



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



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## Darwin Initiative Capability & Capacity: 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](mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com) including your project ref in the subject line.

### Darwin Initiative Project Information

Project reference	DARCC038
Project title	Strengthening Mexican civil society leaders in implementing Nature-based Solutions (RESPONSA)
Country(ies)	Mexico
Lead Organisation	FONNOR
Project partner(s)	N/A
Darwin Initiative grant value	£199,905.00
Start/end dates of project	01/05/2023 – 2024-12-31
Project Leader’s name	María José Mesén Arias
Project website/blog/social media	The project has an LMS site. If you need access please let us know: <a href="https://plataforma.fonnor.org/course/view.php?id=7">https://plataforma.fonnor.org/course/view.php?id=7</a>
Report author(s) and date	Paulina Juárez

## 1 Project Summary

This project’s objective was to develop a cluster training program to strengthen the institutional, leadership, and technical capacities of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the Northwest and West of Mexico (NW&W), in order for them to better design and implement Nature-based Solution (NbS) initiatives that will contribute to containing the environmental crisis of the regions, while providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits. The training program is known as RESPONSA within participant organisations.

Mexico’s NW&W varied unique ecosystems provide environmental services to over 20.9M people. However, the region’s ecological balance is vulnerable and faces aggravated consequences due to climate change (CC) and overexploitation, particularly water stress, extreme warming and economic losses. These complex environmental problems require systemic approaches, such as NbS, and collaboration of multiple stakeholders, including CSOs and local communities.

When the project was designed, the COVID-19 pandemic had significant socio-economic costs. The contraction in economic activity in México led to an increase in the poverty rate from 41.9% (51.9 million people) in 2018 to 43.9% in 2020 (55.7 million people). The percentage of people living in extreme poverty had increased from 7.0% to 8.5% (increase of 2.1 million people).

Climate change affects particularly hard poor countries and poor people for several reasons: 1) They rely more on climate sensitive economic activities like agriculture and have weaker capacity to adapt effectively; 2) They are more likely to live in hazard zones and their assets are likely to be damaged in extreme weather events; and 3) they are more susceptible to the pests and diseases that follow heat waves, floods and drought (Hallegatte 2016; Frankhauser and Stern 2016).

In Mexico, climate has changed over the last 70 years becoming warmer and with a more extreme seasonal water balance, as a consequence we face stronger droughts and more intense rainfall. Particularly, Northwest of Mexico is hardly affected by CC since thermal trend indicates that this area warmed faster than the rest of the country, a possible consequence of the extremely fast warming of the northern Pacific Ocean and the reduction in water availability that increases the consecutive number of hot days (Murray-Tortarolo 2021).

Nature-based Solutions (NbS) are strongly recommended in order to adapt to CC since they contribute to support vital ecosystem services and biodiversity, the creation of jobs, to livelihood resilience and to reducing poverty (UNEP 2019). NbS differs from traditional biodiversity conservation and management approaches because they aim to address broad societal goals such as human wellbeing, including poverty alleviation and socioeconomic development (Seddon et al. 2020). However, misuse of these actions can harm biodiversity, and in consequence endangered the ecosystem functions and human wellness (Seddon et al. 2021).

CSOs have played a key role in conserving the region's natural resources, and therefore are important stakeholders in the implementation of NbS. Hence the need to have strong CSOs in the regions that can develop impactful projects. Some internal elements that narrow CSO strengthening and the impact they can have in Mexico's development are: incipient institutionality, financial difficulties, shallow innovation, and lack of systemic vision, accountability, and monitoring and evaluation (Gómez López, et al. 2019). The RESPONSA training program strengthened 16 CSOs from the Mexican states of Baja California, Baja California Sur, Sonora, Sinaloa and Jalisco.

## 2 Project Partnerships

At FONNOR, we consider all participating organisations in RESPONSA as partners. While formal agreements were not established, the CSOs signed [commitment letters](#) as part of their project proposals, expressing their willingness to engage in the capacity building process. Additionally, the feedback and suggestions from participating CSOs, gathered through surveys, were incorporated into the planning of subsequent activities and the design of future training sessions

We also found important allies in the consultants:

- Consultant Michelle Meza, an expert in nature-based solutions (NbS), formed a multidisciplinary team with colleagues from the Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), who voluntarily participated in individual mentoring with CSOs to strengthen their projects on environmental issues, not only in NbS, but also in other topics such as land use planning, shared examples of successful NbS projects and provided personalized suggestions and tools for their projects improvement. Please check the [virtual mentoring report](#).
- Likewise, consultant Fernando Rodríguez Hernández, resource mobilization expert, provided personalized mentoring to CSOs free of charge. During the work sessions he dedicated additional time to address all participants' questions, often extending the sessions by over an hour beyond the scheduled duration, without charging additional fees.

At the beginning of the project, we received support from the federal authorities, through the National Commission for Protected Natural Areas (CONANP, Spanish Acronym), and from a conservation fund from another region in Mexico (Fondo Golfo de México) for the selection of CSOs that would participate in the project as shown in the [e-mails received from this allies](#).

## 3 Project Achievements

[Annex 1 details in depth project achievements.](#)

### 3.1 Outputs

Output 1:

Environmental CSO leaders with strengthened solid soft capacities to be change makers in managing innovative Nature-based Solution projects.

1.1- In 12 months at least 15 CSO leaders report a 50% increase in their leadership abilities and capacities to direct teams.

