev Raj (CARE)

- Partnership is good at the regional and district level. There is no problem. There is a mechanism of joint planning and progress review.
- "Weak coordination" is a sweeping statement.
- Degraded land has been restored through the cultivation of broomgrass. Thus, this is contributing to the progress of IR2.
- CAPA implementation is affected by compliance issue on infrastructure. Communities have also a high expectation on CAPA implementation.
- CHAL is relatively a young landscape. Assessment of critical watershed was made and HB is working on those areas with CAPA and LAPA based on priority areas.

Sabitra Dhakal (WWF)

- Should not GESI be seen in comparison to other components? If we say performance of GESI is "weak," will it lead to further lowering its priority in the remaining period?
- It would be nice to make evaluation based on GESI design.

Bharati Pathak (General Secretary-FECOFUN)

- Capacity building of the CFUG should be seen in the context of the capacity of HB partner FECOFUN. So, in order to increase the capacity of CFUGs, the capacity of FECOFUN should also be increased.
- We need to see whether the policies of GoN are friendly to CFUGs or not. Lately, the policies of GoN are not friendly to the CFUGs.
- The evaluation report should discuss how successful capacity building has been.
- The team should take into consideration how compatible policies are at a community/local level.
- What are the gaps in CAPA?
- Do the CF and community have additional burden while making CAPA?
- IR 2 is new subject. It has been done according to the capacity in ERPIN.

Krishna Khadka (FECOFUN)

- There is a policy gap in CAPA since the MoSTE does not recognize it. This should be reflected in the recommendation.

Brikha Shahi (Secretary-FECOFUN)

- CAPAs are made at the CFUG level. Although the MoSTE policy on climate change does not refer to CAPA, the ongoing periodic plan (of three years) talks about CAPA.
- We need to understand the knowledge base of CFUG in this context.
- A lot of capacity development has been made under IR 2 that needs to be recognized.

Ek Raj Sigdel (Consultant at MoFALD)

- Governance is very important for integration—how to integrate different offices at the landscape level?
- The coordinating framework that exists at the DDC and VDC level should be used to establish linkages with different programs—not only CAPA and LAPA.
- EFLGP framework of the Ministry (MoFALD) is very good. We should explore its utility to integrate programs at the VDC level.
- CAPA and LAPA need to be integrated at the local level with EFLGP.
- If the government owns the programs, they will be integrated.
- Coordinate and integrate with local level planning and environmental guideline of MOFALD for LAPA and CAPA at the leadership of local government.

Ramu Subedi (Team Leader-MSFP)

- This evaluation should have highlighted four points:
  - HB's contribution to policy and strategies.
  - Innovations (vontribution) made by HB that are relevant to other programs.
  - Validation of risk factors and assumptions. Did the evaluation team validate them? What were the unintended results?
  - Sustainability of outcomes. How do they look?
- The most important is how much of the resources reached to the community level?
- What are new innovations of HB?
- HB has also contributed in policy matter. What are the knowledge products?
- How valid is the assumptions and risks mentioned in the project document?
- Provide about the sustainability of the project activities.
- How much resources have been trickle down at community level?

Thakur Chauhan (CARE-Food Security)

- Cross-cutting themes are different and difficult to compare.
- Has HB contributed to climate-smart agriculture? Would be useful to say something on this topic as well.
- What is the status of climate-smart agriculture in the project area?
- Green enterprise component status, success, and/or failure?

Closing Remarks by Netra Sharma (USAID)

- Thanked the evaluation team and the participants.
- Four partners have worked with the government for about three years.
- We have taken Stop_Look_Go approach; we want to reflect on what happened in past three years in a broader way.
- We should have courage to learn from the investments made by USAID.
- The report should be made users' friendly.

- One project/program cannot resolve all the problems (questions). We should look into whether the interventions are relevant or not. The team is qualified to suggest recommendations.
- We will hold discussions with the partners on what sort of reforms would lead to achieving the goal in Nepal.

Closing Remarks by Judy Oglethorpe (HB team)

- The Evaluation Team worked very hard for five weeks.
- This is a learning project on:
  - What works?
  - What does not work?
- With additional funding from USAID ($5 million), HB team can work more on biodiversity conservation.
- This is also a learning about program design for all Nepal.

