Darwin Initiative Main & Extra: Final Report

To be completed with reference to the "Project Reporting Information Note": (https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/resources/information-notes/).

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum of 20 pages** in length, excluding annexes.

Submission Deadline: no later than 3 months after agreed end date.

Submit to: BCF-Reports@niras.com including your project ref in the subject line.

Darwin Initiative Project Information

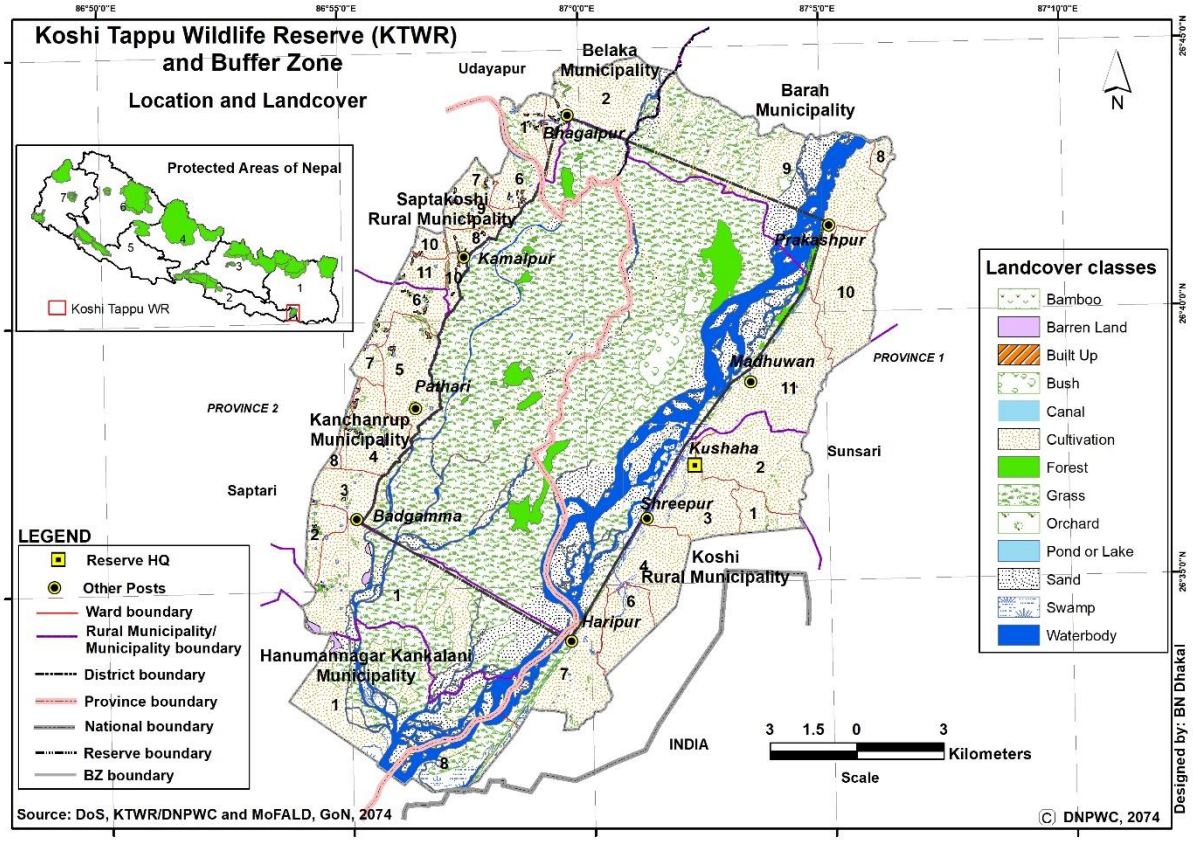
Scheme (Main or Extra)	Main
Project reference	29-017
Project title	Sustainable management of wetlands and grasslands: enhancing biodiversity and livelihoods.
Country(ies)	Nepal
Lead Organisation	Bird Conservation Nepal
Project partner(s)	Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve (KTWR) and Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve Buffer Zone Management Committee
Darwin Initiative grant value	£ 233351.00
Start/end dates of project	1 June 2022/ 31 March 2025
Project Leader name	Ishana Thapa
Project website/blog/social media	www.birdlifenepal.org/ https://www.facebook.com/BirdConservationNepal
Report author(s) and date	Ishana Thapa, Khadananda Paudel, Aavas Pradhan and Sanjay Chaudhary; 23 July 2025

1 Project Summary

According to the *Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve (KTWR) Management Plan 2018*, several key challenges to biodiversity conservation including the heavy reliance of local communities on natural resources within the reserve, as well as the degradation of important wetland and grassland habitats were identified. These challenges pose significant threats to bird populations and other wildlife.

In response to these issues, the project was designed with a focus on restoring and enhancing the ecological quality of wetlands and grasslands within KTWR. Additionally, the project sought to reduce local communities' dependency on the reserve's natural resources by promoting sustainable livelihood alternatives. Key interventions included the construction of fish ponds, supports to restore and improve conditions of wetlands and grasslands, support improved cooking stoves as well as grass cutting machines and support for women-led entrepreneurship initiatives.

One of the major challenges encountered was that many local community members, being from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, lacked the necessary skills and knowledge to engage in entrepreneurial activities. To address this, the project incorporated a capacity-building component, which involved exposure visits, targeted training sessions, and the provision of initial support to help participants establish small-scale enterprises.



Working area Covered by DI project for KTWR				
Municipality/Rural Municipality	**Ward No.**	**District**	**Tole/Village**	**Buffer Zone User Committee (BZUC)**
Barahshetra Municipality	9	Sunsari	Prakashpur	Prakashpur BZUC
Barahshetra Municipality	11	Sunsari	Madhuwan	Madhuwan BZUC
Koshi Rural Municipality	3	Sunsari	Urawn / Sardar Tole	Kusaha - Lauki BZUC
Koshi Rural Municipality	6,7	Sunsari	Haripur-Sreepur	Haripur-SreePur BZUC
Kanchanrup Municipality	1	Saptari	Bairwa Barmajhiya	Beruwa Barmajhiya BZUC
Kanchanrup Municipality	4, 10	Saptari	Jagatpur, Badgama,Dhankatta tole	Badgama Jagatpur BZUC
Kanchanrup Municipality	5,6	Saptari	Purwa Pipra Tole, Pathari Tole, Paremara Tole, Jamuwa Tole	Purwapipra Darampur Goghanpur BZUC
Saptakosi Municipality	9,10,11	Saptari	Kamalpur, Odraha tole	Odraha Kamalpur BZUC
Belka Municipality	1,2	Udaypur	Tapeshwari	Tapeshwari BZUC

2 Project Partnerships

The project was implemented through a robust collaborative partnerships and engagement with various stakeholders and stakeholders were actively involved in project planning, monitoring, evaluation, and decision-making processes. The project was implemented in partnership with Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve office and Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve Buffer zone management committee. The project partners remained very supportive to the effective implementation of the project activities. In addition to this, collaboration of the project with local stakeholders, including the Buffer Zone Management Committee (BZMC) and Buffer Zone User Committees (BZUC), have been integral to our project's success. Through their participation, we have identified beneficiaries and ensured that our activities align with the needs and priorities of the local communities. Their coordination and recommendations have not only enhanced the effectiveness of our interventions but have also fostered a sense of ownership and sustainability within the community.

A project monitoring committee, led by the Deputy Director General of the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, was formed to ensure timely monitoring of project implementation and to provide necessary guidance and support for its effective execution. Few meetings were held at Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation and a field monitoring visit was also conducted.

We remain dedicated to strengthening these partnerships and expanding our engagement with relevant stakeholders to ensure the sustainability and impact of our conservation initiatives.

3 Project Achievements

Throughout the project period, our project has made substantial progress toward achieving our objectives of improving wetland and grassland habitats for birds and promoting nature-based livelihoods for local communities.

3.1 Outputs

Output 1: Threats to threatened bird species in Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve and its buffer zone reduced through improved management of grassland and wetlands inside the reserve; restoring grasslands and restoring wetlands in buffer zone area.

The project successfully contributed in threat reduction to the threatened bird species in Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve (KTWR) through a combination of capacity building, active monitoring, and community-based interventions. Trainings on bird identification, population monitoring, and threat assessment were provided to 27 KTWR staff members and 21 local buffer zone users, significantly enhancing their ability to monitor population and threats to threatened birds in KTWR. Additionally, the project carried out monitoring surveys of water bird count, Bengal florican Survey and counts of threatened birds in year 1, year 2 and year 3 in collaboration with Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve, National Trust for Nature Conservation- Koshi Conservation Centre, Koshi Bird Society, Biodiversity Conservation Centre Nepal, buffer zone user committees as well as university students where 10 trained KTWR staff and 14 local community members actively participated fostering local ownership and continuity in conservation efforts. Before every monitoring surveys, an orientation was provided to all the monitoring team members.

