

Applicant: **Caruso, Emily**
Organisation: **Global Diversity Foundation**
Funding Sought: **£199,979.00**

DIR31CC\1283

Conservation leadership training for indigenous youth in India and Kenya

In India and Kenya, indigenous youth seek to lead community-based environmental, economic and cultural resilience work, yet lack leadership capacity. Many global conservation leadership programmes unintentionally exclude indigenous community members, compounding their marginalisation from formal conservation practice. Global South conservation practitioners co-design and pilot a Grassroots Leadership Programme with 6 indigenous youth associations who gain skills to develop, fundraise for, and lead their conservation projects. Programme scalability is ensured with toolkits, graduate training, online and in-person outreach events and network-building.

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Conservation leadership training for indigenous youth in India and Kenya

Section 1 - Contact Details

PRIMARY APPLICANT DETAILS

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Type	Organisation
Name	GroundUp Conservation
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Section 2 - Title & Summary

Q3. Project Title

Conservation leadership training for indigenous youth in India and Kenya

Please attach a cover letter as a PDF document.

-  [GDF-GUC-JSF cover letter final 20.10.2024](#)
-  20/10/2024
-  10:28:26
-  pdf 284.14 KB

Q4a. Is this a resubmission of a previously unsuccessful application?

☒ No

Q5. Summary of project

Please provide a brief non-technical summary of your project: the capability and capacity problem/need it is trying to address, its aims, and the key activities you plan on undertaking.

In India and Kenya, indigenous youth seek to lead community-based environmental, economic and cultural resilience work, yet lack leadership capacity. Many global conservation leadership programmes unintentionally exclude indigenous community members, compounding their marginalisation from formal conservation practice. Global South conservation practitioners co-design and pilot a Grassroots Leadership Programme with 6 indigenous youth associations who gain skills to develop, fundraise for, and lead their conservation projects. Programme scalability is ensured with toolkits, graduate training, online and in-person outreach events and network-building.

Section 3 - Title, Dates & Budget Summary

Q6. Country(ies)

Which eligible country(ies) will your project be working in?

Country 1	India	Country 2	Kenya
Country 3	No Response	Country 4	No Response

Do you require more fields?

☒ No

Q7. Project dates

Start date:	End date:	Duration (e.g. 1 years, 8 months):
01 April 2025	31 March 2027	2

Q8. Budget summary

Darwin Initiative Funding Request	2025/26	2026/27	Total request
(1 Apr - 31 Mar) £	£100,734.00	£99,245.00	£199,979.00

Q10. Do you have proposed matched funding arrangements?

☒ Yes

Please ensure you clearly outline your matched funding arrangement in the budget.

Q11. If you have a significant amount of unconfirmed matched funding, please clarify how you will fund the project if you don't manage to secure this?

Although not yet confirmed, we have begun conversations with existing GDF donors who are sympathetic to our goals to co-fund the GLP seed fund by an additional £[REDACTED] at least (in Year 2, 'Other Partner Costs').

Q12. Have you received, applied for, or plan to apply for any other UK Government funding for your proposed project or a similar project?

☒ No

Section 4 - Project need

Q13. The need that the project is trying to address

Please describe evidence of the capability and capacity need your project is trying to address with reference to biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction challenges and opportunities.
For example, how have you identified the need? Why should the need be addressed or what will be the value to the country? Please cite the evidence you are using to support your assessment of the need.

Indigenous lands, territories and waters overlap significantly with global biodiversity hotspots and the planet's most intact ecosystems (Ref1, Ref2). Indigenous leadership within conservation initiatives is therefore pivotal for the effectiveness (Ref3, Ref4). Indigenous peoples' detailed and complex ecological knowledge and traditional resource governance systems, central to their territories' rich biodiversity and resilience (Ref5, Ref6), have proven to be highly effective in protecting ecosystems and biodiversity, contributing significantly to conservation project design, implementation and monitoring (Ref7).

Project communities in Nagaland and Uttarakhand, India and Masai Mara, Kenya, state that this biodiversity-enhancing knowledge and practices are being lost, especially when conservation decision-making remains outside community hands. Conservation projects continue to be implemented from the top down, resulting in compounded marginalisation for indigenous communities (Ref3). For Milner-Gulland (Ref8), social justice is essential to conservation success; immediate actions for redress include formally recognising indigenous peoples' conservation practices, addressing systemic marginalisation, and facilitating local conservation leadership.

A grassroots conservation leadership programme - offered in local languages, and attentive to local epistemologies, socioeconomic and political dynamics, and cultural needs - stimulates this shift. While conservation leadership programmes are effective contributions to biodiversity conservation in the Global South (Ref9, Ref10), these cater to educated professionals with English language capacity, access to funding streams and well-functioning internet connections, and a shared conceptual understanding of conservation. While experts recommend inclusive conservation leadership training tailored to marginalised communities (Ref11, Ref15), such opportunities are scarce.