Closing Remarks by Krishna Acharya (Chief of the Planning Division, MoFSC)

- How to operationalize the new Forest Policy, 2015, also should be written in the recommendation.
- We should link forestry program with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) to link to Post 2015 Development Agenda to be ratified by the UN next year.
- Can something be said on how to scale up activities or programs?
- Regarding the addition of members in the Working Group, it has to be decided by the Steering Committee, which holds its meeting only once a year.
- Since the ongoing three-year periodic plan is culminating in this year, any good program can be included in the new periodic plan.
- How can we improve the performance of HB in the remaining period? How can we design programs for new funding? We need to set our priorities.
- It would have been better if the evaluation team had highlighted the interrelationship among conservation, development, and infrastructures.
- We are preparing a new strategy for TAL. We will add the next generation of landscape in that strategy. Learning from this evaluation would be helpful for the design of that strategy.
- Give some inputs to the use of technology (in conservation?).
- Need suggestion for next generation landscape conservation issues and solutions.

Resham Dangi (Recommendations)

- Recommendations should be for broadening partnerships beyond MoFSC.
- Role of private sector needs to be identified and included.
- Instead of limiting to REDD+, now the discussion should be more on sustainable development agenda.

Questions/Suggestions Given in Writing:

Arjan Dixit (CARE)

- On climate change adaptation, appreciate the team looking into LAPA+CAPA. However, HB's adaptation activities are more than just work on LAPAS + CAPAs. If the team could frame their recommendations to answer the following, it would really help the program improve. This include:
  - Was the integrated (ecosystems + community) to assessing climate vulnerabilities effective?
  - Did it result in the identification of vulnerability and adaptation options that would not have been identified with a single approach?
- CCA is not a single intervention or strategy. It needs to be an iterative process. If the team could answer the following:

  - Did the M&E system work (EMMP + PMERL)?
  - Did program built capacity of GO and community to deal with + plan around future uncertainty associated with CC?
  - What role, if any, has HB played around national policy/national policy discourse or CC in Nepal?
  - How effectively did the program make use of various types of information—scientific + indigenous?
- Clearly reframing makes sense but it looks like there is enough flexibility in it to be able to frame the issues in the ways above + provide answers. Answers to the issues above would be very helpful to the HB project.

Anonymous WWF staff person

- Livelihoods and GESI are weaker than governance—DO NOT AGREE. Please justify clearly on the report. In our observations, governance is weaker than other two.
- I hope to have specific recommendations in livelihoods initiatives. Should it be cross-cutting theme or a major component of the HB in future (in terms of investment).
- Within livelihood approach, which approaches are more effective in HB from conservation point of view?

List of Participants in the Listening Session at Shangrila Hotel, Kathmandu
Date: 18 February 2015

SN	Name	Designation	Organization/Address
	Government Agencies		
1	Mr. Krishna P. Acharya	Joint Secretary	MOFSC
2	Mr. Resham B. Dangi	Joint Secretary	MOFSC
3	Mr. Shanta Muni Tamrakar	Joint Secretary	DOF
4	Mr. Tika Ram Adhikari	Director General	DNPWC
5	Mr. Yam B. Thapa	Director General	DPR
6	Mr. Fanidra Kharel	Deputy DG	DNPWC
7	Mr. Deepak Kharal	DDG	DPR
8	Mr. Rajendra Kafle	Under Secretary	REDD Implementation Center
9	Dr. Narendra Chand	Under Secretary	REDD Implementation Center
10	Mr. Ishwari Paudel	Planning Officer	DOF
	Mr. Arjun Thapa	Soil Conservation Officer	DSCWM
11	Mr. Ek Raj Sigdel	Env. Specialist	MOFALD
	USAID and Other Organizations		
12	Mr. Netra Sharma Sapkota	NRM &GCC Specialist	USAID, Nepal
13	Mr. Prakash Gyawali	M&E Specialist	USAID, Nepal
14	Mr. Ramu Subedi	Chief	MSFP
	Partner Organizations		
15	Dr. Ghana Shyam Gurung	Sr. Conservation Program Director	WWF Nepal
16	Ms. Shivani Malla	Sr. Database & Monitoring Officer	WWF Nepal
17	Mr. Dipesh Joshi	Program Officer	WWF Nepal
18	Mr. Ganesh B. Karki	Chairperson	FECOFUN
19	Ms. Bharati Pathak	General Secretary	FECOFUN
20	Mr. Krishna B. Khadka	Team Leader	FECOFUN
21	Ms. Manju Malasi	Treasurer	FECOFUN
22	Mr. Lex Kassenberg	Country Director	CARE Nepal
23	Mr. Thakur Chauhan	Food Security and CC Advisor	CARE Nepal
24	Mr. Anjan Dixit	Regional Coordinator	CARE Nepal
25	Mr. Dev Raj Gautam	Team Leader	CARE Nepal, Pokhara
26	Mr. Ganga Jung Thapa	Executive Officer	NTNC
27	Dr. Naresh Subedi	Sr. Conservation Officer	NTNC
28	Mr. Shyam Thapa	Conservation Officer	NTNC