Baseline was established for few bird species during water bird count and Bengal Florican Survey 2023: 75 Swamp Francolin, 1 Bristled Grassbird, 4 Grey-crowned Prinia, 24 Bengal Florican, 211 Yellow-breasted Bunting, 23 Indian Courser and 70 Northern Pintail and 9 Cotton Pygmy-Goose. Water bird count and Bengal Florican Survey in 2025 recorded 128 Swamp Florican, 9 Bristled Grassbird, 0 Grey-crowned Prinia, 9 Bengal Florican, 310 Yellow-breasted Bunting, 22 Indian Courser and 131 Northern Pintail. Total number of water birds counted in KTWR in 2022 were: 7647; 2023 were 7573; 2024 were 5527 and 2025 were 9250.

These findings present a mixed result, the number of Swamp Florican, Bristled Grassbird, Yellow-breasted Bunting and Northern Pintail as well as total number of water birds increased in 2025 in compared to 2023. While number of Grey-crowned Prinia, Bengal Florican and Indian Courser showed a decrease in 2025 compared to 2023.

The less number of records of in the Bengal Florican in 2025 could be attributed to the loss of floodplain habitats in Koshi Tappu, as indicated by a comparison of land use data from previous years. These floodplains, which served as critical habitats for Bengal Floricans, had recorded sightings of the species in both 2023 and 2024. They might have moved to some other good habitats including closeby Indian territory.

Furthermore, to minimize cattle grazing pressure within the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve (KTWR), chaff cutters were provided to 179 households to promote stall feeding practices, and improved grass seeds were provided to 268 households to encourage grass cultivation within their own land. This intervention, coupled with targeted awareness raising campaigns in nearby communities, led to a decline of cattle numbers inside KTWR by 31.4% from 2023 to 2025 (Bengal Florican Survey report 2023-2025).

In addition, our awareness-raising initiatives under Activity 1.7 focused on the importance of birds and mitigating threats to them achieved notable success. We broadcasted an annual eight-episode radio series on Saptakoshi FM, dedicated to bird conservation. Complementing this, radio jingles were also developed and aired, distributed 4,000 posters emphasizing the ecological value of wetlands and grasslands. Furthermore, hoarding boards and wall paintings were installed to visually convey the significance of these habitats to local communities and key stakeholders. These activities helped raise awareness and encourage a sense of responsibility for protecting wetland and grassland ecosystems.

Output 2: Capability and capacity of KTWR staffs, buffer zone community forest user committee members, local conservation group/NGOs members, university students on managing grassland and wetland for creating safer habitats enhanced.

In year 1 and 2, 12 KTWR staffs, 79 representatives from buffer zone community forest users, 18 local conservation groups and 17 university students were trained in managing existing grasslands and wetlands and restoring grasslands inside KTWR and its bufferzone by end of year 2. Pre- and post-training assessments revealed an overall increase of 47.36% participants' knowledge, with an average score improvement of 3.85 points from 8.13 to 11.98. (Pre and post training assessment report).

Two grassland areas: one located in the Shreepur Harpur buffer zone and the other in the Beruwa Barmajhia buffer zone covering a total of 122.62 hectares, were cleared of un wanted vegetation and grass was cut. The sustainable management of these grasslands is being overseen by three active wetlands management sub-committees. Natural wetlands located within the Shreepur Haripur, Madhuvan, Piprapurba-Dharampur-Ghoganpur, and Bairuwa Barmajhiya buffer zone areas collectively covering approximately 130 hectares were cleared of invasive water hyacinth. The sustainable management of these wetlands is being overseen by three active wetlands management sub-committees. The target for grassland and wetland improvement appeared ambitious, requiring significantly more resources and labor than anticipated. Progress was further delayed due to challenges in identifying suitable areas for restoration.

Grassland management plan and Wetland management plan targeted for bufferzone users were developed in Nepali language and provided to wetland and grassland management committees which are now being followed for the management of wetlands and grasslands in the bufferzone.

Dilip Khanal, a M.Sc. Student at Central Department of Environmental Science (Tribhuvan University) completed a dissertation on "Avifauna in the grassland of Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve, their threats and conservation issues" in August 2024 (Annex 5.7). Likewise, Sadikshya Subedi, a M.Sc. Environmental science Student at Patan Multiple Campus

(Tribhuvan University) completed a dissertation on "Assessment of wetland bird diversity and water quality parameters in buffer zone of Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve" in November 2024 (Annex 5.7).

The bufferzone of KTWR comprises 2768 hectares and wetland covers 1741 hectares in bufferzone of KTWR. During the initial phase of the project implementation, 2000 hectares of area was estimated as disturbance area requiring improvements and the project aimed at improving 50% of the disturbance area however the project was able to manage disturbance reduction measures to only 389.54 hectares, accounting for just 19.5% of the targeted area.

Output 3: Sustainable livelihood enhancement program in place to support local communities' well-being as for example one household one fish pond program, women entrepreneurship, community-managed grasslands and wetlands.

One of the major project interventions was the promotion of aquaculture as an alternative income-generating activity. A total of 340 individuals were trained in aquaculture practices during the project period, resulting in the direct benefit to 484 households through the construction of fish ponds (Annex 5.1), provision of fishlings, and restoration of a community-managed fish pond (Ind. 3.1; Annex-1). Importantly, 279 of these households belonged to Indigenous fish-dependent tribes, reinforcing their traditional livelihoods with improved techniques and resources.

To reduce pressure on forest resources and improve health outcomes, the project introduced alternative energy solutions. A total of 900 households (AR1, AR2 and Annex- 5.3) were supported with improved cooking stoves, reducing indoor air pollution and dependency on firewood. Additionally, 179 households (Annex 5.2) received chaff cutters to promote stall-feeding practices.

Through community managed grasslands and wetlands were targeted to benefit 2000 households, they are only anticipated to benefit 1200 households in Shreepur Haripur bufferzone, Beruwa barmajhia bufferzone, Madhuvan bufferzone and Pipra Purba Dharampur Ghoganpur bufferzone as the grassland and wetland area improved is less than originally targeted.

Women’s economic empowerment emerged as a significant area of progress under the project. Before its implementation, women's involvement in entrepreneurship was minimal. During the project period, three new women-led cooperatives were established:

1. Urawn Mahila Krishi Tatha Bachat Samuha, Kushaha
2. Pipra Mahila Laghu Udhami Group, Saptari
3. Simsar Women Magar Tol Saving Group, Barahkshetra-9, Magartol, Sunsari.

Additionally, an existing cooperative "Koshi Tappu Simsar Multipurpose Co-operative Limited" was strengthened. A total of 175 women were engaged in entrepreneurship across the project sites, among whom 78 have already initiated their own start-up entrepreneurship works (Annex 5.4 and Annex 5.5).

Output 4: Sustainable use of natural resources promoted through involvement of women, indigenous people and local communities in decision-making processes.

At the beginning of the project, a total of 100 women and individuals from indigenous communities were serving as representatives in various local organizational committees. By the year 2025, this number had significantly increased, with 180 women and indigenous representatives actively involved in these committees, reflecting a notable improvement in inclusive participation and representation of marginalized groups with an 80% increase.

Project's another output was the promotion of sustainable fishing practices among Indigenous fishing communities who have traditionally relied on the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve (KTWR) for their livelihoods. A total of 266 licensed fishermen (trained on sustainable fishing and supported with fish pond construction in their homes) have been practicing more sustainable fishing practice in KTWR. Furthermore, to support this output, 80% of respondents agreed that licensed fishermen practice sustainable fishing practice in KTWR (Socio-economic assessment report).

Moreover, between 2023 and 2025, the number of family members entering the reserve for firewood, fodder, grass, and grazing decreased by 18.7%, while overall weekly entries into the reserve fell by 21.62% (Socio-economic assessment 2023-2025). Number of people entering KTWR for thatch collection decreased from 6534 in 2023 to 4425 in 2024 resulting in 32.3% decrease (KTWR thatch grass collection register).

The project initially aimed to collaborate with 16 buffer zone community forests within the buffer zone area and an additional 14 community forests located adjacent to the buffer zone of Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve (KTWR). However, due to coordination challenges with community forest user groups outside KTWR, the project was able to engage with 16 community forest user groups. As a result, sustainable natural resource use was integrated into the operational plans of 15 CFUGs, collectively covering an area of 125.92 hectares (Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve and Its Buffer Zone Management Plan, 2024).

Outcome: **Sustainable use of grasslands and wetlands with reduced threats for the populations of grassland and wetland dependent bird species contributing well-being of 5500 households.**

Outcome target partially achieved with sustainable use of grasslands and wetlands with reduced threats for the populations of grassland and wetland dependent bird species contributing well-being of 3031 households.

As a result of the project implementation specifically in wetland and grassland management, wetland and grassland management sub-committees under bufferzone management committees have been actively managing their wetlands and grasslands following management plans, contributing to the sustainable use and conservation of natural resources within the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve (KTWR). Efforts to promote sustainable fisheries have led to positive outcomes, with 266 licensed fishermen now actively practicing sustainable fishing within the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve (KTWR).