After the last-in person training, 20 CSO leaders reported and average 53% increase in their leadership abilities and capacities to direct teams as shown in the [post-ex-ante survey](#).

1.2- In 12 months at least 15 CSO leaders will be trained in 7 different soft capacities.

During the implementation of the project 30 CSO leaders were trained in-person and virtually with a group dynamics and systems approach in the following soft capacities as shown in [agenda](#) and [list of attendance](#):

- Conflict management
- Negotiation
- Creativity
- Emphatic and conscious leadership
- Self awareness of impact on others
- Growth mindset and personal strengths
- Goal achievement

Self-assessment survey results can be found in Annex 3.1.

#### Output 2:

Organisations with increased and persistent institutional capacities and capabilities to develop and implement successful conservation projects in the long term.

2.1- In 12 months at least 15 organisations have improved capacities and capabilities in project management, fiscal and legal issues, fundraising and gender as shown in the [post-ex-ante survey](#).

At the end of the project and trainings 21 participants from 15 CSOs reported:

- 40% increase in M&E necessary for project management
- 43% increase in fiscal and legal issues
- 50% increase in fundraising (resource mobilization) issues.
- 56% increase in how to include gender issues in project design.

2.2- In 7 months at least 15 organisations will be diagnosed in terms of organisational processes effectiveness and project & programme effectiveness.

The Institutional Effectiveness Index (IEI) is based upon an instrument of self-evaluation of capacities that was developed by the Mexican Fund for the Conservation of Nature ([www.fmcn.org.mx](http://www.fmcn.org.mx)), to determine the actions that encourage organizational improvement and evaluate the quality of the efforts in the subject, taking in consideration technical, administrative and organizational capacities. The format associated with this instrument is filled out by as many active members in an organization. FONNOR applied the IEI to 14 CSO's in 2023 and 12 CSOs in 2024. In total, 15 CSOs were diagnosed in terms of organisational processes effectiveness and project & programme effectiveness between 2023 and 2024, as shown in the information on [IEI report and graphics](#): Asociación Sudcaliforniana de Protección al Medio Ambiente y a la Tortuga Marina de Los Cabos, A.C. (ASUPMATOMA), Ayotzintli A.C., Baja Rescue A.C., Comunidad Desarrollo y Medio Ambiente A.C., Ecología para la Conservación del Gran Desierto A.C., Conservación de Fauna del Noroeste A.C., Fundación por una Nueva Solución A.C., Grupo de Investigación de Mamíferos Marinos A.C., INTEGRA: Integración de Estudios, Asesoría Técnica y Gestión Ambiental A.C., Naturaleza y Cultura Sierra Madre A.C., Ponguinguola A.C., Renovación Ambiental y Natural A.C., Red de Turismo Sustentable y Desarrollo Social A.C., Unidos por las Guacamayas A.C., Jóvenes por la Conservación de la Perla del Pacífico (JOCOPP).

#### Output 3:

Organisations with acquired knowledge on Nature-based Solutions (NbS) approaches to apply in their actual projects and develop new ones.

The implementation of training and capacity-building sessions resulted in participating organizations acquiring practical knowledge on Nature-based Solutions (NbS). The training program provided tailored guidance and actionable insights, enabling organizations to integrate NbS approaches into their ongoing projects effectively. Through virtual and in-person workshops and expert-led discussions, participants gained a clear understanding of how to design, implement, and monitor NbS initiatives, fostering both environmental and community benefits.

3.1- In 12 months at least 15 organisations increased knowledge on NbS approaches.

The surveys show that they acquired new knowledge and that the concepts and exercises presented are useful for designing and adhering their projects to the NbS standard. [Post-ex-ante survey](#) shows that participant organisations have had an average increase of 99.80% in knowledge, and a 170% increase in their tools to relate their projects to NbS.

3.2- In 12 months at least 15 organisations will design an adequate NbS intervention adhering to the IUCN Global Standard for NbS.

Using the IUCN Global Standard for NbS self-assessment tool, the Participating CSOs carried out 3 self-assessment project evaluations to determine the degree to which their project adhered

to the IUCN Global Standard for NbS. The first was to identify a baseline, the second was to re-evaluate their project after completing the NbS training program and finally the third was carried out after having received one-on-one mentoring to strengthen their projects regarding NbS.

In the first self-assessment, 10 CSOs achieved adequate results, 5 obtained partial results, and 1 demonstrated a solid understanding. Based on these findings and considering the IUCN tool, it was concluded that all 16 participating CSO' projects aligned with the IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions (NbS). However, as mentioned earlier, this initial assessment was conducted before the CSOs received formal training on NbS, relying solely on their pre-existing knowledge. As a result, it was anticipated that some organizations might have overestimated or underestimated their project evaluations.

As a result of the third and final self-assessment, the following outcomes were achieved: 7 CSOs were classified as having solid projects, while 9 were deemed adequate. Throughout the implementation of RESPONSA, various factors were identified that help explain these results. One key factor was the limited knowledge participants initially had about Nature-based Solutions (NbS). The training sessions and mentoring provided during the program enabled the CSOs to better understand NbS concepts, as well as adjusting their projects to meet the criteria that needed strengthening, allowing them to conduct more accurate self-assessments of their projects. This improvement is evident in the results: CSOs that were initially categorized as solid in the first self-assessment were later classified as adequate, while several CSOs initially identified as adequate in the first assessment achieved the solid category in the final evaluation. The results of the self-assessments can be found in [Annex 3.1](#).