29	Mr. Meghraj Adhikari	M&E Officer	NTNC
30	Ms. Judy Oglethorpe	Chief of Party	HB/WWF Nepal
31	Mr. Sandesh Hamal	Deputy Chief of Party	HB/CARE nepal
32	Dr. Shant Raj Jnawali	Coordinator, Biodiversity	HB/WWFNepal
33	Mr. Keshav Khanal	Coordinator Sustainable Landscape	HB/WWFNepal
34	Dr. Sunil Regmi	Coordinator, Climate Change Adaptation	HB/ CARE Nepal
35	Ms. Sabitra Dhakal	GESI Coordinator	HB/CARE Nepal
36	Dr. Rajendra Lamichhane	M&E Specialist	HB/WWFNepal
37	Mr. Kapil Khanal	Program Officer-WOO	HB/WWFNepal
38	Mr. Jagadish C. Kuikel	Livelihood Specialist	HB/WWFNepal
39	Mr. Mahendra Shakya	TAL Program Associate	HB/WWFNepal
40	Ms. Richa Bhattarai	Communication Officer	HB/WWFNepal
41	Ms. Shova Silpakar	Sr. Finance Manager	HB/WWFNepal
42	Ms. Anita Adhikari	M&E Associate	HB/WWFNepal
43	Ms. Shrutina Dancha	M&E Associate	HB/WWFNepal
44	Ms. Umi Joshi	Admin Associate	HB/WWFNepal
45	Mr. Ram B. Praja	Office Messenger	HB/WWFNepal
46	Mr. Khadananda Paudel	Vulture Program Officer	BCN

List of Participants in the Listening Session at Sauraha, Chitwan
Date: 16 February 2015

SN	Name	Designation	Organization/Address
	Government Agencies		
1	Mr. Chiranjibi Pokheral	Project Chief/Project Coordinator	NTNC, BCC, Chitwan
2	Mr. Shyam K. Shah	Project Manager	TAL, Chitwan
3	Mr. Parmanand Ray	IA	NTNC/BCC, Chitwan
4	Mr. Baburam Lamichhane	RO	NTNC/BCC, Chitwan
5	Mr. Rabin Kadariya	CO	NTNC/BCP
6	Mr. Bishnu Singh Thakuri	Conservation Officer	NTNC/MCAP
7	Mr. Ishwari P. Dahal	AFO	DFO, Lamjung
8	Mr. Anil Prasai	Conservation Officer	NTNC/BCC, Sauraha, Chitwan
9	Mr. Ramji Khaniya	AFO	DFO, Chitwan
10	Mr. Abdhesh Hari Bhattarai	Sub-Engineer	Chandrapur Municipality, Rautahat
	Partner Organizations		
11	Mr. Surendra Ranpal	FPA	WWF/TAL/PABZ, Chitwan
12	Mr. Keshav Khanal	Coordinator	WWF/HB, Kathmandu
13	Mr. Tulsi Ram Chaudhary	Chairperson	Janahit Mahakali CFUG, Kanchapur
14	Mr. Janak Man Chaudhary	CFCC CA	
15	Mr. Bhaskar Deo Chaudhary	FPA	WWF
16	Mr. Rajan Rijal	FCA	WWF/HB
17	Mr. Pradip Khanal	SFPO	WWF/TAL
18	Mr. Bal Krishna Jamarkatel	CCAS	CARE/HB
19	Mr. Manoj Chaudhary	M&E Associate	WWF/TAL
20	Mr. Ram Prit Yadav	TRCC Coordinator	TAL DABZ, Chitwan
21	Mr. Umesh Shrestha	GS	CARE Nepal/HB
22	Mr. Shekhar B. Adhikari	FC	CARE Nepal/HB
	Community-Based Organizations		
23	Mr. Basanta Thapa	President	Gyaneshwar CFUG, Managlpur, Chitwan
24	Mr. Keshab Chandra Neupane	Chairperson	FECOFUN, Tanahu
25	Mr. Jaylal Kandel	Chairperson	Taharykhola CFUG, Padampur, Chitwan