Efforts in reducing threats to grassland and wetland habitats have resulted in reduction of cattle inside KTWR by 33.3% in 2025 compared to 2023 (Bengal Florican Survey reports 2023-2025). In addition to this, practice of cattle leaving inside the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve has been reduced by 25.27% (Socio-economic assessment reports 2023 and 2025). This significant decline indicates a corresponding 24.71% reduction in overgrazing pressure within the reserve.

The project also made progress in monitoring key bird species particularly in establishing baselines during the 2023 Water Bird Count and Bengal Florican Survey. Initial records included 75 Swamp Francolin, 1 Bristled Grassbird, 4 Grey-crowned Prinia, 24 Bengal Florican, 211 Yellow-breasted Bunting, 23 Indian Courser, 70 Northern Pintail, and 9 Cotton Pygmy-Goose. Follow-up surveys in 2025 showed mixed result as the number of Swamp Florican, Bristled Grassbird, Yellow-breasted Bunting and Northern Pintail increased in 2025 compared to 2023. While number of Grey-crowned Prinia, Bengal Florican and Indian Courser showed a decrease in 2025 compared to 2023. The decline in the Bengal Florican population in 2025 could be attributed to the loss of floodplain habitats in Koshi Tappu, as indicated by a comparison of land use data from previous years.

In terms of socio-economic impact, the project contributed to a 24.74% average increase in household income, as indicated by socio-economic assessments. A total of 1831 households directly benefited from various interventions, including improved cooking stoves, fish ponds, fishlings, chaff cutters, improved grass seed distribution, and community fish pond restoration. Furthermore, the improved management of natural wetlands and grasslands is expected to

benefit an additional 1200 households, supporting long-term ecological and livelihood sustainability. A total of 1543 individuals (986 males and 557 females) participated in various trainings, workshops, awareness programs and learning tours.

3.1 Monitoring of assumptions

Outcome Assumptions		comments
Assumption 1	There won't be government restrictions on movement and group meetings due to pandemic during project period.	This assumption remained true, there was no any restrictions on movement due to pandemic.
Assumption 2	No flood occurs in Koshi during the project period.	The flood that occurred during the 2024 monsoon season caused some delays in the implementation of our project.
Assumption 3	Stakeholders in Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve prioritize conservation of threatened birds and their habitats.	This assumption remained important. Our collaboration with stakeholders to implement various project activities and their willingness to collaborate are some positive signs of stakeholders being interested in conservation of threatened birds and their habitats.
Assumption 4	Local government supports and collaborate to provide livelihood supports to local communities.	This assumption remained true. Local government agencies showed interest to collaborate.
Assumption 5	Regular monitoring of threats to threatened bird species takes place in KTWR.	This assumption remained important. Stakeholders participated in regular threat monitoring activities.
Assumption 6	Human Wildlife conflict minimized.	Although the assumption was challenging to predict, it had no impact on the project's progress.
	Output 1 Assumptions	
Assumption 1	Trained personnel remain in institutions and participate in annual monitoring of populations and threats to threatened birds.	Holds true. Trained personnel participated in annual monitoring of populations and threats to threatened birds.
Assumption 2	Local stakeholders participate actively and contribute in project planning.	This assumption remained true.
Assumption 3	Local communities remain positive towards reducing threats to threatened birds in KTWR.	This assumption remained true.
	Output 2 Assumptions	

Assumption 1	Trained personnel remain in institutions and use skills for the management of grasslands and wetlands.	This assumption remained true except for few KTWR staffs.
Assumption 2	Local communities will adopt management of grasslands and wetlands for new source of income and follow management plans.	Important assumption. Regular contacts will be made with newly formed wetland management committees as well as local communities.
Assumption 3	Buffer zone user committees actively participate in managing grasslands and wetlands and minimizing threats to threatened birds.	This assumption remained true.
	Output 3 Assumptions	
Assumption 1	Local government will provide partial supports to local communities for establishing fish ponds, biogas plant and promote stall feeding in project area.	This assumption remained true as local government has been providing supports to local communities to promote stall feeding.
Assumption 2	Management committees will provide equal distribution of benefits from grasslands and wetlands to local communities.	This assumption remained true. Management commmittes follow management plans and guidance from KTWR.
Assumption 3	Fish ponds, restored grasslands and wetlands and women entrepreneurship activities generate sufficient income to serve as conservation incentives.	Fish ponds, restored grasslands and wetlands and women entrepreneurship just started generating income, however conservation incentives hasn't started yet.
	Output 4 Assumptions	
Assumption 1	Women and indigenous people are willing to learn and actively participate in decision-making processes.	This assumption remained true. Quite significant number of women and indigeneous people have been benefitted by the project.
Assumption 2	Buffer Zone Community Forest User Committees are positive to include sustainable harvesting of natural resources and conservation of threatened birds in their operation plan and implement it.	This assumption remained true. During the project period, sustainable harvesting of natural resources were included in Operational Plan of 15 bufferzone community forests.

3.2 Impact

In our original application form, the identified impact was centred on the protection and restoration of grassland and wetland ecosystems within the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve (KTWR), with the aim of maintaining stable populations of grassland and wetland dependent bird species while simultaneously alleviating poverty among local communities.

Our project has made significant contributions to the higher-level impact on biodiversity conservation by actively engaging local stakeholders in improving degraded wetlands and grasslands and reducing major threats to bird populations.

Through a series of training sessions and capacity-building initiatives, the project has significantly enhanced the abilities of local stakeholders including community members and buffer zone users to manage grassland and wetland ecosystems in a more informed and sustainable manner. Stakeholders were also trained in the monitoring of threatened bird species, helping to build a strong local foundation for long-term conservation.

The project has placed a strong emphasis on social inclusion, actively engaging a substantial number of women and individuals from Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) during various phases of implementation. Their involvement in planning, decision-making, and field-level activities has not only empowered these groups but also fostered a deeper sense of ownership and responsibility toward conservation goals.

Additionally, the project has promoted the sustainable use of natural resources particularly through activities that encourage responsible fishing practices and other conservation-friendly livelihood options.

Furthermore, our project has made notable progresses in promoting human development and well-being, particularly in poverty reduction. By providing training and support for livelihood enhancement programs such as aquaculture, women entrepreneurship, and the distribution of improved cooking stoves and chaff cutters, the project has substantially contributed to increased household income, improved food security, and enhanced community resilience. This is evidenced by the establishment of numerous fish ponds, the adoption of sustainable cooking practices, and the uptake of stall feeding among livestock owners, all of which have tangible benefits for local communities' economic well-being and overall quality of life.

Overall, our project's contributions to biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction align closely with the higher-level impact objectives outlined by the Darwin Initiative.

4 Contribution to Darwin Initiative Programme Objectives

4.1 Project support to the Conventions, Treaties or Agreements

In overall, the project has actively contributed to national policies and international biodiversity conventions through various actions and engagements. Specifically, our project has supported the implementation of Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve (KTWR) management plan (2018-2022) and management plan (2024-2028) through awareness raising to reduce threats to biodiversity and improving grassland and wetland habitats. The project has also aligned its activities with the country's commitments under international conventions.

Furthermore, the project has contributed to the targets of draft Post 2020 Global Diversity Framework through following activities:

Target 1 and 2- reducing threats to biodiversity. The project has contributed in improving 252.62 hectares of wetlands and grasslands.

The project has contributed to the CBD article 8 (d, e) through promoting conservation of grassland and wetland habitats for birds and promoting sustainable development of local communities through nature friendly livelihood schemes.

Similarly, the project has contributed to the following Sustainable Development Goals' targets:

Target 1. No Poverty: Supports to local communities for fish pond construction, providing various trainings on entrepreneurships, empowerment and supports to cooperatives (Output 3).

Target 3. Good Health and Well-being: Improved Cooking Stoves and income generation supports (Output 3).

Target 5. Gender Equality: Women empowerment through training on women entrepreneurship and supporting women-led cooperatives (Output 3 and 4).

Target 15: Life on land: improving wetland and grassland habitats and promoting conservation of threatened bird species (Output 1 and 2).

4.2 Project support for multidimensional poverty reduction

Economically, the project provided alternative and sustainable livelihood options to reduce dependence on degrading natural resources. The support for 171 fish ponds and provision of fishlings to 279 households promoted aquaculture, generating food and income for local families. These households earn about GBP 45,530 annually from the aquculture.

In addition to this, the project supported to establish three women cooperatives and supports to strengthen one women-led cooperative, support to establish souvenir shop to women group and various trainings on entrepreneurship have enhanced local enterprise development especially for women contributing to long-term economic empowerment and gender equity.

Socially, the project promoted inclusion and strengthened local governance by forming four cooperative organizations and establishing management committees for grasslands and wetlands. Involvement of women's groups and Indigenous communities also promoted equity and participation among marginalized groups.

Environmentally, through the distribution of 900 improved cooking stoves (ICS), the project contributed in reduction of fuelwood consumption. Additionally, 179 chaff cutters and 268 grass seed packets were distributed to promote stall feeding and reduce grazing pressure on critical habitats.

The project developed capacities of local communities and local stakeholders through multiple training sessions that reached 1,543 individuals. These covered skills such as biodiversity monitoring, sustainable harvesting of natural resources as well as skills for livelihood enhancement.