### 3.2 Outcome

As a result of RESPONSA, out of the 16 participant CSOs, 12 logical frameworks were developed along with draft budgets for the participating CSOs' NbS projects aimed at benefiting local communities in Northwest and West Mexico, successfully achieving the goal established at the beginning of the project.

One of the CSOs submitted a complete logical framework, however the draft budget was not developed.

Meanwhile, three CSOs did not present a framework because, as a result of the training program, they determined that developing a new project with a stronger focus on NbS would be more effective.

Additionally, the project had the participation of 37 women and 22 men. This corresponds to a participation rate of 62.7% for women and 37.9% for men.

It is worth noting that the results presented in this report reflect a period of 10 months, as the project's start was delayed due to the first disbursement being received later than anticipated. This increased the workload for both participants and staff, making it more challenging to implement the training program and meet the outcome and output indicators.

The logical frameworks and attendance list are for consultation are in [Annex 3.2](#)

### 3.3 Monitoring of assumptions

- Assumption 1. Organisations will submit proposals where all the criteria specified in the call are met.
- Assumption 2. Initiatives are carried out in states with highest extreme and moderate poverty percentages in northwest and western Mexico.
- Assumption 3. Participants will attend all group, one-on-one, virtual and in-person activities.
- Assumption 4. Topic experts are able to collaborate in specific activities when needed
- Assumption 5. 30% of participants are women.

- Assumption 6. Post-ex-ante surveys demonstrate that at least 80% of the organisations strengthened their institutional management capacities, leadership skills and Nature-based Solutions knowledge.

All assumptions were monitored throughout the project and while no changes were required to the assumptions, actions were taken to ensure compliance.

Regarding assumption number 3, some participants received reminders about the obligation to attend all events, both webinars and in-person workshops. It is also important to note that there were two exceptions; in the second in-person workshop, 2 people were unable to attend due to medical reasons.

## 4 Contribution to Darwin Initiative Programme Objectives

### 4.1 Project support to the Conventions, Treaties or Agreements

[Mexico's NDC considers](#) Nature-based Solutions (NbS) as central to achieving its commitments. It also highlights that NbS play a cross-cutting role in the implementation of adaptation commitments, supporting both the reduction of GHG emissions and the establishment and permanence of carbon reservoirs in ecosystems.

In this way, our project aligns with national public policy by promoting knowledge of NbS and their application in projects across the country.

### 4.2 Project support to biodiversity conservation and multidimensional poverty reduction

### 4.3 Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

Please quantify the proportion of women on the Project Board <sup>1</sup> .	100% There is no Project Board, instead there is a Project Team composed by only women.
Please quantify the proportion of project partners that are led by women, or which have a senior leadership team consisting of at least 50% women <sup>2</sup> .	

GESI Scale	Description	Put X where you think your project is on the scale
<b>Not yet sensitive</b>	The GESI context may have been considered but the project isn't quite meeting the requirements of a 'sensitive' approach	

<sup>1</sup> A Project Board has overall authority for the project, is accountable for its success or failure, and supports the senior project manager to successfully deliver the project.

<sup>2</sup> Partners that have formal governance role in the project, and a formal relationship with the project that may involve staff costs and/or budget management responsibilities.

<b>Sensitive</b>	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.	
<b>Empowering</b>	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	X
<b>Transformative</b>	The project has all the characteristics of an 'empowering' approach whilst also addressing unequal power relationships and seeking institutional and societal change	

At FONNOR we recognize that addressing inequality and discrimination, including gender, is crucial for sustainable development; and that gender roles influence the access and control that women and men have over decisions, goods and resources in the work and daily environment. Therefore we have a Gender Equality and No Discrimination Plan and a Policy against sexual and workplace harassment, which we shared with the participants, in addition to including these topics of the strengthening program. These documents are included in [Annex 4.3](#)

Coupled with FONNOR internal policies, the GESI context was relevant during the design of the training program where gender equality and social inclusion are of utmost importance since plenty of socio-environmental projects work directly with small communities where vulnerable populations, gender problems and poverty problems can be found.

Addressing gender and marginalized groups in the training program is essential when working with CSOs, as it equips them with the necessary tools to engage effectively with the communities they work with. In many regions of Mexico, there are still significant gaps in women's participation in conservation and productive projects, limiting their involvement in decision-making and implementation processes. Additionally, many communities lack a comprehensive understanding of how environmental impacts will disproportionately affect them. Strengthening CSOs' capacities in these areas ensures that projects are more inclusive, equitable, and effective in fostering long-term resilience.

#### 4.4 Transfer of knowledge

The primary objective of our project has been to collaborate with civil society organizations whose conservation initiatives have a direct impact on the territory and provide tangible benefits to local communities. Through this approach, we ensure that Nature-based Solutions (NbS) are effectively integrated into on-the-ground conservation efforts, strengthening both environmental and social outcomes.

While our main focus has been on supporting these organizations, we also recognize the importance of broader knowledge dissemination. To facilitate wider access to NbS-related information, we have made key resources available on our website for public consultation. This ensures that practitioners, policymakers, and other stakeholders can access and apply relevant insights to their conservation challenges.

#### 4.5 Capacity building

We do not have an in-country partner, and internally, our staff has not been invited to participate in national expert committees, panels, or similar instances. Our former Executive Director, however, was invited and accepted the post as Secretary of Environment in the Mexican State of Jalisco. We have also been approached for new collaborations, which reflects the recognition of our work and expertise in the field.