26	Mr. Raj Kumar Aryal	Chairperson	Collaborative Forest Mgt Grou29p, Bara
27	Ms. Kala Kharel	PA/HB	,,
28	Mr. Hemant Acharya	Chairperson	CBAPU, Bardia
29	Mr. Khadka B. Sunar	Chairperson	Electric Fence PB Bardia
30	Mr. Krishan B. Gurung	Chairperson	Sardikhola, VDC, Kaski
31	Mr. Dini Giri	Chairperson	FECOFUN, Banke
32	Mr. Rajendra B. Ayer	Vice Chair	Sundevi CFUG, Jhalari, Kanchanpur
33	Ms. Khima Bhattarai	Chairperson	Pashupati BZCF, Kamdi, Banke
34	Mr. Debi Ram Gharti	Chairperson	Sadabahar CFUG, Fatepur, Banke
35	Mr. Navraj Neupane	Chairperson	SRVC, Bardia
36	Mr. Naresh Chaudhary	Member	Sarswati CFUG, BDR
37	Mr. Bhumi Raj Lamichhane	MFP/HB	FECOFUN, BDR
38	Mr. Umakant Pant	CF	CFCC, Dang
39	Mr. Ashok Chaudhary	Member	Jyotic CFCC, Dang
40	Mr. Dulashi P. Adhikari	DOC & Com Officer	FECOFUN Center, KTM
41	Mr. Durga P. Paudel	Chairperson	Bhakarjung CFUG, Kaski
42	Mr. Kalidas Subedi	Chairperson	FECOFUN, Kaski
43	Mr. Netra Raj Acharya	Chairperson	Bardia NP BZMC
44	Mr. Narayan Datta Timalsina	Chairperson	Budhirapti VDC, Kumroj
45	Mr. Bishnu P. Simkhada		Bhimwali CFUG, Padampur, Chitwan
46	Mr. Khem Narayan Mahato	FPC	FECOFUN, Nawalparasi
47	Mr. Bharat Lamichhane	Secretary	Laligurans CFUG, Nawalparasi
48	Ms. Nura Padey		MBCC, Nawalparasi
49	Mr. D.B. Chaudhary	Coordinator	Jatayu Restaurant, Nawalparasi
50	Ms. Anita Chaudhary	Chairperson	Women Camp, Namuna CFUG, Nawalparasi
51	Mr. Shreekanta Syangtan	CM	TAL/PABZ
52	Mr. Mohan Lal Thing	Secretary	Lokpriya BZCF, Hadikhola, Makwanpur
53	Mr. Bashudev Dhungana	Chairperson	Mrigakunja BZUC, Sauraha, Chitwan
54	Mr. Samjhana Acharya	F&AA	TAL/PABZ
55	Mr. Bek Bahadur	Chairperson	Ranikhola CFUG, Chitwan

Attendance of Final Presentation of Hariyo Ban Midterm Evaluation at USAID, Kathmandu

Date: 23 February 2015

Serial No.	Name	Designation	Department at USAID
1	Indra Sharan K.C.	Geospatial Analyst	USAID Program Office
2	Ram N. Gurung	AA Specialist	OAA
3	Tom Zearley	S&T Advisor	SEED
4	Prakash Gyawali	M&E Specialist	PPD
5	Roshan Kafle	HR Specialist	E&O
6	Amy Fawwcett	Controller	OC
7	Shanker Khadgi	Env. Energy Specialist	SEED
8	Amanda cats Bony	DTG Specialist	DGO
9	Bronwyn Llenwellyn	Environment Team Leader	SEED
10	John Stamm	SEED Director	SEED
11	Murari Adhikari	M&E Specialist	USAID
12	Netra Sharma Sapkota	NRAM &GCC Specialist	USAID
13	Chetana Ghimire	A&A Agent	OAA
14	Radu Munteanu	Cont. Officer	OAA
15	Tej M. Gurung	Program Assistant	PPD
16	Binita Rai	Program Assistant	SEED/USAID
17	Maneka Gurung	Program Assistant	SEED/USAID
18	Sharadha Suman Yadav	Intern	SEED/USAID
19	Rita Singh	Intern	PPD
20	Teri Allendorf	MTR Team Leader	ECODIT
21	Keshav Kanel	MTR Team Member	ECODIT
22	Madhav Karki	MTR Team Member	ECODIT
23	Bijay Kumar Singh	MTR Team Member	ECODIT