The project team has engaged with indigenous youth to explore creative and practical strategies for enhancing their communities' environmental, economic and cultural resilience, while countering the pressures of urban migration. Indigenous youth are also recognised as essential actors in conservation initiatives (Ref12, Ref13, Ref14). Yet in many indigenous societies youth are not direct participants in community governance structures (Ref13). Mainstream leadership programmes are often ineffective in this context, as they fail to address the exclusion of youth from community decision-making while attempting to empower them. Youth leadership must be elicited and grown within existing community spaces that they can occupy. Our approach is to use a conservation problem - recognised community-wide - as an entry-point for an experiential leadership development process. This approach also is at the root of our programme's adaptability to highly diverse community needs and governance scenarios globally.

These multilayered challenges were confirmed in dialogue with fellows from the DI-funded Conservation and Communities Fellowship (CCF; DARDD026) and conservation donors, the latter underscoring their requirements for local project leadership, and associated capacity-building, to ensure the efficiency, efficacy and equity of their funding.

Our project pilots a Grassroots Leadership Programme (GLP) with 6 Indigenous youth associations (3 in India and 3 in Kenya) who have expressed this need. Three CCF fellows (Preety Sharma, Rosebell Abwonji and Akshay Chettri) lead and co-design the GLP with the youth associations, adapting it to their needs and specificities. Rooted in indigenous epistemologies, local realities and youth agency, the project attends to the long history of power imbalance and systemic injustice that has harmed communities and undermined conservation goals (Ref16).

Section 5 - Darwin Objectives and Conventions

Q14. Biodiversity Conventions, Treaties and Agreements

Q14a. Your project must support the commitments of one or more of the agreements listed below.

Please indicate which agreement(s) will be supported.

- ☒ Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- ☒ Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs)

Q14b. National and International Policy Alignment

Using evidence where available, please detail how your capability and capacity project will contribute to national policy (including NBSAPs, NDCs, NAPs etc.) and in turn international biodiversity and development conventions, treaties and agreements that the country is a signatory of.

The project plays a vital role in supporting implementation of national laws and policies focused on community-led conservation and youth capacity-building in India and Kenya. Our project partner youth organisations have been working to conserve their landscapes, supporting implementation of laws and policies legislated for conserving biodiversity through research and documentation to contribute to data generation and validation, and ensuring equitable governance of their landscapes through various conservation programmes.

Our project addresses selected Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) articles, on in-situ conservation and preservation of indigenous knowledge (Art 8 c,d, and j), protecting customary use of biological resources (Art 10 c), research and training (Art 12 b), and public education and awareness (Art 13 a). It supports implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and its targets under the CBD, primarily target 3 on securing 30% of terrestrial and marine ecosystems, 9 on sustainable management of wild species, 20 on strengthening capacity building and cooperation between nations, 22 on equitable, inclusive, and gender-responsive governance, and 23 on gender-equality. The Framework focuses on a youth and gender inclusive approach, which forms a central part of our project.

The project addresses multiple Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG 4 on ensuring equitable and inclusive quality education, 5 on Gender equality, 8 on sustainable economic growth and decent work, 10 towards reducing inequalities, 15 to promote effective conservation of terrestrial species, 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions, by enabling local leadership with Indigenous values, and 17 towards effective collaborations and partnerships to achieve the goals, between indigenous leaders, civil society organisations, academics, and practitioners in India, Kenya and other countries.

Our objective to contextualize the leadership programme to local needs and publish materials in their indigenous language aligns our project with the goals of UNESCO's 'Decade of Indigenous Languages' (2022-2032).

Section 6 - Method, Change Expected, GESI & Exit Strategy

Q15. Methodology

Describe the methods and approach you will use to achieve your intended capability and capacity Outcome and contribute towards your Impact. Provide information on:

- how you have reflected on and incorporated evidence and lessons learnt from past and present similar activities and projects in the design of this project.
- the specific approach you are using, supported by evidence that it will be effective, and justifying why you expect it will be successful in this context.
- how you will undertake the work (activities, materials and methods).
- what the main activities will be and where these will take place.
- how you will manage the work (governance, roles and responsibilities, project management tools, risks etc.).
- what practical elements will be included to embed new capabilities.

This project enhances conservation initiatives' success through community-led design, decision-making and implementation. It is based upon needs expressed by project communities to solve the conservation and development issues of their lands and people. We build capacity among indigenous youth to lead and implement endogenous solutions through an experiential, locally-adapted, in-situ leadership programme. Our confidence in this approach is based on the success of the CCF which inspires it, the commitment and grounded experience of the fellows co-leading the project and the evidence available regarding the effectiveness of the methods and approaches we have chosen (Ref7).