## 5 Monitoring and evaluation

No changes were made to the project design or logframe during implementation.

Since we did not have a project partner, there were no communication challenges within the team. The only feedback we received was from the Darwin team, who recommended that for future projects, we ensure that the indicators are SMARTer.

## 6 Lessons learnt

The implementation of the project provided several valuable lessons, which have been incorporated into the proposal for its continuation.

One key lesson was the enhancement of indicators to ensure they meet SMART criteria.

From an administrative perspective, we refined our processes, particularly as this was our first experience working with the Darwin Initiative. This has given us a clearer understanding of the procedures to follow in future collaborations.

In terms of technical implementation, one lesson learned was the importance of increasing the visibility of the call for proposals to reach a broader audience. Additionally, while the training program received positive feedback, participants expressed interest in exploring certain topics in greater depth or having more time to engage with the material. We also recognize that a second phase of the project requires the most committed organizations to have access to seed funding for their projects.

For those looking to implement similar projects or replicate this initiative, we recommend working with highly skilled consultants in their respective fields to better engage participants. It is also crucial to account for potential delays in the planning phase. In our case, the project started later than expected, requiring adjustments to the training program. As a result, sessions were scheduled closer together, increasing the workload for participants.

In general, the project allowed us to reinforce that CSOs are in need of having spaces for capacity building, which also function as spaces for exchanging experiences that allow them to identify strategies to replicate in their projects and also create working alliances to improve the impact they have in the territory.

## 7 Actions taken in response to Annual Report reviews

In response to the observations from the previous annual report, here are some actions taken: - Some teaching materials were translated to serve as evidence that illustrates the content of the training sessions. [See Annex 7](#). Additionally, the project section on the FONNOR website was translated.

This report's annexes also includes the technical sheets of the projects developed by the participant CSOs, which contain both the framework and budget.

Furthermore, in section 3.2 we provide a detail of the number of women that received training as part of the project.

We do not have a GESI consultant but have provided information on GESI measures taken.

In terms of our MEL strategy, all progress is measured through satisfaction surveys, knowledge surveys, consultant reports and key products developed by the CSOs (i.e. logical frameworks developed).



## **8 Sustainability and legacy**

We consider the project successful, as shown by exit surveys (described in section 3) where participants expressed gratitude and satisfaction with the organization, work plan, and topics covered. The data also indicates a measurable increase in knowledge, strengthening capacity for NbS and leadership and organisational topics.

With participating CSOs spread across Northwest and West Mexico, the knowledge gained will be applied locally and shared among stakeholders. This enhances their ability to develop NbS projects and secure funding. Our organization also facilitates connections between CSOs and potential donors.

Given the project's success, we are exploring a second phase with the Darwin Initiative or another donor, potentially including a seed fund for CSOs in the implementation stage. FONNOR's Fundraising strategy for 2025 and 2025 includes an important component to search for funding for REPONSE. Meanwhile, project staff and resources will be redirected to other organizational initiatives. For this, we have developed a Video that shares the impact the project had on participants. See [Annex 8](#).

## **9 Darwin Initiative identity**

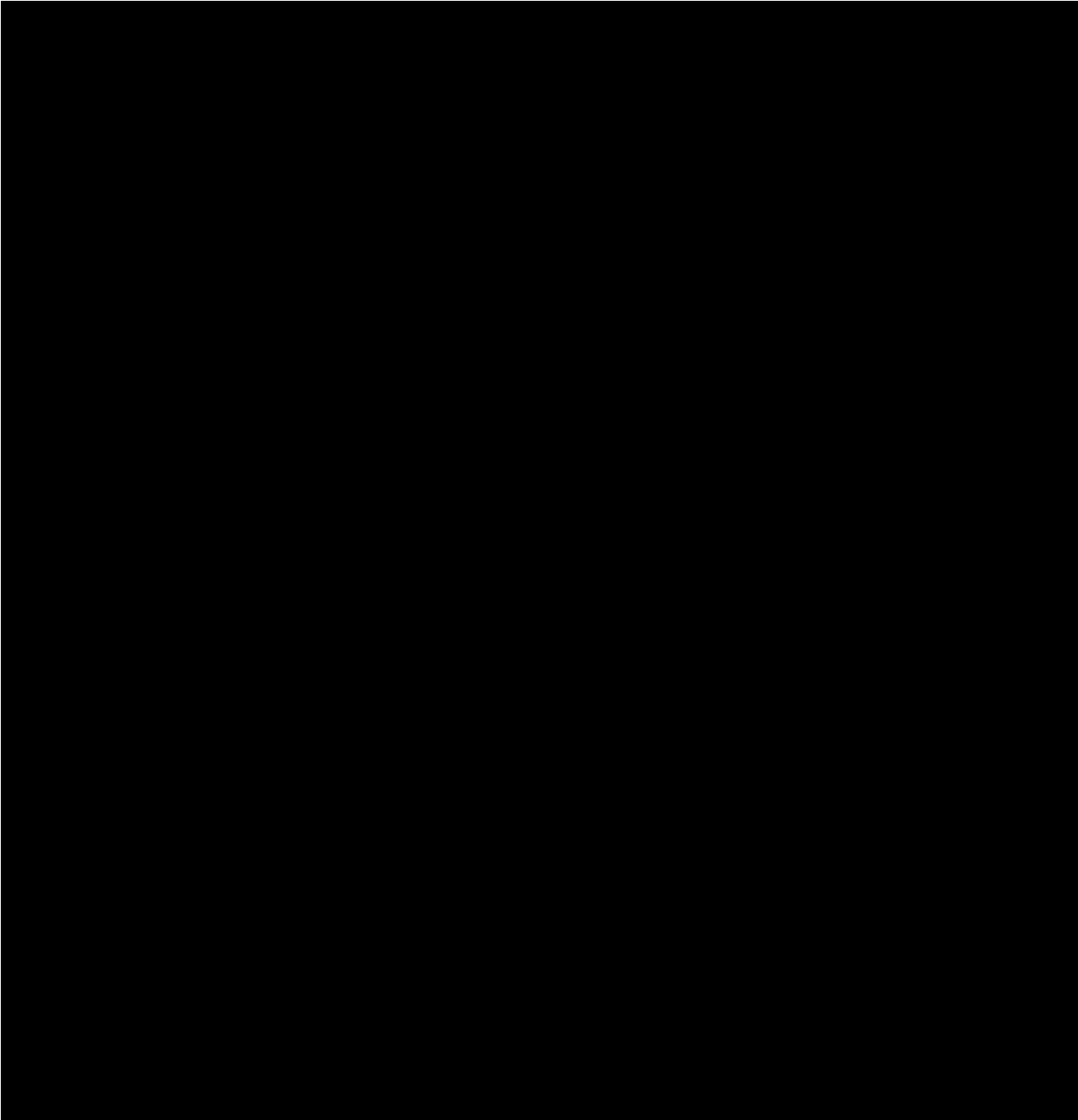
From the beginning of the project, participants were informed that RESPONSA was made possible thanks to the funding from the UK Government through the Darwin Initiative. Additionally, the Darwin Initiative logo was featured on all learning materials and provided to consultants for integration into their training resources.