Summary analysis of site visits based on evaluation questions

	Location (team)	Activities	Landscape (CHAL or TAL)	Project type (watershed, protected area, corridor)	Q1 & 3: Obj. at site	Q3: Synergies (1=good, 2=fair, 3=poor)	Q4: Partners at site	Q4: Partner integration (1=good, 2=fair, 3=poor)	Q5: CAPA status	Q5: LAPA status	Q6: Key gaps and challenges?
Day 1	Dhikurpokhari (all)	Meeting with Bhakarjung CFUG, field visit to observe integrated activities CLAC, CAPA, CBAPU, livelihood improvement	CHAL	Watershed	1, 2, 3	1	WWF, CARE, FECOFUN	1	Yes	No	Low resources for IGA and CAPA implementation.
	Bhadouri Tamagi, Panchase (all)	Meeting with Naule Chharchhare CFUG: discussion on ecotourism, protection forest, CAPA	CHAL	Watershed	1, 2	2	WWF, CARE, FECOFUN	3	Yes	No	Activities not focused, too many projects, water issues.
Day 3	Sardhikhola (Team A - Madhav and Teri)	Meeting with CAMC members and field visit: corridor restoration by plantation, governance in conservation area, CBAPU and illegal wildlife trade	CHAL	Protected area	1, 2, 3	2	NTNC	2	Yes	Yes	NTNC and CARE not working together initially, failed plantation, CAPA not effective since water project has stopped functioning.
	Tanahu (Team B - Keshav and Bijay) Meeting with DFO	Meeting with Tanahu DFO and Nursery observation - Keshav	CHAL	Watershed	1, 2	1	DFO/WOO	NA	Yes,	No	Financial disbursement issue for DFO from HB, 2 CAPAs exist but not well implemented and linked to LAPA due to NTNC and CARE working separately.
	Devghat (Team B) Visit of Broomgrass area	Travel, field observation, and meeting with broomgrass plantation communities at Devghat, jointly with	CHAL	Watershed and corridor	1, 2	1	DFO/WOO	NA	NA	NA	Financial disbursement issue for DFO from HB.

		Tanahu DFO; WOO activity, critical corridor restoration									
Day 4	Jum dada (Team A - Keshav and Teri)	Meeting with Jum Dada Jhapri CFUG: CLAC (women empowerment), IGAs, green enterprise, improved forest management	CHAL	Watershed	1, 2, 3	2	WWF, CARE, FECOFUN	1	No	No	Shortage of drinking water, potential of working with 30 more CFUGs not yet materialized.
	Siddhathani, Tanahu (Team B - Madhav and Bijay)	Meeting with Siddhathani CFUG: CAPA (adaptation planning process), livelihood, governance	CHAL	Watershed	1, 2, 3	2	CARE, FECOFUN	1	No	No	
Day 5	Basishahar, Lamjung (Team A - Keshav and Teri)	Meeting with MMHP and PES technical committee and RCDC - Hydro-power PES	CHAL	Watershed	2, 3	2	CARE	3	Yes	No	Above the MMHP, a new hydro-power being constructed and a huge quantity of sand/soil and boulder being dumped. No policy on PES, lots of awareness-raising on PES, not good coordination amongst active GLAs and HB.
	Marsyangi, Lamjung (Team A)	Field visit upper Marsyangdi, Manang road , MMHP - infrastructure threat on ecosystem services and biodiversity (water, forest, aquatic life)	CHAL	Watershed	2	3	CARE	3	No	NA	As above, enforcement of EIA mitigation measure is a huge problem.
	Sundhabazzar, Lamjung (Team A)	Meeting with VLBS - sustainable financing and micro-enterprise support mechanism	CHAL	Watershed	2	None	VSBL (micro-credit company)/ WOO	3	NA	NA	No relation to other objectives of HB except providing small loan to locals. This is a WOO and is a recent award.
Day 6	Gorkha (Team B - Madhav and Bijay)	Meeting with DSCO, Gorkha to discuss HB collaboration	CHAL	Watershed	2	3	CARE	3	NA	No	DSCO not involved in planning; DSCO engineering estimates not recognized by HB, third-party technical not at site

											and too centralized and clumsy.
	Gorkha (Team B - Madhav and Bijay) Khalte Gangate micro-watershed visit	Meeting with Khalte Gangate community and visit to sub-watershed site - integrated watershed management and its contribution on restoring critical habitat	CHAL	Watershed	2	2	CARE	2	Yes	NA	Low resources for IGA; upstream-downstream linkage poor even at micro-watershed and participants are not clear about it.
	Team A (Madhav and Keshav)										
Day 8 Sun	Jyoti CFUG, Gadawa VDC, Dang	Meeting with Jyoti CFUG and field visit to observe flood plain restoration activity	TAL	Corridor	1, 3	1	WWF, CARE, FECOFUN	1	No	Yes	Riverside flooding and sedimentation. Not many activities in the upstream to reduce flooding and sedimentation.
	Mahadewa CFUG, Gobardiya	Intrection with Mahadeva CFUG and field visit to observe/discuss restoration of encroached land; CAPA implementation	TAL	Corridor (Kamdi)	1, 3,5	2 (it is rather poor)	WWF and CARE (through CFCC, Gadhwa)	3 (actually CFCC work is not transparent); MSFP also works in the same VDC but there is no coordination	Yes	Yes, by MSFP	Riverine floods and wetland degradation are major problems; technical quality of work is weak since CFC hires experts to deliver services; no empowerment of CFUG; upstream and downstream linkages not considered.
Day 9 Mon	Kamdi Corridor, Kamdi VDC, Banke	Interaction with Pashupati CFUG and field visit: CLAC, CBAPU, governance activities. Discussion on challenge of corridor restoration due to sand/boulder extraction and flood plain encroachment.	TAL	Corridor (Kamdi)	1, 3	1	CARE, WWF, FECOFUN	1	No	Yes, prepare d by CARE	The participants said: "DFO does nothing to help us; range post does not exist; illegal cutting of tress by insiders and outsiders (even from people from India) happens; poverty is the key issue and partnership is the gap."