This GLP is carried out in four overlapping phases.

Phase 1: Development and delivery. Rooted in indigenous ways of thinking, being and learning (Ref17), and deploying Human-centred Design (Ref 18) principles, we pilot the GLP 'adaptive design process' in Nagaland, led by India lead Preeti Sharma and two youth associations, with the support of an indigenous pedagogy expert. The methodology at the core of the GLP process involves youth first identifying a conservation problem through a participatory and autoethnographic needs assessment. Site leads then facilitate youth groups to autonomously develop solutions - based on their contextual knowledge and local realities - through a learning-by-doing approach (Ref19). Site leads offer mentorship and support, and share skills, tools and information as needed, stewarding youth to develop their own leadership capabilities. By virtue of its adaptability, subsequent iterations of the GLP process will be unique to each context. Rosebell Abwonji and Akshay Chettri, fieldsite leads in Kenya and Uttarakhand respectively, test and enhance the GLP process with local indigenous youth associations. During the pilot and testing phase, 6 youth associations in India and Kenya each implement one conservation project, funded by this grant.

Following the pilot and testing phases, we produce a GLP toolkit which includes:

- The adaptive design process, including principles, practices and methods for rooting the GLP in local needs and realities;
- Local-language Community Guides to Conservation Leadership prepared by the individual youth associations to sustain their in-situ conservation leadership efforts, including a template and manual for their creation;
- A Training-of-Trainers (TOT) module, based on existing TOT evidence, experience and best practice (Ref20), provides protocols for conservation practitioners and researchers to embed the GLP in other communities.

Phase 2: Sustainability. Applying Phase 1 learnings, empowered youth leaders design and begin fundraising for further conservation projects to be implemented post-grant. We disseminate our process among funder networks, helping youth groups to build direct connections with supportive donors (Ref21) and develop high quality proposals. We launch a GLP seed project fund which youth groups can apply for through a competitive process. The GLP toolkit is disseminated, including through podcasts, webinars and in-person workshops, to promote replication. We offer an introductory online GLP TOT module to 70 CCF fellows and conservation practitioners. We select 5 CCF alumni to participate in the in-situ 4-week TOT programme, post-project.

Phase 3: Network-building. We gather participants into a network for mutual learning and collaboration, hosted by GDF's Global Environments Network (GEN), through which they gain access to further funding and outreach opportunities. We organise an in-person exchange in Nagaland in 2026 to share experiences and enhance collective learning, discuss future GLP delivery, and shape a GLP-2030 strategy. Participants connect with other global indigenous networks including the ICCA Consortium, Asia Indigenous People's Pact, and IPACC, leveraging South-South community exchanges as vital mechanisms for innovation, learning, and mutual support (Ref22).

Phase 4: Dissemination and replication. We co-deliver with community partners an in-person workshop to introduce the GLP, the importance of indigenous and local conservation leadership and conservation social justice to graduate students from regional universities, including Tetso College, Dimapur. The team present their experiences at relevant international 2025-27 events, e.g. ISE Congress 2026, IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025, 2026 CBD COP17. We establish conversations with interested funders and develop proposals to support GLP replication in the 5 communities identified in Phase 2.

The project Steering Committee includes 1 youth participant from India and Kenya, 3 field site leads, project leader, pedagogy experts and CCF 2024 fellows Asiem Sanyal (India) and Rachel Ikemeh (Nigeria) who have extensive experience in capacity-building with indigenous and local communities. GroundUp Conservation oversees knowledge management and communications, GLP delivery in India, TOT design and delivery and the in-person event. Jasiri Sustainable Futures manages GLP delivery and TOT testing in Kenya. The GDF team provides mentorship to the field teams and oversees network-building, project evaluation and project administration. Yolanda Lopez-Maldonado provides essential expertise on indigenous pedagogy and learning processes, and GLP design.

Q16. How will you identify participants?

How did/will you identify and select the participants (individuals and/or organisations) to directly benefit from the capability and capacity building activities? What makes these the most suitable participants?

How will you ensure that the selection process is unbiased, fair and transparent? How have you incorporated GESI considerations in identifying participants?

Partner youth associations and the communities they serve select 30 participants (≥30% women) in India and 12 participants (50% women) in Kenya for the GLP. Respecting communities' autonomous decision-making, we entrust them with participant selection, so long as minimum gender proportions are respected. In India, 3 community youth associations identify participants in consensus with community leaders, women's groups, elders and other stakeholders. Since the GLP entry-point for an experiential approach involves addressing a conservation problem the community wishes to resolve, we guide the youth associations to identify a group comprising diverse key competencies, including traditional knowledge, writing skills, community engagement capacities and technical know-how. In Kenya, to ensure transparency, representation and inclusivity, participants are elected by the 3 youth associations in the Greater Mara ecosystem, belonging to the Western, Eastern, and Central clusters. This ensures broad regional representation and strengthens local ownership.