The logo was also included FONNOR's website and in social media posts and self-teaching videos to ensure visibility and recognition of the initiative's support.

## **10 Risk Management**

Fortunately, the risks identified during the project planning did not materialize. However, during implementation, several issues arose. These challenges were successfully addressed without impacting the project's overall progress or outcomes, ensuring that the objectives were met as planned. Risk management frameworks are included in [annex 10](#).

**11 Safeguarding**



**12 Finance and administration**

## 12.1 Project expenditure

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2023/24 Grant (£)	2023/24 Total actual Darwin Initiative Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs (see below)				
Consultancy costs				
Overhead Costs				
Travel and subsistence				
Operating Costs				
Capital items (see below)				
Others (see below)				
Audit costs				

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£102,663.00</b>	<b>£100,372.00</b>	

<b>Staff employed (Name and position)</b>	<b>Cost (£)</b>
Ilse Paulina Juárez Parra	
María José Mesén Arias	
Clara de Alba de la Peña	
Ana Victoria Molina Lucero	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

<b>Capital items – description</b>	<b>Capital items – cost (£)</b>
NA	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

<b>Other items – description</b>	<b>Other items – cost (£)</b>
NA	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

**12.2 Additional funds or in-kind contributions secured**

<b>Matched funding leveraged by the partners to deliver the project</b>	<b>Total</b>
Organisation: Fundación Gonzalo Río Arronte, Fondo Mexicano para la conservación de la Naturaleza, Governors' Climate and Forests Task Force, David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Family Health International (PHI360)/USAID, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	
Organisation: Fundación Gonzalo Río Arronte, Fondo Mexicano para la conservación de la Naturaleza, Governors' Climate and Forests Task Force, David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Family Health International (PHI360)/USAID, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	
Organisation: Fundación Gonzalo Río Arronte, Fondo Mexicano para la conservación de la Naturaleza, Governors' Climate and Forests Task Force, David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Family Health International (PHI360)/USAID, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	

Organisation: Fundación Gonzalo Río Arronte, Fondo Mexicano para la conservación de la Naturaleza, Governors' Climate and Forests Task Force, David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Family Health International (PHI360)/USAID, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

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

### 12.3 Value for Money

At FONNOR, we are committed to achieving good Value for Money by ensuring that every resource entrusted to us generates the greatest possible impact in a cost-effective manner. Our approach aligns with principles of economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and equity, as demonstrated through rigorous planning, and strategic decision-making throughout the project cycle. By leveraging evidence to carefully assess options and prioritize quality over mere cost, we ensure that our actions deliver meaningful results. Furthermore, our stringent financial management and governance practices allow us to minimize waste and continuously improve, maximizing the value of every pound invested in our projects.

Some examples of the referred practices are: From the project's planning phase, potential sites for in-person workshops were identified, prioritizing connectivity between the locations of prospective participants, ensuring that costs for transportation wouldn't affect the budget. also, for lodging and meals, we compared economic proposals, considering not only cost but also the quality of services and facilities offered.

Regarding air travel, we collaborated with participants to identify routes and airlines that provided the best balance between price and benefits.

Additionally, the selection of consultants for the knowledge sessions was based on their prior experience with FONNOR and an analysis of their economic proposal, ensuring high-quality training. Its important to mention that staff expenses are subject to what is legally authorized in Mexico, so in this way we ensure that the resource is used in the best way.

Thanks to these measures, we managed to extend the project by three months, utilizing a surplus to further strengthen the participating CSOs.

## 13 Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

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

I agree for the Biodiversity Challenge Funds Secretariat to publish the content of this section (please leave this line in to indicate your agreement to use any material you provide here).