	Kamdi VDC, Banke	Intrection with Sadabahar CFUG and field visit to observe CAPA activites: flood control and flood plain restoration activities; biodiversity conservation practices	TAL	Corridor	1, 3	1	WWF, CARE, FECOFUN	1	Yes	No	Riverside flooding and sedimentation.
Day 10 Tue	Rajapur, Bardia	Interaction with Sarashwoti CFUG; discuss CLAC and cooperative, observe CAPA and livelihood activities	TAL	Corridor	1, 3	1	WWF, CARE, FECOFUN	1	Yes	Yes, by NCCSP	River cutting of the plantation forest.
	Bhimapur, Bardia	Intrection with Bhimmapur community and field visit to observe HWC reduction activities and discuss transboundary issues	TAL	Corridor	1	2	NTNC	1	Yes	No	Some of the poles of the electric fencing poles (wooden) are decaying, and power stations sometimes do not work. Replacement of wooden post and other livelihood support needed.
Day 11 Wed	Neulapur Bardia	Interaction with Neulapur BZCF and observe corridor restoration plantation and livelihood activities	TAL	Protected area	1, 3	1	All the protected area partners	1	No	Yes	
	Lamki, Kailali	Interaction with Lamki Municipality Officials on LAPA preparation and CCA-DRR integration	TAL	Corridor	3	2	CARE	2	Yes	Yes	Very new idea in this area. CCA awareness not well carried out. LAPA in the process of formulation.
	Lamki, Kailali	Interaction with Chure Mahila Cooperative: CLAC and women economic empowerment; livelihood activities through cooperative	TAL	Corridor	1, 2	1	WWF, CARE, FECOFUN	1	Yes	Yes	Loan disbursement is not possible to all (even for biogas installation) as there is not much working capital of the cooperative.

Day 12 Thu	Kanchanpur	Observation of Black Buck translocation site and interaction on species conservation	TAL	Protected area	1	1	NTNC	2	Yes	No	Potential for infection from the surrounding cattle (open grazing).
	Kanchanpur	Interaction with Sundevi BZUC, Jhalari to discuss conservation issues around protected area and community perception	TAL	Protected area	1, 3	2	NTNC, CARE, WWF	3	Yes	No	People are confused with the conflicting norms of the partners; through NTNC facilitation, got a WOO grant but facing difficulty in implementation as the norms approved are different than what they proposed.
	Kanchanpur	Meeting with NTNC head, SPWLR, Kanchanpur to discuss HB-GLAs collaboration and coordination	TAL	Protected area	1	1	NTNC, WWF, CARE	2	NA	NA	NTNC and DNPWC are working well in both BZM and PA management work.
	Janahit Mahakali CFUG, Krishnapur, Bani	Bijaya Sal conservation area field observation, interaction with Janahit Mahakali CFUG	TAL	Corridor	1, 2, 3	1	WWF, CARE, FECOFUN	1	Yes	No	Very little support to these very poor and marginalized communities to restore degraded forest to its pristine form with its endangered tree species.
	Team B (Teri and Bijay)										

7th day	Dahakhnai, Chitwan	Meeting with 5 CFUGs including Ranikhola CFUG, Kalikhola CFUG, Tin Kanya CFUG, Chandithan CFUG, and Kalikatar CFUG: CLAC initiated activities; field visit CAPA site and uspstream area; CAPA implementation; school construction at the initiative of women for children education, biological ponds construction, control of illegal poaching by forming CBAPU	TAL	Corridor and watershed	1, 2, 3	2	CARE, WWF	1	Yes.	No	Poor quality of embankment construction under CAPA, no concept of upstream-downstream linkage, upstream watershed degradation, drying of Bish Hazari Lake water source, plantation failed along embankment, lack of awareness of strategic site both for TAL and CHAL of Barandavar upstream.
Day 8 Sun	Bharatpur	KII Travel to DFO office and Interaction with DFO on Barandabhar Protection Forest plus collaboration with HB in general	TAL	Corridor	1, 2, 3	1	All the partners	1	Yes	No	DFO is not involved in planning process of HB.
	Padampur, Chitwan	Interaction with 5 CFUGs on HB activities; protection forest issues: CLAC, IGA, biogas, CAPA	TAL and CHAL	Corridor and watershed	1, 2, 3	1	All the partners	1	Yes	Yes	Deep boring installed but not operational due to lack of electricity in Padampur forest, weak monitoring, no involvement of DFO in planning process as DFO will be responsible after phase out project, CFUG are working in accessible sites but not in remote hills, CFUG opposing protected forest but DFO has to fulfill the forest product needs of people outside CF.