The project's outreach and sustainability participants are CCF fellows, alumni, existing practitioners and graduate students identified through existing networks of GDF, GroundUp Conservation (GUC) and Jasiri Sustainable Futures (JSF) i.e. the Global Environments Network, Patkai College and Cambridge Conservation Leadership Programme alumni group, respectively. These three networks align with the project approach and expected impact, so are an effective means of disseminating the programme and its results. These diverse networks are governed by national and international inclusion criteria. Nevertheless, our outreach material and methods will pay special attention to marginalised communities' inclusion. The 5 CCF alumni selected as participants in the post-project edition of the GLP TOT programme are identified based on their groundedness within communities and capacity to deliver this nuanced programme.

The field site leads, Preety Sharma, Rosebell Abwonji and Akshay Chettri, are Global South CCF Fellows; they are core proponents and intellectual leads of this project, and key beneficiaries; as such they are self-selected.

Q17. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

All applicants must consider whether and how their project will contribute to promoting equality between persons of different gender and social characteristics. Please include reference to the GESI context in which your project seeks to work. Explain your understanding of how individuals may be disadvantaged or excluded from equal participation within the context of your project, and how you seek to address this. You should consider how your project will proactively contribute to ensuring individuals achieve equitable outcomes and how you will ensure meaningful participation for all those engaged.

This project places indigenous peoples at the centre, prioritising social inclusion. It leverages the experiences and values of indigenous communities at project sites as the foundation for a locally-adapted leadership development process. The positionality and personal experiences of project staff and collaborators who are rooted in the Global South enhance understanding and programme adaptability.

Nevertheless, project communities (and other indigenous societies) often obey "ageist" norms (Ref13) and

patriarchal land ownership models (e.g. Ref23) that exclude youth and women from community decision-making. We address this by tailoring our programme specifically to youth (~40% women overall). Our experiential approach, which focuses on building youth leadership through the delivery of conservation solutions to community problems, is respectful to elders because it averts the issues that can arise when a direct approach to youth empowerment is chosen, as the latter can be perceived as a challenge to their authority.

Women in indigenous communities of our project sites are often marginalised due to limited participation in community-wide decision making, early marriages and strict segregation of gender roles (e.g. Ref24, Ref25). We address this by establishing a minimum participation of 50% for young women in Kenya and 30% in Nagaland and Uttarakhand and creating program delivery methods that support childcare needs, and allow for domestic, labour and livestock-related chores.

Two out of 3 site leads, and 8 out of 11 project staff members, are women. Four out of 11 project staff belong to indigenous communities of India and Kenya. The indigenous pedagogy consultant, Dr. Yolanda Lopez-Maldonado, is a Mayan scientist from Mexico. All partners have strong gender equity policies: GUC employees are 50% women, JSF is women-led, and GDF is also women-led, with a team composed of 70% women and 70% employees from global majority backgrounds.

Q18. Change expected

Detail the expected changes and benefits to both biodiversity and multi-dimensional poverty reduction, and links between them, that this work will deliver. You should identify what will change and who exactly will benefit a) in the short-term (i.e. during the life of the project – including capability and capacity building benefits) and b) the potential changes in the long-term (after the project has ended).

When talking about how people will benefit, please remember to give details of who will benefit, differences in benefits by gender or other layers of diversity within stakeholders, and the number of beneficiaries expected. The number of communities is insufficient detail – number of households should be the largest unit used.

Our expected impact is that the success of conservation initiatives is enhanced by indigenous communities' leadership and equitable inclusion in decision-making, and promoted by emerging conservation professionals trained to mainstream social justice.

The project has two sets of primary and secondary beneficiaries.

1. Indigenous youth and communities.

1(a) Primary beneficiaries are the 30 youth from 3 youth associations in India (30% women) and 12 youth from 3 youth associations in Kenya (50% women) who receive intensive capacity-building in conservation leadership. In the short-term, GLP participants design and deliver 6 conservation projects - 3 each in India and Kenya - addressing community-specific biodiversity and livelihood needs. This secures immediate wellbeing results for 4 communities (500 households) and employability for the 42 primary beneficiaries.