We collaborated with an expert NbS consultant to develop self-learning materials in video format, providing participants with a valuable reference for themselves, their staff, and other collaborators. This ensures that capacity-building in NbS can continue beyond the project's completion.

Four videos were produced, covering the following topics: **Introduction to Nature-based Solutions, Opportunities and Risks of NbS, Types of NbS and Social Challenges and NbS Principles.**

Additionally, at the end of the project, we gathered participants' feedback and impressions, which were compiled into a testimonial video. Overall, participants expressed a positive opinion about the training program, the consultants, and the virtual and in-person work sessions.

They highlighted an increase in their knowledge, which enabled them to strengthen their projects.

One notable outcome was the creation of collaboration networks. It became evident that some CSOs were operating in the same territories or even working with the same communities. Participants also found it valuable to hear about the challenges and weaknesses faced by other CSOs, as this helped them recognize shared difficulties. Moreover, they acknowledged that collaboration and experience-sharing are essential tools for continuous organizational improvement and for enhancing the impact of their projects. Up to date all participants are in constant contact through a WhatsApp chat group where they share their collaborations as well as financing opportunities or key interest events.

Evidence of these achievements can be found in Annex 14.

<b>File Type (Image / Video / Graphic)</b>	<b>File Name or File Location</b>	<b>Caption, country and credit</b>	<b>Online accounts to be tagged (leave blank if none)</b>	<b>Consent of subjects received (delete as necessary)</b>
Video	Introducción a las SbN	Self-teaching material on the introduction to NnS. México. FONNOR	Instagram: @fonnor.ac  Facebook: FONNOR AC	Yes
Video	Desafíos sociales y principios de las SbN	Self-teaching material on the social challenges and principles of SbN	Instagram: @fonnor.ac  Facebook: FONNOR AC	Yes
Video	Tipos de SbN	Self-teaching material on types of SbN	Instagram: @fonnor.ac  Facebook: FONNOR AC	Yes
Video	Oportunidades y riesgos de las SbN	Self-teaching material Opportunities and challenges of SbN	Instagram: @fonnor.ac  Facebook: FONNOR AC	Yes
Video	RESPONSA	Testimonials from participants, Mexico. FONNOR	Instagram: @fonnor.ac  Facebook: FONNOR AC	Yes
Photograph	Annex 14	Group photography of the second in-person workshop and closure of the project	Instagram: @fonnor.ac  Facebook: FONNOR AC	Yes

## Annex 1 Report of progress and achievements against final project indicators of success for the life of the project

Project summary	Progress and achievements
<p><b>Outcome</b></p> <p>Nature-based Solution (NbS) projects planned by strengthened organisations that will benefit local communities of Northwest and West Mexico</p>	<p>The project strengthened 16 CSOs in NbS, as well as in both technical and organizational capacities. The knowledge and skills acquired will enable participants to design and implement more structured projects, empowering them as agents of change in their communities while contributing to natural resource conservation and sustainable community development.</p>
<p><b>Outcome indicator 0.1</b></p> <p>In 12 months at least 10 logical frameworks and associated draft budgets developed for possible NbS projects that will benefit local communities of Northwest and West Mexico</p>	<p>As part of the training program implemented in accordance with the approved logical framework, 12 CSOs successfully developed a framework aligned with NbS strategies, along with their respective budgets. Additionally, 1 CSO completed the framework; however, its budget remains under development due to the involvement of government stakeholders. Meanwhile, 3 CSOs did not meet the goal, as the training process led them to identify the need to redefine their projects for better alignment with NbS strategies. Evidence provided in Annex 3.</p>
<p><b>Outcome indicator 0.2,</b></p> <p>at least 30% of the beneficiaries of this project will be women.</p>	<p>The project involved the participation of 16 civil society organizations, with two representatives from each. Among them, 13 were women and 17 were men, representing 43.33% and 56.66% of the direct participants, respectively.</p> <p>Additionally, virtual sessions provided an opportunity for other CSO staff to join the training, resulting in the overall participation of 37 women and 22 men. This corresponds to a participation rate of 62.7% for women and 37.9% for men. Evidence provided in Annex 3.</p>
<p><b>Output 1</b></p> <p>Environmental CSO leaders with strengthened solid soft capacities to be change makers in managing innovative Nature-based Solution projects.</p>	
<p><b>Output indicator 1.1</b></p> <p>In 12 months at least 15 CSO leaders report a 50% increase in their leadership abilities and capacities to direct teams.</p>	<p>Over the course of 12 months, 20 CSO leaders reported and average 53% increase in their leadership abilities and capacities to direct teams as shown in the post-ex-ante survey.</p>