	Kasara, CNP headquarters	Meeting with CNP: habitat management, rhino monitoring, wildlife research, CBAPU	TAL	Protected area	1	1	NTNN, WWF	1	NA	No	Lack of capacity on upstream-downstream linkage for wildlife management water source conservation.
Day 9 Mon	Sauraha, Chitwan	Meeting with CNP BZMC/Saurha BZUC on HB work in buffer zone areas; park and people relation	TAL	Protected area	1	1	NTNC, WWF	1	Yes	No	Difficulty in decreasing human life casualties and crop damage from wildlife.
	Gyneshwor BZCFUG, Mangalpur	Meeting with 4 CFUGs including Gyneshwor BZCFUG, field observation of HWC reduction activities; CBAPU, eco-tourism	TAL	Protected area	1	1	NTNC, CARE, FECOFUN	1	Yes	No	Difficulty in decreasing human life casualties and crop damage from wildlife.
	Namuna BZCFUG, Nawalparasi	Meeting with Namuna BZCFUG, field observation: community-based habitat management and vulture conservation	TAL	Protected area	1	1	NTNC, WWF, CARE	1	No	No	Difficulty in decreasing crop damage from wildlife.
Day 10 Tue	Goral conservation area, Nawalparasi	Interaction with Mahabharat Biodiversity Conservation Concern Society and CFUGs from conservation area; discussion on community based wildlife conservation in collaboration with CFUGs, CAPA; livelihood activities	TAL and CHAL	Corridor and watershed	1	1	NTNC, WWF, CARE	1	Yes	Yes	Upstream-downstream linkage not yet started in Kerunge Khola, which has multiple positive effects.
	Kerunge Khola Kawasoti, Nawalparasi	Interaction with Kerunge Khola sub-watershed management committee and discussion on	TAL	Watershed	1	2	CARE, DSCO (District Soil Conservation Office)	2	Yes	No	Activities limited in downstream but not in upstream conservation.

		watershed management challenges									
Day 11 Wed	Lokpriya BZUC, Handikhola, Makawanpur	Interaction with Lokpriya BZUC and field visit to observe CAPA activities for sub-watershed conservation, CAPA prepared and implemented, CBAPU, bamboo plantation, biogas, vegetable farming	TAL	Protected area	3	1	WWF, CARE	1	Yes	No	Struggling for rehabilitation of degraded lands washed away by kholas.
	Halkhoria CFM, Bara	Interaction with Halkhoria CFM: CLAC, capacity assessment, plantation, river-bank cutting control, ICS	TAL	Corridor	1	1	CARE, WWF/TAL	1	Yes	No	CFM management plan not renewed, thus difficult to manage forest, protect collaborative forest products from illegal logging, also long bureaucratic process for dealing with government (DFO) in CFM operation.
Day 12 Thu	Rangpur CFM, Rautahat	Meeting with Rautahat DFO, Rangapur collaborative forest group and field visit to observe restoration of encroached area, nursery and seedling production of native species	TAL	Corridor	1	2	CARE, WWF/TAL	2	NA	NA	Massive encroachment of CFM area, uprooting of plantation and fencing from encroachers, illegal logging, long bureaucratic process for dealing with government (DFO) in CFM operation.
	Chandrapur Municipality, Rautahat	Meeting with Chandrapur Municipality officials on LAPA preparation and DRR-CCA integration	TAL	Watershed	3	1	CARE, FECOFUN	1	NA	Yes	Lack of resources to implement LAPA.

	FECOFUN Rautahat	CAPA a CFUG and LAPA in Chandrapur Municipality, Plantation	TAL	Watershed	3	1	CARE, FECOFUN	1	Yes	Yes	Lack of resources for LAPA implementation, Chandi river bank cutting, forest resources only in 3 VDCs and 1 municipality out of 96 VDCs, thus forest resource distribution.