1(b) Secondary beneficiaries: One group of secondary beneficiaries in this set are the 700+ youth (30% women) in 3 associations in India and 370 (50% women) in 3 associations in Kenya. Learning from the primary beneficiaries through their internal sharing and peer-exchange practices, which take place both during and beyond our project lifecycle, the members of youth associations build their confidence and engagement with national and global conservation and development actors. The broader communities also benefit from empowered youth who design and fundraise for further local conservation and livelihood projects, fostering community wellbeing and employment opportunities, thereby reducing urban migration.

2. Conservation practitioners who operate at the interface between communities and globalised conservation praxis.

2(a) Primary beneficiaries. Most proximate are the field site leads Preety Sharma, Rosebell Abwonji and Akshay Chettri, who undertake their own experiential learning by delivering the GLP, enhancing their understanding of the nuances of community-based conservation. This helps them build their careers in service to community-based conservation globally and to become core trainers-of-trainers for other practitioners who operate in similar socio-political spaces.

2(b) Secondary beneficiaries. We offer opportunities to similar practitioners who “straddle two worlds” by engaging a further 70 Global South conservation practitioners among alumni from CCF2024 and 2025, South Asia University graduate students and other changemakers from the Global Environments Network who seek to support community-based conservation. In the long-term, we offer the full TOT programme to at least 5 conservation practitioners every year, who in turn deliver it to colleagues and partners in their networks, thus amplifying the GLP’s impact over time and extending its support for indigenous ownership of biodiversity conservation (Ref3).

By acknowledging the problem-solving and adaptability of indigenous knowledge and management systems (Ref26), the project safeguards these practices for the future by supporting youth to integrate indigenous knowledge with Western science methods in conservation practice (cf. Ref13). The in-situ, localised approach provides youth participants with direct experience in community-based problem-solving. This creates opportunities within their territories, reducing youth migration and ensuring the continuity of community-based conservation efforts and community knowledge (Ref14). By enhancing local capacities and leadership to contribute knowledge, insights and data to global biodiversity and climate assessments, we nourish the needed dialogue between indigenous knowledge and science for global biodiversity and climate futures (Ref4, Ref5, Ref27).

Q19. Sustainable benefits and scaling potential

How will the project reach a point where the benefits of strengthened capability and capacity can be sustained post-funding?

How will the capability and capacity be retained and remain available to deliver benefits in-country after the project? Is there potential for the new capability and capacity to renew itself or deliver additional capability and capacity, for example by building future environmental leaders beyond the project?

We share our adaptable design process and associated implementation guides through a comprehensive GLP toolkit published on an online platform and represented through all our partner channels. One key GLP output, the Community Guides, co-developed with project communities and youth associations serve as local-language training manuals to support future community leaders to implement conservation and livelihoods projects. An adaptable template for these is shared within the GLP toolkit for adaptation and replication within new GLP iterations post-project. In the final phase of GLP delivery, participants design, fundraise for, and implement conservation projects across six sites. The GLP seed grant fund provides modest start-up funds, while country partners mentor participants to build and sustain relationships with donors for further funding. This approach ensures long-term community buy-in and sustainable local impact.

Phases 3 and 4 of the project (cf. Q15) focus on network-building, dissemination and replication. The GLP toolkit is widely shared through targeted outreach and training activities including an online introductory 4-part workshop series to engage the interest of a broad group of practitioners in the Training-of-Trainer (TOT) programme. Of those who express their interest in receiving full training of the GLP, we select 5 CCF alumni who will receive the in-situ, experiential GLP TOT training programme. Early engagement with donors ensures we are able to fund implementation in these 5 new sites in the immediate post-project period. By inviting the GLP participants into the Global Environments Network we offer them a safe space to continue learning, access to collaborators and opportunities for further seed funding, through GEN member project grants, to sustain and extend their impact. By sharing the GLP widely through a public online webinar and in-person sessions offered in at least 3 major, relevant international events, we continue to build interest and support for scaling up.

If necessary, please provide supporting documentation e.g. maps, diagrams, references etc., as a PDF using the File Upload below:

 [DIR31CC-1283 - GDF proposal - TOC + bibliograp](#)
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Section 7 - Risk Management

Q20. Risk Management

Please outline the 7 key risks to achievement of your Project Outcome and how these risks will be managed and mitigated, referring to the Risk Guidance. This should include at least one Fiduciary, two Safeguarding, and one Delivery Chain Risk.