Overall, by the efforts above the project contributed in addressing the root causes of multidimensional poverty.

4.3 Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

GESI Scale	Description	Put X where you think your project is on the scale
Not yet sensitive	The GESI context may have been considered but the project isn't quite meeting the requirements of a 'sensitive' approach	
Sensitive	The GESI context has been considered and project activities take this into account in their design and implementation. The project addresses basic needs and vulnerabilities of women and marginalised groups and the project will not contribute to or create further inequalities.	×
Empowering	The project has all the characteristics of a 'sensitive' approach whilst also increasing equal access to assets, resources and capabilities for women and marginalised groups	
Transformative	The project has all the characteristics of an 'empowering' approach whilst also addressing unequal power relationships and seeking institutional and societal change	

The project supported the establishment of three new women-led cooperatives and strengthened one existing cooperative, supported in setting up a souvenir shop. These initiatives, combined with various entrepreneurship and skill enhancement trainings, contributed to local enterprise development and long-term economic empowerment, particularly for women. Out of 175 women who participated in entrepreneurship promotion activities, 78 successfully initiated their own enterprises with project support. Furthermore, representation of women and indigenous people in local organizational committees increased by 80%, from 100 at baseline to 180, reflecting improved participation. In addition to this, the project benefitted 484 households of which 279 belonged to indigenous fish-dependent communities through fish pond construction, fishling distribution, and community pond restoration. These project efforts made significant progress in promoting Gender Equality and Social Inclusion.

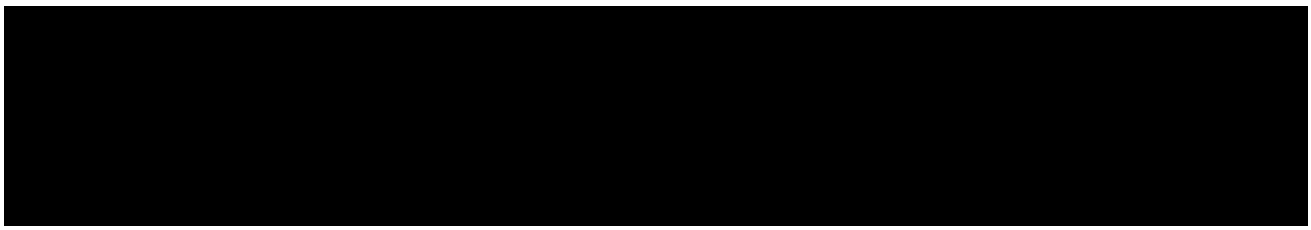
4.4 Transfer of knowledge

The project supported Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation to develop a 10 year Bengal Florican Action Plan (2024-2033) published in 2024 and in implementation phase now. The project also supported for the development of Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve and Buffer Zone Management Plan for five years published in 2024. The project provided research grant as well as technical assistance to two master's level students (one female and one male) to complete their master's dissertation. The project developed six thousand posters for

promoting conservation of threatened birds as well as grassland and wetland management. Furthermore, project activities were regularly posted in Bird Conservation Nepal website, Bird Conservation Nepal's newsletters Danphe and Munal as well as annual reports. Project case study entitled "From Smoke to Smiles in the Himalayas in Nepal" has been published in Darwin Initiative website.

A case study featuring on Darwin Koshi Tappu project has been submitted to the upcoming book by Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN) focusing on Nature-Based Solution. This is a great opportunity to showcase the project's impact, share valuable lessons learned, and highlight good practices that could help inform future UNFCCC negotiations.

4.5 Capacity building



Project Team Leader Ms. Ishana Thapa has been elected as BirdLife Global Council member in September 2022. She is female from developing country Nepal. A Technical Working Team (TWT) will take the lead in revising NBSAP and aligning it with the GBF, Monitoring framework, and national priorities.

5 Monitoring and evaluation

Baseline and end line studies on i) socio-economic assessments, ii) fish stock survey and iii) and annual population monitoring of important bird species served as a basis for internally evaluate contribution of the project. Further, recorded of partner organizations Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve and buffer zone management committees were useful in evaluating the contribution of the project.

During the project period, project was monitored by project monitoring committee, District Coordination Committee of Sunsari and Saptari districts and Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve office. The recommendations provided by these monitoring were instrumental in enhancing the effectiveness of project implementation.

The Executive Council member of BCN also visited the project site to ensure effective implementation.

6 Lessons learnt

Reflecting on the project implementation years, several valuable lessons have been learned that inform our approach to project implementation.

1. Effective Stakeholder Engagement: Engaging stakeholders at all levels, including local communities, government agencies, and conservation organizations, proved to be crucial for project success. Establishing strong partnerships and fostering open communication channels facilitated collaboration and ensured alignment with local priorities and needs.

2. Adaptive Management: Flexibility and adaptability are essential when working in dynamic environments. During project implementation, we encountered unforeseen challenges such as changing weather patterns and logistical constraints. Embracing adaptive management principles allowed us to adjust our strategies and activities accordingly, ensuring continued progress towards our objectives.

3. Pro-Poor Initiatives: One of the main challenges during project implementation was the selection of beneficiaries, as many ultra-poor households did not own land to construct individual fish ponds. This issue was addressed through regular consultations with stakeholders, including Buffer Zone User Committees. Eventually, the Buffer Zone Management Committees, after several meetings, selected suitable beneficiaries. We also focused on providing aquaculture training and raising awareness about sustainable harvesting practices as well as providing supports on community fish pond ensuring that all community members can benefit from these initiatives indirectly.

4. Agroforestry and Land Management: Encouraging agroforestry practices and plantation of fodder and fuel wood species in buffer zone areas can alleviate pressure on the reserve and promote biodiversity conservation. By diversifying livelihood options and reducing dependence on natural resources, these practices contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable land management.

5. Socio-economic assessments: During the socio-economic assessments, many respondents were reluctant or unwilling to disclose information regarding their income. However, income levels were generally assessed through indirect means, such as field observations and estimations based on the type of profession or economic activities they were engaged in.

7 Actions taken in response to Annual Report reviews

We received few comments and queries by reviewers during review of year 1 report suggesting setting goals and need of encouraging buffer zone users and students to participate in capacity development trainings in order to reach targets. We set the targets to develop capacities of 41 (end of year 2 target: 50) bufferzone users and 18 students (end of year 2 target: 20) in monitoring populations of threatened bird species and threats to these bird species/ sustainable management of grasslands and wetlands. At the end of year 2, the project was susccesssful to develop capacities of 79 bufferzone users and 17 students in monitoring populations of threatened bird species and threats to these bird species/ sustainable management of grasslands and wetlands.

In year 2 report, we were asked to explain the reason that the project did not update its safeguarding policy in the past 12 months.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB, UK) has been a continuous and valuable partner in strengthening our safeguarding systems. Their support has included both the development of our safeguarding policy and capacity building of our designated safeguarding focal staff. Throughout this year as well, RSPB has provided regular one-on-one training and counselling sessions to our safeguarding focal person. The safeguarding policy remained unchanged as there has been no identified need for revision based on current implementation and feedback.

In addition to this, we were asked to provide the specific number of women who have been actively participated in the handicraft's activities. 32 Women from the project sites actively participated in the handicraft's activities (Annex 4.2).

8 Risk Management

No new risks have arisen in Year 3.

No, the project hasn't made any significant adaptations to the project design to address changes to risk.

9 Scalability and Durability

To ensure the long-term sustainability of the project, several integrated approaches were implemented. These included the formation of Grassland Management and Wetland Restoration Committees to support the protection and sustainable use of wetlands and grasslands following grassland and wetland management plans under the guidance of Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve office. Skills on monitoring of threatened birds and their threats provided to the key stakeholders and participatory monitoring of key bird species has been practiced. The project also organized capacity-building trainings on entrepreneurship, sustainable harvesting of natural resources, and provided sewing machines, handicraft materials, and mushroom farming materials to support income-generating activities, particularly for women and marginalized groups. Furthermore, the project worked closely with Buffer Zone Community Forest User Groups to incorporate key themes such as biodiversity conservation**,** ecosystem services**,** and the sustainable use of forest resources into their operational plans. These combined efforts have laid a strong foundation for long-term conservation and community resilience. This livelihood support initiative, combined with efforts to reduce biodiversity threats, has the potential to serve as a model project for replication in other geographic areas facing similar biodiversity conservation challenges.

Of the two full-time project staff, one has left, and the other has transitioned to a different project within Bird Conservation Nepal (BCN). The remaining project resources will now be utilized by BCN in other initiatives aimed at bird and biodiversity conservation.