ANNEX F: DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INFORMATION

Instructions:

Evaluations of USAID projects will be undertaken so that they are not subject to the perception or reality of biased measurement or reporting due to conflict of interest.[10] *For external evaluations, all Evaluation Team members will provide a signed statement attesting to a lack of conflict of interest or describing an existing conflict of interest relative to the project being evaluated.*[11]

Evaluators of USAID projects have a responsibility to maintain independence so that opinions, conclusions, judgments, and recommendations will be impartial and will be viewed as impartial by third parties. Evaluators and Evaluation Team members are to disclose all relevant facts regarding real or potential conflicts of interest that could lead reasonable third parties with knowledge of the relevant facts and circumstances to conclude that the evaluator or Evaluation Team member is not able to maintain independence and, thus, is not capable of exercising objective and impartial judgment on all issues associated with conducting and reporting the work. Operating Unit leadership, in close consultation with the Contracting Officer, will determine whether the real or potential conflict of interest is one that should disqualify an individual from the Evaluation Team or require recusal by that individual from evaluating certain aspects of the project(s).

In addition, if Evaluation Team members gain access to proprietary information of other companies in the process of conducting the evaluation, then they must agree with the other companies to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.[12]

Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:

- Immediate family or close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.
- Financial interest that is direct, or is significant/material though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.
- Current or previous direct or significant/material though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project.
- Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.
- Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.

[10] USAID Evaluation Policy (p. 8); USAID Contract Information Bulletin 99-17; and Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) Part 9.5, Organizational Conflicts of Interest, and Subpart 3.10, Contractor Code of Business Ethics and Conduct.
[11] USAID Evaluation Policy (p. 11)
[12] FAR 9.505-4(b)

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluation Team Members

Name	Dr. Terilyn Allendorf
Title	Consultant
Organization	ECODIT
Evaluation Position	Team Leader and M&E Specialist
Evaluation Award Number	SOL-367-14-000025
USAID Project(s) Evaluated *(Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)*	Project Name: Hariyo Ban Project Award Number: AID-367-A-11-00003 Implementing Partner(s): Prime partner – WWF, Sub partners–CARE, National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), Federation of Community Forest User Groups Nepal (FECOFUN)
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	☐ Yes X No
If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts: *Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:* *Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.* *Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.* *Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project.* *Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.* *Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.* *Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.*	

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Signature:	
Date:	20 October 2014

Name	Dr. Madhav Karki
Title	Consultant
Organization	ECODIT LLC
Evaluation Position	Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Specialist
Evaluation Award Number	SOL-367-14-000025
USAID Project(s) Evaluated *(Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)*	Project Name: Hariyo Ban Project Award Number: AID-367-A-11-00003 Implementing Partner(s): Prime partner – WWF, Sub partners- CARE, National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), Federation of Community Forest User Groups Nepal (FECOFUN)
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	☐ Yes X No
If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts: *Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:* *Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.* *Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.* *Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project.* *Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.* *Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.* *Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.*	

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or

disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Signature:	
Date:	29 Oct 2014
Name	Dr. Keshav Kanel
Title	Consultant
Organization	ECODIT LLC
Evaluation Position	Forestry and NRM Specialist
Evaluation Award Number	SOL-367-14-000025
USAID Project(s) Evaluated *(Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)*	Project Name: Hariyo Ban Project Award Number: AID-367-A-11-00003 Implementing Partner(s): Prime partner – WWF, Sub partners- CARE, National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), Federation of Community Forest User Groups Nepal (FECOFUN)
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	☐ Yes X No
If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts: *Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:* *Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.* *Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.* *Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project.* *Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.* *Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.*	

Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.	

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Signature:	
Date:	October 10, 2014

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluation Team Members

Name	Bijay Kumar Singh, Ph.D.
Title	Independent Researcher
Organization	
Evaluation Position	Rural Development and Livelihood Specialist
Evaluation Award Number	SOL-367-14-000025
USAID Project(s) Evaluated *(Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)*	Hariyo Ban, Nepal
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	xYes □ No
If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts: *Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to: Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated. Preconceived ideas toward*	In Hariyo Ban Project, I conducted a small study as an expert consultant for 35 days from 13 April to 30 September 2013 for "Operational and Monitoring Plan Preparation for Ecosystem Services in Phewa Watershed for Tourism". Professionally, I am an independent researcher (Forestry, Environment, Social, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation), but at the same time I am working as a board member in numbers of government and civil society organizations including Rastrapati Chure Madhesh Conservation Development Board, Forest Action Nepal, Renaissance Society Nepal, but none of these organizations are directly or indirectly working with USAID/Hariyo Ban as partner organization or Service Provider. As a Board Member, I have to attend the Board Meetings and provide my inputs but I do not have to make daily attendance. Thus, I do not see any real or potential conflict of interests that can influence the MTR.

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