Risk Description	Impact	Prob.	Gross Risk	Mitigation	Residual Risk
Fiduciary (financial): funds not used for intended purposes or not accounted for (fraud, corruption, mishandling or misappropriated). Mishandling of funds by project partners, including poor, inadequate or non-transparent financial reporting.	moderate	rare	minor	The risk is mitigated by following a robust M&E plan, including detailed quarterly financial monitoring and internal informal 'audits' of expenditure, coordinated by GDF. Youth associations and Global South NGO participants receive targeted training and ongoing mentoring & support for high quality financial management as part of the project.	minor
Safeguarding: risk of sexual exploitation abuse and harassment (SEAH), or unintended harm to beneficiaries, the public, implementing partners, and staff. Since we work in diverse cultural and political contexts within both countries, there is a risk of unintended harm to or by the partners, youth associations and the communities.	moderate	rare	minor	Project staff, participants and collaborators undergo a short training and discussion on SEAH safeguarding and core partners' redressal processes at the start of the project, in line with local legislation. All partners and participants are primed regarding local cultural and political sensitivities.	minor

Safeguarding: risks to health, safety and security (HSS) of beneficiaries, the public. Implementing partners, and staff. Since our country partners work in remote areas, there is a risk of accidents in the field, which could entail human injuries.	moderate	rare	minor	Country partners GUC and JSF both have accident and emergency contingency plans, and the youth associations shall elaborate these at the start of the project – both as part of emergency planning and as part of the leadership program delivery. These plans are reviewed and supervised by GDF.	minor
Delivery Chain: the overall risk associated with your delivery model. The project's delivery success is dependent on country partners' engagement, and the active participation of the youth associations over which we have no control.	moderate	rare	minor	We maintain constant contact with the site teams through online and in-person meetings, emails, quarterly internal assessments and logframe reviews, a 6-month partner-wide M&E process and 2 in-person evaluations, all coordinated by GDF. The project's deep rootedness in site partners' and youth organisations aspirations and ambitions mitigates this risk significantly.	minor
Risk 5 There could be risk of misinterpretation of project goals and activities due to language barriers and/or cultural practices.	moderate	rare	minor	The GLP's experiential and adaptive framework, the site leads' positionalities and long-term relationships with the communities, and community leads' rootedness within the youth associations, ensure transparent, direct and culturally meaningful translations of plans, discussions, outputs and processes. Any misinterpretations or misunderstandings are addressed immediately and mindful of cultural specificities.	minor
Risk 6 There is a risk of conflict arising due to incompetent safeguarding of indigenous knowledge and practice during the project.	moderate	rare	minor	The risk is mitigated through our community leads' embeddedness within their communities to ensure local norms and values around knowledge and practice are respected and project processes align with relevant community and association authorities and rules regarding how and what is documented, and whether it is released publicly and how.	minor

Risk 7

Latent political conflicts within each of the project sites may affect the delivery due to tensions with local government or community leaders regarding the project's intention and impact.

major

rare

moderate

The communities' formal political representatives support the project, which is actively sought by community youth. All relevant parties are informed of project process throughout; potential challenges are addressed before they become conflicts. Any conflicts arising are addressed immediately by the project team, and if needed a third party mediator.

minor

Q21. Project sensitivities

Please indicate whether there are sensitivities associated with this project that need to be considered if details are published (detailed species location data that would increase threats, political sensitivities, prosecutions for illegal activities, security of staff etc.).

☒ Yes

Please provide brief details.

The project works within the existing power dynamics of the conservation sector and national legislations that exclude indigenous peoples, and within indigenous communities that usually exclude youth and women. Additionally, political and social issues surrounding land-rights, land ownership and governance in the sites should be considered. In Nagaland, latent national independence struggles are also a factor we are aware of regarding publishing project materials. It will be particularly important to get endorsement and buy-in from the stakeholders of these sensitivities for any publication of project outputs.

Section 8 - Workplan

Q22. Workplan

Provide a project workplan that shows the key milestones in project activities.

 [DIR31CC-1283 - GDF proposal Workplan](#)

 21/10/2024

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Section 9 - Monitoring and Evaluation

Q23. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

Describe how the performance of the project will be monitored and evaluated, making reference to who is responsible for the project's M&E.

Darwin Initiative projects are expected to be adaptive, and you should detail how the monitoring and evaluation will feed into the improved delivery of the project including its management. M&E is expected to be built into the project and not an 'add' on. It is as important to measure for negative impacts as it is

for positive impact. Additionally, please indicate an approximate budget and level of effort (person days) to be spent on M&E (see Finance Guidance).

Every quarter, the core project team - composed of Preety Sharma and Akshay Chettri (GUC), and Rosebell Abwonji (JSF) and Emily Caruso (GDF) - monitors progress in activities, results and spending according to indicators and budget, meeting every quarter for an internal assessment. Every semester it implements an internal partner-wide project evaluation and review of risks and assumptions 1 month prior to formal reporting. A 9-person Steering Committee (SC) assesses the biannual internal evaluation, offering reorientations and adaptations as needed. The SC is composed of Preety, Rosebell, Emily, Akshay, Aringle (Jalukie Students' Union Nagaland), Rarin Kayiok (Mara Osero Volunteer Programme), Yolanda Lopez (Indigenous Science) and CCF fellows Asiem Sanyal (FFI-Fundaçao Principe) and Rachel Ikemeh (SW/Niger Delta Project).