<p>Output indicator 1.2, In 12 months at least 15 CSO leaders will be trained in 6 different soft capacities.</p>	<p>Over the course of 12 months, 16 organizations received training in 7 soft skills, such as: creativity, personal development, institutional development, leadership, systemic thinking and conflict resolution. Evidence provided in Annex 3.</p>
<p><b>Output 2.</b> Organisations with increased and persistent institutional capacities and capabilities to develop and implement successful conservation projects in the long term.</p>	
<p>Output indicator 2.1. In 12 months at least 15 organisations have improved capacities and capabilities in project management, fiscal and legal issues, fundraising and gender.</p>	<p>At the end of the project and trainings 21 participants from 15 CSOs reported: 40% increase in M&amp;E necessary for project management 43% increase in fiscal and legal issues 50% increase in fundraising (resource mobilization) issues. 56% increase in how to include gender issues in project design. Evidence provided in Annex 3.</p>
<p>Output indicator 2.2. <b>Etc.</b> In 7 months at least 15 organisations will be diagnosed in terms of organisational' processes effectiveness and project &amp; programme effectiveness.</p>	<p>In total, 15 CSOs were diagnosed in terms of organisational processes effectiveness and project &amp; programme effectiveness between 2023 and 2024. Evidence provided in Annex 3.</p>
<p><b>Output 3. Etc.</b> Organisations with acquired knowledge on Nature-based Solutions (NbS) approaches to apply in their actual projects and develop new ones</p>	
<p>Output indicator 3.1. <i>In 12 months at least 15 organisations increased knowledge on NbS approaches</i></p>	<p>The training program included 68.5 hours of virtual and in-person sessions, along with one-on-one virtual mentoring on NbS-related topics. Its objective was to equip participants with essential knowledge to enhance their understanding and application of NbS in their proposed projects.  As a result of the training and based on post-survey responses, participants reported an increased understanding of NbS, which proved valuable in aligning their projects with the IUCN NbS Standard.  Evidence provided in annex 3.</p>
<p>Output indicator 3.2. <i>In 12 months at least 15 organisations will design an adequate NbS intervention adhering to the IUCN Global Standard for NbS.</i></p>	<p>During the implementation of the project, the organizations strengthened and aligned their initiatives with the IUCN NbS standard. At the beginning of the training program, the organizations carried out a self-assessment evaluation to determine the degree of alignment with the IUCN NbS standard, obtaining the following results: 4 partial, 10 adequate and two solid. After the virtual and in-person work sessions, in addition to the personalized mentoring, the participating organizations carried out the self-assessment evaluation again with the following results: 9 adequate and 7 solid.</p>

	Therefore, the output is successfully met. Evidence provided in annex 3.
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## Annex 2 Project's full current indicators of success as presented in the application form (unless changes have been agreed)

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification
<p><b>Outcome:</b> Nature-based Solution (NbS) projects planned by strengthened organisations that will benefit local communities of Northwest and West Mexico</p>	<p>0.1 In 12 months at least 10 logical frameworks and associated draft budgets developed for possible NbS projects that will benefit local communities of Northwest and West Mexico, and 0.2 at least 30% of the beneficiaries of this project will be women</p>	<p>Key result 0.1: 10 completed logical frameworks and draft budgets.</p> <p>Performance indicators (goal):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Number of completed logical framework steps (8)</li> <li>● Number of completed project budget (8)</li> </ul> <p>Key result B: Promotion of gender inequality reduction</p> <p>Performance indicators (goal):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 0.2.1- Number of actions carried out to promote inclusion of women in the project (5)</li> <li>● 0.2.2- Number of trainings on gender issues (1)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Output 1</b> Environmental CSO leaders with strengthened solid soft capacities to be change makers in managing innovative Nature-based Solution projects</p>	<p>1.1- In 12 months at least 15 CSO leaders report a 50% increase in their leadership abilities and capacities to direct teams.</p> <p>1.2- In 12 months at least 15 CSO leaders will be trained in 6 different soft capacities.</p>	<p>Key result 1: Post-ex-ante surveys results showing increases.</p> <p>Performance indicators (goal):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Number of post-then knowledge and capacity surveys (1)</li> <li>● Number of satisfaction surveys (3)</li> </ul> <p>Key result 2: CSO leaders strengthen soft capacities.</p> <p>Performance indicator (goal):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 1.2.1- Number of strengthened soft capacities (6)</li> <li>● 1.2.2- Number of feedback sessions with participants (15)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Output 2</b> Organisations with increased and persistent institutional capacities and capabilities to develop and implement successful conservation projects in the long term</p>	<p>2.1- In 12 months at least 15 organisations have improved capacities and capabilities in project management, fiscal and legal issues, fundraising and gender.</p> <p>2.2- In 7 months at least 15 organisations will be diagnosed in terms of organisational' processes effectiveness and project &amp; programme effectiveness.</p>	<p>Key result 2.1: Post-ex-ante surveys results showing increases.</p> <p>Performance indicators (goal):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2.1.1- Number of satisfaction surveys (7)</li> <li>● 2.1.2- Number of post-ex-ante knowledge and capacity surveys (1)</li> <li>● 2.1.3- Number of strengthened technical capacities (8)</li> <li>● 2.1.4- Number of feedback sessions with 15 organisations (1)</li> </ul> <p>Key result 2.2: Institutional Effectiveness Index (IEI) results per organisation.</p>