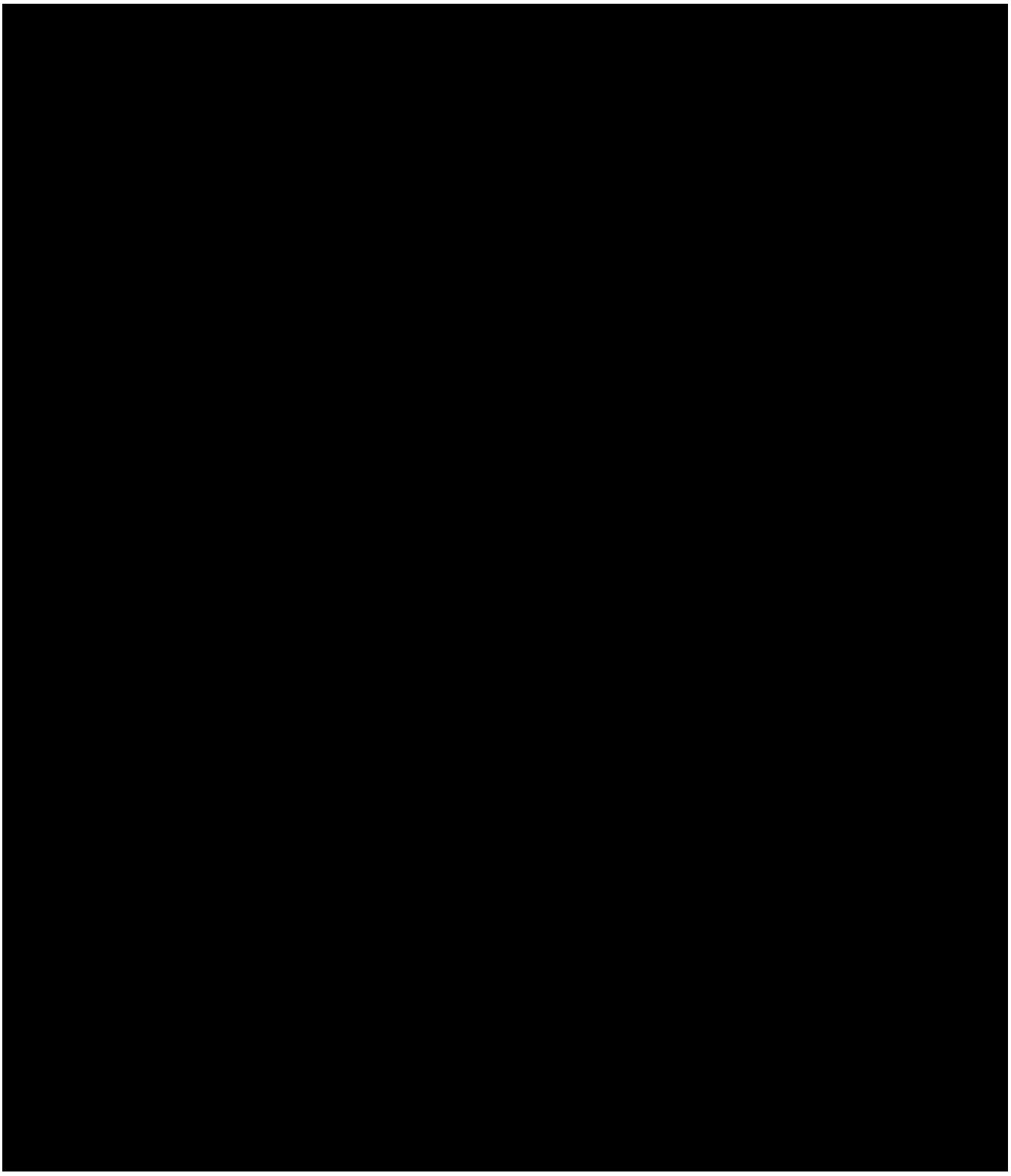
10 Darwin Initiative identity

The project has made concerted efforts to publicize the Darwin Initiative, prominently showcasing it as the main organization driving the project's objectives. The Darwin Initiative logo has been consistently used in various project materials, including presentations, program documentation, awareness materials such as t-shirts, caps, posters, and hoarding boards. This widespread use of the logo serves to raise awareness about the Darwin Initiative's funding support and its commitment to biodiversity conservation.

The Darwin Initiative funding has been recognized as a distinct project with a clear identity. The project's activities, funded by the Darwin Initiative, have been exemplary among organizations active in the project area, showcasing impactful interventions such as the construction of fishing ponds, distribution of chaff cutters, and installation of improved cooking stoves. These efforts have really helped protect biodiversity and improve people's lives, making our project stand out as a success in the area.

The Darwin Initiative logo in the policy document (Bengal Florican Conservation Action Plan) is the high acknowledge of its contribution in biodiversity conservation.

11 Safeguarding



12 Finance and administration

12.1 Project expenditure

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2024/25 Grant (£)	2024/25 Total actual Darwin Initiative Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)

Staff costs (see below)	[redacted]			
Consultancy costs				
Overhead Costs				
Travel and subsistence				
Operating Costs				
Capital items (see below)				
Others (see below)				
TOTAL	75,759.00	75,759.00		

Staff employed (Name and position)	**Cost (£)**
Ms. Ishana Thapa – Project Leader (15%)	[redacted]
Mr. Khadananda Paudel –Project Manager (50%)	
Mr. Aavas Pradhan – Project Officer (Full Time)	
Mr. Sanjay Chaudhary – Project Assistant (Full Time)	
Ms. Pratikchha Srivastava – Finance and Admin Head (30%)	
TOTAL	

Capital items – description	**Capital items – cost (£)**
NA	
TOTAL	

Other items – description	**Other items – cost (£)**
NA	
TOTAL	

12.2 Additional funds or in-kind contributions secured

Matched funding leveraged by the partners to deliver the project	**Total (£)**
Taiwan Forestry Bureau	[redacted]

TOTAL	[redacted]

Total additional finance mobilised for new activities occurring outside of the project, building on evidence, best practices and the project	**Total (£)**
TOTAL	

12.3 Value for Money

[redacted]

The establishment of a field office in Maduvan, Sunsari district by BCN and hiring staff from the project site significantly improved the efficiency and effectiveness of project implementation. By engaging local resources and vendors, the project ensured good value for money while supporting the local economy. Capacity-building efforts enhanced the ability of communities and institutions to manage wetlands, grasslands, and monitor key bird species, laying the foundation for sustained conservation efforts. These investments in local capacity are expected to yield long-term conservation benefits. Additionally, the active involvement of local communities helped reduce implementation costs and improve efficiency, further ensuring strong value for money. The project also contributed to poverty reduction, making the overall investment even more impactful.

BCN has now received a small funding from BirdLife International to run some activities for next two years where all the project knowledge, human resource and other sources will be best utilized.

13 Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

NA.

14 OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes.

The project successfully reduced community dependence on natural resources within the reserve, improved degraded wetland and grassland habitats, and enhanced local livelihoods, thereby contributing to poverty reduction. Key interventions included the construction of fish ponds, distribution of improved cooking stoves, fishlings, grass seeds, chaff cutters, and restoration of community fish ponds, directly benefiting 1,831 households. Socio-economic assessments showed a 24.74% average increase in household income. Additionally, 1,543 individuals (986 males and 557 females) participated in capacity-building activities such as trainings, workshops, awareness programs, and learning tours. The project also contributed to strategic conservation planning through the development of the Bengal Florican Conservation Action Plan (2024–2033) and the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve and Buffer Zone Management Plan (2024–2029).

I agree for the Biodiversity Challenge Funds to edit and use the following for various promotional purposes (please leave this line in to indicate your agreement to use any material you provide here).

[redacted]

File Type (Image / Video / Graphic)	File Name or File Location	Caption, country and credit	Online accounts to be tagged (leave blank if none)	Consent of subjects received (delete as necessary)
Image	Photo 1	Training on handicraft making, Nepal, Sanjay Chaudhary		Yes
Image	Photo 2	Wetland restoration, Nepal, Sanjay Chaudhary		Yes
Image	Photo 3	BCN field office in Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve		Yes

Annex 1 Report of progress and achievements against logframe for the life of the project

Project summary	Progress and achievements
Impact: Grassland and Wetland ecosystem are protected and restored in KTWR with populations of grassland and wetland dependent bird species remaining stable and poverty of local communities alleviated.	**The conservation and sustainable use of resources in Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve have enhanced the well-being and livelihoods of nearby communities.**
Outcome: Sustainable use of grasslands and wetlands with reduced threats for the populations of grassland and wetland dependent bird species contributing well-being of 5500 households.	Target partially achieved: Sustainable use of grasslands and wetlands with reduced threats for the populations of grassland and wetland dependent bird species contributing well-being of 3031 households.
Outcome indicator 0.1: Grassland and wetlands management committees with the supports from KTWR follow management plans developed for grasslands and wetlands in KTWR by year 3.	Three wetland management committees and two grassland management committees have been managing wetlands and grasslands following wetland and grassland management plans.
Outcome indicator 0.2: 300 individuals out of 380 individuals taking licence for fishing will practice sustainable fishing (use fishing methods/techniques to leave young fishes so that fish stock is not depleted in rivers and wetlands) in KTWR by year 3.	Near Target: 266 licensed fishermen (trained on sustainable fishing and supported with fish pond construction in their homes) have been practicing sustainable fishing practice in KTWR. Furthermore, to support this output, 80% of respondents agreed that licensed fishermen practice sustainable fishing practice in KTWR (Socio-economic assessment report). In 2023 fish stock survey recorded 734 fish with a total biomass of 8.547 kg, averaging 11.6 grams per fish. In contrast, the 2025 fish stock survey recorded 1303 fish, but the total biomass dropped to 4.048 kg, with an average fish size of just 3.1 grams.
Outcome indicator 0.3: Number of cattle grazing illegally inside the KTWR reduced to 1000 (50% reduced from baseline of 2000) by year 3.	Target partially achieved: 1420 feral cattle recorded during Bengal Florican Survey 2023 whereas only 947 feral cattle were recorded during Bengal Florican Survey in 2025. This shows that number of cattle reduced by 33.3% In addition to this, socio-economic assessment in project sites also showed that cattle leaving inside the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve has been reduced by 24.71%.
Outcome indicator 0.4: Threats to grassland and wetland dependent bird species reduced by 80% from year 1 baseline (to be obtained by 3rd quarter of year 1) to year 3.	Target partially achieved: Based on the findings of the socio-economic assessment conducted in the project sites, there has been a 24.71% decrease in the number of cattle entering and grazing inside the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve. This significant decline indicates a corresponding 24.71% reduction in overgrazing pressure within the reserve.