All project beneficiaries contribute to M&E through in-person participatory evaluations and/or online evaluation questionnaires implemented around key project milestones. Our focus on the circular design cycle of prototype testing and feedback instigates a culture of ongoing reflection and assessment to improve and adapt our approach, annotated in a project logbook. All project beneficiaries receive M&E and impact measurement training through the GLP, ensuring that their contribution is meaningful and effective, and that the project proposals developed as part of the training are based upon sound M&E foundations.

Our indigenous pedagogy expert Yolanda Lopez-Maldonado undertakes a mid-way and a final evaluation, offering recommendations for post-project scaling-up.

Aarti Gor is the M&E and reporting lead for GDF, supported by Emily, Preety, Rosebell and Akshay.

Total project budget for M&E (£):	
(this may include Staff and Travel and Subsistence Costs)	
Total project budget for M&E (%):	
(this may include Staff and Travel and Subsistence Costs)	
Number of days planned for M&E	

Section 10 - Indicators of Success & Standard Indicators

Q24a. Indicators of success

Please outline the Outcome and Outputs of the project and how you will show that they have been achieved by using SMART indicators and milestones.

SMART Indicator	Means of Verification
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Outcome Capacity of six indigenous youth organisations in India and Kenya built to lead locally-rooted conservation projects, generating a replicable Grassroots Leadership Programme model and resources for promoting conservation social justice	0.1 2 indigenous youth organisations from Nagaland (30% women), 1 from Uttarakhand (30% women) and 3 Maasai Youth organisations (50% women) receive training to design, fundraise and implement their first autonomously-led conservation and livelihoods projects in their territories (Y2Q4)	-Project plans & proposals; Annual Activity reports, organisational registration and compliance documents and financial reports of the youth organisations
	0.2 GLP toolkit, which includes Training-of-Trainers (TOT) module and community guides, published on dedicated GLP online platform (Y2Q1), disseminated through international conferences (Y1Q4-Y2Q4) and online events (Y2Q3)	-Final GLP toolkit; Online event recording; International event session and presentation outlines; congress programmes -GLP platform created (including infographic, a promotional video, GLP toolkit, and TOT toolkit); Global Environments Network GLP subgroup created; GLP 2027-2030 strategy; in-person event reports
	0.3 Initial GLP network of 45 members (40% women) is created, joins the Global Environments Network, with a dedicated online platform (Y1Q4), and expanded to 90 members through online training (Y2Q1 and Y2Q3).	-Website analytics; project proposals
	0.4 At least 50 GLP toolkit downloads by Y2Q4, and 5 new proposals for local GLP implementation submitted to at least 2 global donors by Y2Q4	

Output 1

Co-creation and testing of the Grassroots Leadership Programme (GLP) process with indigenous youth organisations in India and Kenya strengthens their leadership, resulting in their creation of 6 new conservation projects

1.1 GLP process, co-developed with 3 CCF2024 alumni, 2 Indian indigenous youth organisations (30 participants, at least 30% women) and 1 indigenous pedagogy expert piloted experientially in situ in Nagaland (Y1Q2) and written up as the initial 'adaptive design process' (Y1Q3)

1.2 GLP process improved and finalised by testing in collaboration with 10 youth (30% women) from Van Gujjar Tribal Yuva Sangathan in Uttarakhand, India and 12 youth (50% women) from 3 Maasai youth organisation in Kenya (Y1Q4)

1.3 Locally-adapted 'Community guides to conservation leadership and implementation' published in local languages for 6 indigenous communities (Nagaland Y1Q2; Kenya and Uttarakhand Y1Q4), with a template and instructions for the development of these guides to be published as part of the GLP toolkit (Y1Q4)

1.4 Six indigenous youth associations in India and Kenya each design, develop and fundraise for 1 new conservation and livelihoods project proposal (by Y2Q4)

-GLP adaptive design process drafted; Nagaland case study + video

-Kenya and Uttarakhand case studies + videos published; GLP adaptive design process final version published on online dedicated platform.