		<p>Performance indicators (goal):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2.2.1- Number of IEI chart results per organisation (15)</li> <li>• 2.2.2- Number of IEI chart results in terms of project &amp; programme effectiveness. (15)</li> <li>• 2.2.3- Number of IEI chart results in terms of organisational processes effectiveness. (15)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Output 3</b></p> <p>Organisations with acquired knowledge on Nature-based Solutions (NbS) approaches to apply in their actual projects and develop new ones.</p>	<p>3.1- In 12 months at least 15 organisations increased knowledge on NbS approaches.</p> <p>3.2- In 12 months at least 15 organisations will design an adequate NbS intervention adhering to the IUCN Global Standard for NbS.</p>	<p>Key result 3.1: Post-ex-ante surveys results showing increases</p> <p>Performance indicators (goal):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3.1.1- Number of satisfactory surveys (2)</li> <li>• 3.1.2- Number of post-ex-ante knowledge and capacity surveys (1)</li> <li>• 3.1.3- Number of NbS topics covered (10)</li> <li>• 3.1.4- Number of feedback sessions with 15 participants (5)</li> </ul> <p>Key result 3.2: Project evaluations results using the IUCN Global Standard for NbS self-assessment tool showing increase.</p> <p>Performance indicators (goal):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3.2.1- Number of interventions qualified as “adequate” by the IUCN Global Standard self-assessment tool at the end of the project (at least 10)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Activities</b> (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)</p> <p>1.1 Training program design</p> <p>1.2 Individual diagnosis on: Personal Development and conflict resolution profile</p> <p>1.3 1st in-person training on personal leadership skills: personal development and emotional intelligence, conflict resolution and negotiation, team building and collaboration for greater impact, networking for social causes</p> <p>1.4 Webinar on systemic thinking for collaboration in conservation</p> <p>1.5 Webinar on creativity and innovation for environmental projects</p> <p>1.6 One-on-one feedback session for 15 participants.</p> <p>2.1 Design the call for training process</p> <p>2.2 Dissemination of the call for training among organisations in western and northwestern Mexico</p> <p>2.3 Candidate organisations evaluation and participants selection</p> <p>2.4 Organisational diagnosis (Institutional Effectiveness Index) of organisations to determine capacity strengthening main needs to adjust training topics.</p> <p>2.5 Training program design in association with output 3</p> <p>2.6 Kickoff virtual session in association with output 3</p> <p>2.7 1st in-person workshop on in association with output 3: socio-environmental project design tools, development of indicators, monitoring and evaluation of projects</p> <p>2.8 Webinar on risk assessment matrix</p> <p>2.9 Webinar on social and gender perspectives in project design and implementation</p>		

- 2.10 2nd in-person workshop in association with output 3: business Social Canvas, strategic finance including budget development, fundraising and resource mobilisation.
- 2.11 Webinars on: fiscal and legal issues according to Mexican Law necessary for a CSO's sustainability, fundraising specifics, and security for CSOs
- 2.12 One-on-one feedback mentoring follow up virtual sessions.
- 2.13 Logical frameworks presentations and training experiences exchange in association with output 3
- 2.14 Post-ex-ante knowledge and capacity survey
- 3.1 Training program design in association with output 2
- 3.2 Kickoff virtual session in association with output 2
- 3.3 Virtual workshop for initial project evaluations using the IUCN Global Standard for NbS self-assessment tool
- 3.4 Five one-on-one feedback mentoring follow up virtual sessions.
- 3.5 1st in-person workshop in association with output 2: introduction to NbS, types of NbS interventions, opportunities and risks associated to NbS
- 3.6 Groupal follow up virtual session.
- 3.7 2nd in-person workshop in association with output 2: NbS for solving major societal challenges: livelihoods, climate change, food security, water security, disaster management, and human health
- 3.8 Virtual workshop for final project evaluations using the IUCN Global Standard for NbS self-assessment tool
- 3.9 Logical frameworks of NbS projects presentations and training experiences exchange in association with output 2
- 3.10 Network-building between organisations to develop future NBS projects with greater scope and impact
- 3.11 Post-ex-ante knowledge and capacity survey
- 3.12 Toolbox design in association with output 1 and 2 for self-assessment of: NbS, project design tools, systemic thinking, strategic finance.

**Important Assumptions**

- 1. Organisations will submit proposals where all the criteria specified in the call are met.
- 2. Initiatives are carried out in states with highest extreme and moderate poverty percentages in northwest and western Mexico.
- 3. Participants will attend all groupal, one-on-one, virtual and in-person activities.
- 4. Topic experts are able to collaborate in specific activities when needed.
- 5. 30% of participants are women.
- 6. Post-ex-ante surveys demonstrate that at least 80% of the organisations strengthened their institutional management capacities, leadership skills and Nature-based Solutions knowledge.

**Table 1 Project Standard Indicators**

DI Indicator number	Name of indicator	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Total achieved	Total planned
DI-A01	Number of people in eligible countries who have completed structured and relevant training	People	Men	18	21	22	18
DI-A01	Number of people in eligible countries who have completed structured and relevant training	People	Women	30	34	38	30
DI-A03	Number of local civil society organisations with improved capability and capacity	Number of organisations	Civil society organisations	16	16	16	16
DI-C13	Number of webinars	Number	Number of Webinars	7	6	13	13
DI-C13	Number of webinars attendees	Number	Men	18	21	22	18
DI-C13	Number of webinars attendees	Number	Women	30	34	37	30

In addition to reporting any information on publications under relevant standard indicators, in Table 2, provide full details of all publications and material produced over the last year that can be publicly accessed, e.g. title, name of publisher, contact details, cost. Mark with an asterisk (\*) all publications and other material that you have included with this report.

**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)

## 1. 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 <b>correct template</b> (checking fund, type of report (i.e. Annual or Final), and year) and <b>deleted the blue guidance text</b> before submission?	X
<b>Is the report less than 10MB?</b> If so, please email to <a href="mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com">BCF-Reports@niras.com</a> putting the project number in the Subject line.	x
<b>Is your report more than 10MB?</b> If so, please discuss with <a href="mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com">BCF-Reports@niras.com</a> about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line. All supporting material should be submitted in a way that can be accessed and downloaded as one complete package.	
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, <b>do these meet the outlined requirements (see section 14)?</b>	x
<b>Have you included means of verification?</b> You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	x
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors?	N/A
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	X
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	