Outcome indicator 0.5: Populations of important grassland and wetland dependent bird species namely Bengal Florican, Yellow-breasted Bunting, Bristled Grassbird, Swamp Francolin, Grey-crowned Prinia, Indian Courser, Northern Pintail and Cotton Pygmy Goose stop declining by year 3.	Near target: Baseline was established for few bird species during water bird count and Bengal Florican Survey 2023: 75 Swamp Francolin, 1 Bristled Grassbird, 4 Grey-crowned Prinia, 24 Bengal Florican, 211 Yellow-breasted Bunting, 23 Indian Courser and 70 Northern Pintail and 9 Cotton Pygmy-Goose. Water bird count and Bengal Florican Survey in 2025 recorded 128 Swamp Florican, 9 Bristled Grassbird, 0 Grey-crowned Prinia, 9 Bengal Florican, 310 Yellow-breasted Bunting, 22 Indian Courser and 131 Northern Pintail.
Outcome indicator 0.6: 0.6 In overall, annual income of households in project area increased by 50% of 3100 households from year 1 baseline (to be obtained by 3rd quarter of year 1) to year 3.	Target partially achieved: According to the socio-economic assessment, income of households increased by 24.74% in an average. A total of 1831 households (Improved cooking stoves- 900 households, fish pond- 171 households, fishlings- 263 households, chaff cutter- 179 households, improved grass seed- 268 households, community fish pond- 50 households) were the direct beneficiaries of the project. In addition to this, 1200 households are anticipated to benefited from management of natural wetlands and grasslands.
Output 1: Threats to threatened bird species in Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve and its buffer zone reduced through improved management of grassland and wetlands inside the reserve; restoring grasslands and restoring wetlands in buffer zone area.	
Output indicator 1.1: 20 KTWR staffs and 50 buffer zone community forest guards/representatives from buffer zone community forest users capable on monitoring populations of threatened bird species and threats to these bird species by year 2.	Near Target: In year 1 and 2, 27 KTWR staffs and 21 representatives from buffer zone community forest users participated in training on monitoring of threatened bird species and their threats. 10 KTWR staffs and 14 local buffer zone users also participated in monitoring populations of important bird species in Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve in year 1, year 2 and year 3.
Output indicator 1.2: Number of cattle grazing illegally inside the KTWR reduced to 1000 (50% reduction from baseline of 2000) by year 3.	Target partially achieved: During the 2023 Bengal Florican survey, a total of 1,420 cattle were recorded inside the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve (KTWR). By 2025, this number had decreased by 31.4%
Output indicator 1.3: Population and threats monitoring surveys of threatened birds in KTWR and its buffer zone by a team of BCN staff, park staff and buffer zone users and university students conducted annually in year 1, year 2 and year 3.	Target achieved: Monitoring surveys of water bird count, Bengal florican Survey and counts of threatened birds in year 1, year 2 and year 3 in collaboration with Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve, National Trust for Nature Conservation- Koshi Conservation Centre, Koshi Bird Society, Biodiversity Conservation Centre Nepal, buffer zone user committees as well as university students.
Output indicator 1.4: Populations of threatened bird species resident in KTWR and buffer zone stop declining by year 3.	Near target: Baseline was established for few bird species during water bird count and Bengal Florican Survey 2023: 75 Swamp Francolin, 1

	Bristled Grassbird, 4 Grey-crowned Prinia, 24 Bengal Florican, 211 Yellow-breasted Bunting, 23 Indian Courser and 70 Northern Pintail an 9 Cotton Pygmy-Goose. Water bird count and Bengal Florican Survey in 2025 recorded 128 Swamp Florican, 9 Bristled Grassbird, 0 Grey-crowned Prinia, 9 Bengal Florican, 310 Yellow-breasted Bunting, 22 Indian Courser and 131 Northern Pintail.
Output 2: Capability and capacity of KTWR staffs, buffer zone community forest user committee members, local conservation group/NGOs members, university students on managing grassland and wetland for creating safer habitats enhanced.	
Output indicator 2.1: 10 KTWR staffs, 50 buffer zone community forest user committee members, 50 local conservation group/NGOs members and 20 university students trained on managing existing grasslands and wetlands and restoring grasslands inside KTWR and in its buffer zone by year 1.	Near Target: In year 1 and 2, 12 KTWR staffs, 79 representatives from buffer zone community forest users, 18 local conservation groups and 17 university students were trained in managing existing grasslands and wetlands and restoring grasslands inside KTWR and its bufferzone by the end of year 2.
Output indicator 2.2: Management plans for grasslands and natural wetlands in buffer zone of KTWR for protecting threatened birds are available by year 2 and are implemented by buffer zone community forest user committees.	Target achieved: Grassland and wetland management plans were developed in Nepali language and provided to grassland and wetland management committees and those management plans are being implemented by respective management committees.
Output indicator 2.3: Two grassland of each >100-hectare area restored in buffer zone of KTWR targeted for threatened bird species and local community takes management responsibility by the end of year 3.	Target partially achieved: Two grassland areas: one located in the Shreepur Harpur buffer zone (72.62 hectare) and the other in the Beruwa Barmajhia buffer zone (50 hectare) covering a total of 122.62 were improved and two grassland sub-committees of Shreepur Haripur BZUC & Bairuwa Barmajgiya BZUC are taking responsibility of managing these grasslands.
Output indicator 2.4: Natural wetland (at least 300 hectares) will be restored in buffer zone of KTWR and local community takes management responsibility by the end of year 3.	Target partially achieved: Altogether 130 hectares of natural wetlands have been improved (5 hectares in Shreepur Haripur area, 50 hectares in Madhuvan bufferzone area, 50 hectares in Piprapurba Dharampur Ghoganpur bufferzone area, 25 hectares in Bairuwa Barmajhiya bufferzone area) and three wetland management sub-committees of Madhuwan BZUC, Sreepur-Haripur BZUC & Purba Pipra Dharampur Ghoghanpur BZUC are taking responsibility of managing these wetlands.
Output indicator 2.5: Two M.Sc, students will have completed their thesis on population monitoring and threats to grassland and wetland dependent bird species by the end of year 3.	Target achieved: Two M.Sc. Student completed their thesis in Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve. i) Dilip Khanal completed his thesis on

	"Avifauna in the grassland of Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve, their threats and conservation issues" ii) Sadikshya Subedi completed her thesis on "Assessment of wetland bird diversity and water quality parameters in buffer zone of Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve".
Output indicator 2.6: Disturbance area (grasslands and wetlands) reduced to 1000 ha (50% reduction from baseline of 2000 ha) by year 3.	Target partially achieved: Project worked towards reducing disturbance in 130 hectares of natural wetland, 122.62 hectares of natural grassland, 125.92 hectares of community forest land, 5-hectare community fish pond area and 6-hectare private fish pond area totaling 389.54 hectare less disturbance area.
Output 3: Sustainable livelihood enhancement program in place to support local communities' well-being as for example one household one fish pond program, women entrepreneurship, community-managed grasslands and wetlands.	
Output indicator 3.1: 500 households (including 250 indigenous fish dependent tribes) benefitted through training as well as one household one fish pond program by year 3.	Near target: Trainings on aquaculture provided to 340 participants in project period and a total of 484 households were benefitted through supports on fish pond construction (171 households), fishling distribution (263 households) and restoration of community fish pond (50 households). These 484 households include 279 households of Indigenous fish-dependent tribes.
Output indicator 3.2: 2000 household benefitted through community managed grasslands and wetlands by year 3.	Target partially achieved: 300 Households (HHs) out of 1744 HHs in Madhuvan bufferzone, 300 HHs out of 4328 HHs in Shreepur Harpur bufferzone, 300 HHs out of 2831 HHs in Pipra Purba Dharampur Ghoghanpur bufferzone and 300 HHs out of 1886 HHs in Beruwa Barmajhia bufferzone totalling 1200 HHs are anticipated to benefit from community managed grasslands and wetlands.
Output indicator 3.3: 500 households benefitted through use of alternative energy (biogas/Improved cooking stoves) and support on stall feeding by year 3.	Above target: Altogether 900 households benefitted through alternative energy (Improved cooking stoves) and 179 households benefitted through support on stall feeding (Chaff cutter distribution).
Output indicator 3.4: Number of women starting women entrepreneurship will be increased to 100 (increased by 10% from baseline of 10) by the end of year 3.	Near Target: 175 Women participated in entrepreneurship promotion trainings, skill enhancement trainings and learning tours however 78 women out of 175 initiated their own entrepreneurship with the supports from the project.
Output indicator 3.5: Three women-led cooperatives will be in operation by year 3.	Above target: Three new women-led cooperatives namely 1. Urawn Mahila Krishi Tatha Bachat Samuha, Kushaha 2. Pipra Mahila Laghu Udhami Group, Saptari and 3. Simsar Women Magar Tol Saving Group, Barahkshetra-9, Magartol, Sunsari were formed. Additionally, an existing

	cooperative organization named Koshi Tappu Simsar Multipurpose Co-operative Limited, Kushaha was strengthened and made operational during the project period.
Output 4: Sustainable use of natural resources promoted through involvement of women, indigenous people and local communities in decision-making processes.	
Output indicator 4.1 Number of women and indigenous people representing in local organizations committee increased to 150 (50% increased from baseline of 100) by the end of year 3.	Above target: From the baseline of 100 women and indigenous people at the start of the project, the number of women and indigenous people representation local organizations committee increased to 180 (80% increase).
Output indicator 4.2: 300 individuals out of 380 individuals taking licence for fishing will practice sustainable fishing (use fishing methods to leave young fishes so that fish stock is not depleted in rivers and wetlands) in KTWR by year 3.	Near target: 266 licensed fishermen (trained on sustainable fishing and supported with fish pond construction in their homes) have been practicing sustainable fishing practice in KTWR.
Output indicator 4.3: Number of individuals collecting natural resources from KTWR reduced to 500 (50% reduced from baseline of 1000) by year 3.	Target partially achieved: The primary purposes of entering the reserve are to collect fodder, firewood, grass, and livestock grazing. In 2025, the number of family members entering the reserve decreased by 18.70%. Overall, there was a 21.62% decrease in weekly entries into the reserve from 2023 to 2025. Number of people entering KTWR for thatch collection decreased from 6534 in 2023 to 4425 in 2024 resulting in 32.3% decrease.
Output indicator 4.4: Provision of sustainable use of natural resources included in operation plans of at least 30 community forest user groups by the end of year 3.	Target partially achieved: Sustainable use of natural resources included in Operational plans of 15 CFUGs.

Annex 2: Project's full current logframe as presented in the application form (unless changes have been agreed)

Project Summary	SMART Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
Impact: Grassland and Wetland ecosystem are protected and restored in KTWR with populations of grassland and wetland dependent bird species remaining stable and poverty of local communities alleviated. (Max 30 words)			
Outcome: Sustainable use of grasslands and wetlands with reduced threats for the populations of grassland and wetland dependent bird species contributing well-being of 5500 households. (Max 30 words)	0.1 Grassland and wetlands management committees with the supports from KTWR follow management plans developed for grasslands and wetlands in KTWR by year 3. 0.2 300 individuals out of 380 individuals taking licence for fishing will practice sustainable fishing (use fishing methods/techniques to leave young fishes so that fish stock is not depleted in rivers and wetlands) in KTWR by year 3. 0.3 Number of cattle grazing illegally inside the KTWR reduced to 1000 (50% reduced from baseline of 2000) by year 3. 0.4 Threats to grassland and wetland dependent bird species reduced by 80% from year 1 baseline (to be obtained by 3rd quarter of year 1) to year 3. 0.5 Populations of important grassland and wetland dependent bird species namely Bengal Florican, Yellow-breasted Bunting, Bristled Grassbird, Swamp Francolin, Grey-crowned Prinia, Indian Courser, Northern Pintail and Cotton Pygmy Goose stop declining by year 3.	0.1 Management plans in place for use 0.2 Fishing license record, fishermen questionnaire survey report and fish stock assessment report 0.3 Baseline and end line grazing survey report 0.4 Baseline and end line data of survey of threats to significant grassland and wetland dependent bird species. 0.5.Baseline and end line population monitoring data of key threatened bird species. 0.6 Socio-economic assessment reports	1. There won't be government restrictions on movement and group meetings due to pandemic during project period. 2. No flood occurs in Koshi during the project period. 3. Stakeholders in Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve prioritize conservation of threatened birds and their habitats. 4. Local government supports and collaborate to provide livelihood supports to local communities. 5. Regular monitoring of threats to threatened bird species takes place in KTWR. 6. Human Wildlife conflict minimized.

	0.6 In overall, annual income of households in project area increased by 50% of 3100 households from year 1 baseline (to be obtained by 3rd quarter of year 1) to year 3.		
Outputs: **1**. Threats to threatened bird species in Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve and its buffer zone reduced through improved management of grassland and wetlands inside the reserve; restoring grasslands and restoring wetlands in buffer zone area.	1.1 20 KTWR staffs and 50 buffer zone community forest guards/representatives from buffer zone community forest users capable on monitoring populations of threatened bird species and threats to these bird species by year 2. 1.2 Number of cattle grazing illegally inside the KTWR reduced to 1000 (50% reduction from baseline of 2000) by year 3. 1.3 Population and threats monitoring surveys of threatened birds in KTWR and its buffer zone by a team of BCN staff, park staff and buffer zone users and university students conducted annually in year 1, year 2 and year 3. 1.4 Populations of threatened bird species resident in KTWR and buffer zone stop declining by year 3.	1 Post training bird survey data and reports prepared by reserve staff/bufferzone forest users 1.2 Baseline and endline survey data on grazing 1.3 Annual scientific survey reports 1.4 Baseline and endline population monitoring data of threatened birds	1. Trained personnel remain in institutions and participate in annual monitoring of populations and threats to threatened birds. 2. Local stakeholders participate actively and contribute in project planning. 3. Local communities remain positive towards reducing threats to threatened birds in KTWR.
2. Capability and capacity of KTWR staffs, buffer zone community forest user committee members, local conservation group/NGOs members, university students on managing grassland and wetland for creating safer habitats enhanced.	2.1 10 KTWR staffs, 50 buffer zone community forest user committee members, 50 local conservation group/NGOs members and 20 university students trained on managing existing grasslands and wetlands and restoring grasslands inside KTWR and in its buffer zone by year 1. 2.2 Management plans for grasslands and natural wetlands in	2.1 Training attendance and pre and post training assessment report 2.2 Management plan 2.3 Fixed point photographs, Land cover maps, drone captured video footage for mapping of habitat change 2.4 Fixed point photographs, Land cover maps, drone captured video footage for mapping of habitat change	1. Trained personnel remain in institutions and use skills for the management of grasslands and wetlands. 2. Local communities will adopt management of grasslands and wetlands for new source of income and follow management plans. 3. Buffer zone user committees actively participate in

	buffer zone of KTWR for protecting threatened birds are available by year 2 and are implemented by buffer zone community forest user committees. 2.3 Two grassland of each >100-hectare area restored in buffer zone of KTWR targeted for threatened bird species and local community takes management responsibility by the end of year 3. 2.4 Natural wetland (at least 300 hectares) will be restored in buffer zone of KTWR and local community takes management responsibility by the end of year 3. 2.5 Two M.Sc, students will have completed their thesis on population monitoring and threats to grassland and wetland dependent bird species by the end of year 3. 2.6 Disturbance area (grasslands and wetlands) reduced to 1000 ha (50% reduction from baseline of 2000 ha) by year 3.	2.5 M.Sc. student thesis 2.6 Fixed point photographs, Land cover maps, drone captured video footage for mapping of habitat change	managing grasslands and wetlands and minimizing threats to threatened birds.
3. Sustainable livelihood enhancement program in place to support local communities' well-being as for example one household one fish pond program, women entrepreneurship, community-managed grasslands and wetlands.	3.1 500 households (including 250 indigenous fish dependent tribes) benefitted through training as well as one household one fish pond program by year 3. 3.2 2000 household benefitted through community managed grasslands and wetlands by year 3. 3.3 500 households benefitted through use of alternative energy (biogas/Improved cooking stoves) and support on stall feeding by year 3.	3.1 Report on M&E of beneficiaries with photo and video evidences 3.2 Baseline and endline household survey reports 3.3 Baseline and endline household survey reports 3.4 Baseline and end line survey reports on women entrepreneurship 3.5 Enterprise/Cooperative registration	1. Local government will provide partial supports to local communities for establishing fish ponds, biogas plant and promote stall feeding in project area. 2. Management committees will provide equal distribution of benefits from grasslands and wetlands to local communities. 3. Fish ponds, restored grasslands and wetlands and women entrepreneurship

	3.4 Number of women starting women entrepreneurship will be increased to 100 (increased by 10% from baseline of 10) by the end of year 3. 3.5 Three women-led cooperatives will be in operation by year 3.		activities generate sufficient income to serve as conservation incentives.
4. Sustainable use of natural resources promoted through involvement of women, indigenous people and local communities in decision-making processes.	4.1 Number of women and indigenous people representing in local organizations committee increased to 150 (50% increased from baseline of 100) by the end of year 3. 4.2 300 individuals out of 380 individuals taking licence for fishing will practice sustainable fishing (use fishing methods to leave young fishes so that fish stock is not depleted in rivers and wetlands) in KTWR by year 3. 4.3 Number of individuals collecting natural resources from KTWR reduced to 500 (50% reduced from baseline of 1000) by year 3. 4.4 Provision of sustainable use of natural resources included in operation plans of at least 30 community forest user groups by the end of year 3.	4.1 Local organization committee member lists 4.2 Questionnaire survey report and fish stock assessment report. 4.3 Baseline and endline socioeconomic survey reports 4.4 Approved community forest operational plan of user groups	1. Women and indigenous people are willing to learn and actively participate in decision-making processes. 2. Buffer Zone Community Forest User Committees are positive to include sustainable harvesting of natural resources and conservation of threatened birds in their operation plan and implement it.

Activities (each activity is numbered according to the output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1)

1.1 Organize three annual planning workshops with KTWR management authorities, Buffer zone management committee members, Buffer zone community forest user committee members and representatives from local conservation groups in the project site.
1.2 Hold project start-up as well as regular meetings with relevant local stakeholders to discuss on achieving project objectives.
1.3 Establish BCN Field Office close to KTWR office and operation till the project ends.
1.4 Recruit two project field staffs for the execution of the project in Field Office.
1.5 Carry out trainings on monitoring of population and threats to threatened bird species to KTWR staffs, forest guards and buffer zone users.
1.6 Conduct participatory monitoring of globally threatened and nationally threatened bird species namely Bengal Florican, Yellow-breasted Bunting, Lesser Adjutant, Palla's Fish Eagle, Bristled Grassbird, Swamp Francolin, Grey-crowned Prinia, Grey-headed Fish Eagle, Indian Courser, Northern Pintail, Cotton Pygmy Goose and Short-eared Owl and their threats based on approved methodology annually.
1.7 Carry out awareness events, produce and distribute conservation leaflets and run radio programs on importance of biodiversity and reducing threats to threatened birds in KTWR among local communities.
1.8 Write-up and publish two research articles on i) population monitoring of threatened birds and ii) threats to threatened birds in peer-reviewed journal.
2.1 Carry out capacity building trainings to KTWR staffs, buffer zone users and local conservation groups on management of wetlands and grasslands.
2.2 Engage two M.Sc. students to study on wetland and grassland dependent birds and their threats.
2.3 Carry out workshops to develop participatory management plans and restoring grasslands and natural wetlands and develop management plans.
2.4 Identify areas suitable for restoration of grasslands and wetlands in buffer zone of KTWR.
2.5 Restoration of natural wetlands and grasslands (at least 2 of >100 hectares) in buffer zone of KTWR.
2.6 Formation of a fully representative committee sitting under buffer zone user committee to manage the grasslands restored.
2.7 Formation of a fully representative committee sitting under buffer zone user committee to manage the wetlands restored.
2.8 Carry out observation tours for representatives from local government, buffer zone, community forest user groups, local conservation groups and local youth groups to demonstrate community managed grasslands and community managed biodiversity conservation initiatives.
3.1 Carry out trainings to local communities on aquaculture to establish fish pond in their homes (500 individuals including indigenous fishing tribes).
3.2 Prioritize households based on the wealth ranking from the socio-economic survey as well as on the basis of indigenous fishing tribes for providing supports to enhance their livelihoods.
3.3 Initiate one household one fish pond program (for at least 500 households including 250 households of indigenous fishing tribes) in the project area.
3.4 Carry out Socio-economic survey in year 1 at start of the project and in year 3 towards the end of the project. (M and E)
3.5 Carry out familiarization visits to build rapport as well as understand the socio-economic processes in the project area.
3.6 Carry out trainings on women entrepreneurships and co-operatives.
3.7 Initiate alternative energy program (supports to install biogas plant/improved cooking stove) and promote stall feeding with supporting hand machines to cut grasses in their home in project area.
3.8 Establish three women-led cooperatives and support them with initial seed fund.
3.9 Organize observation tours to women-led cooperative members to demonstrate functioning of best women run cooperatives.
4.1 Carry out sensitization workshops to local women and indigenous people on role of women and indigenous people in natural resource management.
4.2 Carry out trainings on sustainable fishing techniques and sustainable harvesting of all other natural resources to fishing license holders and local communities visiting the reserve frequently.
4.3 Carry out community workshops to local communities' leaders, members of buffer zone user committees and members of buffer zone community forest user committees on sustainable fishing and sustainable use of natural resources.
4.4 Organize observation tours to women and indigenous people of the project area to community managed important conservation areas.

4.5 Carry out trainings to Buffer zone user committee and buffer zone community forest user committee members to integrate sustainable use of natural resources and conservation of threatened birds in operation plans of buffer zone community forests.
4.6 Work with Buffer Zone Community Forest User Committees to revise their operational plans including sustainable use of natural resources and conservation of threatened birds.
4.7 Carry out surveys on fish stocks in Koshi river in year 1 at the start of the project and in year 3 towards the end of the project. (M and E)
4.8 Based on the local level practice, make recommendations to wildlife reserve authorities on reducing collection of natural resources from the reserve.

Table 1 Project Standard Indicators

Please see the Standard Indicator Guidance for more information on how to report in this section, including appropriate disaggregation. N.B. The annual total is not cumulative. For each year, only include the results achieved in that year. The total achieved should be the sum of the annual totals.

DI Indicator number	Name of indicator	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
DI-A05	Trainings on monitoring of population and threats to threatened bird species.	People	Male = 44, Female 2 (Year 1) Male =45, Female = 7 (Year 2)	46	52		98	70
DI-A05	Capacity building trainings to KTWR staffs, buffer zone users and local conservation groups on management of wetlands and grasslands.	People	Male = 53, Female 19 (Year 1) Male =48, Female = 5 (Year 2)	72	53		125	130
DI-A05	Trainings to local communities on aquaculture to establish fish pond in their homes (500 individuals including indigenous fish dependent tribes).	People	Male= 54 Female= 26 (Year 1) Male =71, Female = 19 (Year 2)	80	90		170	200
DI-A06	Fish Pond construction	Household Number		38	76	57	171	250
DI-A06	Improved Cooking Stove installation	Household Number		400	200	300	900	500

DI Indicator number	Name of indicator	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
DI-A06	Chaff Cutter distribution	Household Number		54	60	65	179	200
DI- D04 (d)	Number of Masters qualifications obtained	Number	1 Male, 1 Female (Both from Nepal)		2		2	2

Table 2 Publications

Title	Type (e.g. journals, manual, CDs)	Detail (authors, year)	Gender of Lead Author	Nationality of Lead Author	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. weblink or publisher if not available online)
"Life is good when fishes are in the pond" in Nepali language	Newsletter	Aavas Pradhan and Sanjay Chaudhary, 2023	Male	Nepali	Bird Conservation Nepal, Kathmandu	Munal Newsletter published by Bird Conservation Nepal
"From smoke to smiles: The benefits of improved cooking stoves for communities and biodiversity in Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve"	Newsletter	Khadananda Paudel, Aavas Pradhan and Sanjay Chaudhary, 2024	Male	Nepali	Darwin Initiative, London	BCFs Newsletter- Darwin Initiative- Local Learnings, October 2024
"Journey of *Batar* community women towards entrepreneurship" in Nepali language	Newsletter	Aavas Pradhan, 2024	Male	Nepali	Bird Conservation Nepal, Kathmandu	Munal Newsletter published by Bird Conservation Nepal

Title	Type (e.g. journals, manual, CDs)	Detail (authors, year)	Gender of Lead Author	Nationality of Lead Author	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. weblink or publisher if not available online)
Bengal Florican Conservation Action Plan (2024-2033)	Policy document				Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation	https://dnpwc.gov.np/media/publication/Bengal_Florican_Conservation_Action_Plan_2024-2033..pdf

Checklist for submission

	Check
Different reporting templates have different questions, and it is important you use the correct one. Have you checked you have used the **correct template** (checking fund, scheme, type of report (i.e. Annual or Final), and year) and **deleted the blue guidance text** before submission?	×
Is the report less than 10MB? If so, please email to BCF-Reports@niras.com putting the project number in the Subject line.	×
Is your report more than 10MB? If so, please consider the best way to submit. One zipped file, or a download option, is recommended. We can work with most online options and will be in touch if we have a problem accessing material. If unsure, please discuss with BCF-Reports@niras.com about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line.	
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, **do these meet the outlined requirements** (see section 14)?	×
Have you included means of verification? You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	×
Have you provided an updated risk register? If you have an existing risk register you should provide an updated version alongside your report. If your project was funded prior to this being a requirement, you are encouraged to develop a risk register.	×
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	×
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	×
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	