-Community guides; template & instructions for co-creation of Community guides with youth and community associations (to be included in GLP toolkit)

-Project proposals and recommended donor list; Project planning documents

Output 2	Publication of GLP toolkit, and design and delivery of associated training-of-trainers module to members of the Global Environments Network and Conservation and Communities Fellowship establishes the programme's replicability.	2.1 GLP Training of Trainers (TOT) module and manual designed and piloted through the GLP adaptive design process in a collaboration between field site leads, indigenous pedagogy expert and youth organisations in India and Kenya (Y1Q3) and published as part of the full GLP toolkit (Y2Q1) 2.2 Introductory GLP TOT module delivered online to 50 CCF fellows (50% women) and alumni and 20 further GEN members (50% women) (Y2Q2) 2.3 CCF alumni apply for full 4-week GLP TOT by Y2Q3; and 5 alumni selected by Y2Q4 to fundraise and implement GLP programmes in partner communities, post Darwin-project cycle.	-Field workshop reports; 3 CCF fellows' individual case study write-ups; Publication of finalised TOT module and manual, as part of full GLP toolkit -Online workshop series session recordings published on the GLP online platform. -Criteria for selection of CCF alumni for TOT programme; list of 5 selected alumni and associated communities; Fundraising proposals for scaling up the GLP
Output 3	An online GLP platform and networking hub for learning, collaboration and outreach amplifies the impact and visibility of GLP participants, who forge connections with global indigenous and youth networks	3.1 Thirty indigenous youth from India (Y1Q4) and 12 indigenous youth from Kenya (Y2Q2) enhance their networks and skills by joining the 800-strong Global Environments Network (GEN) and participating in the associated CCF Alumni Programme 3.2 Thirty representatives (40% women) from the six GLP sites, GLP project team and 1 indigenous pedagogy expert learn from each other, build their network through GEN and develop a joint 'GLP 2030 strategy' during an in-person event in Nagaland (Y2Q3) 3.3 Participating indigenous communities and youth engaged in the GLP join and participate actively in other youth and indigenous networks including ISE's Emerging Ethnobotanist's network, ICCA Consortium, Asia Indigenous People's Pact.	-Profiles of new GLP members of Global Environments Network uploaded to GEN online database; CCF alumni programme, including GLP component, developed and published on GDF website; GLP participation stories, videos and photos shared via GEN and partners' social media. -In-person event participant list, video, website story, podcast (with event ppt interviews) and social media posts; GLP 2030 strategy published -Membership forms submitted; Survey for GLP youth participants on their engagement with these networks

Output 4 Access to resources and knowledge networks for conservation professionals, graduate students, indigenous peoples and donors promotes GLP replication, indigenous conservation leadership and conservation social justice	4.1 Forty MSc students from 2 colleges in Nagaland participate in introductory GLP workshop (Y2Q1) following which at least 5 new Global South higher education institutions are approached for similar trainings (Y2Q3)	-Partnership agreements with 2 colleges; Graduating student GLP introductory training programme and schedule; workshop participant lists
	4.2 At least 80 global conservation professionals learn about the GLP through in-person sessions offered during at least 2 international events (e.g. International Society for Ethnobiology 2026, World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education 2025, IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025, New York Climate Week 2026) (Y1Q3 through to Y2Q4)	-Programme, schedule and outputs from at least 2 international events/workshop programme; session reports and articles for partner websites -Potential donor contact list created; results of initial donor conversations reported; list of 5 new indigenous community partners selected for replication
	4.3 Five new donors identified (by Y1Q4) and approached (Y2Q1-Q4) to promote the GLP and develop collaborations for future replication in 5 new sites	-Online event recording
	4.4 At least 50 conservation professionals learn about the GLP through a publicly promoted online GEN in Conversation event held in Y2Q3	

Activities

Each activity is numbered according to the Output that it will contribute towards, for example, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 are contributing to Output 1.

- 1.1 GLP adaptive design process prototyped by 2 indigenous youth organisations in Nagaland (Y1Q1-2)
- 1.2 GLP adaptive design process tested with 1 youth association in Uttarakhand, India and in 3 youth associations in Maasai Mara, Kenya (Y1Q3-4)
- 1.3 India and Kenya field experiences collated into the final GLP toolkit and uploaded on the GLP online platform (Y2Q1)
- 1.4 Six conservation projects designed, developed and fundraised for by youth organisations (3 in India, 3 in Kenya) (by Y2Q4)
- 1.5 Internal GLP seed grant fund launched (including call for applications, selection and feedback) for the 6 participating youth organisations (Y2Q2)

- 2.1. GLP Training of Trainers module designed by project team and indigenous pedagogy expert with India and Kenya youth organisations (Y1Q3-4)
- 2.2 GLP TOT module (introductory & full course options) collated and published as a component of the GLP toolkit on the online platform by Y2Q2
- 2.3 GLP TOT module introductory course delivered in Y2Q2 through a 4-part online series to CCF fellows and alumni and other GEN members
- 2.4 Five fellows from the CCF2025 selected, following an application process, in Y2Q4 to receive full training to delivery the GLP in their sites
- 3.1 Indigenous youth GLP participants from India and Kenya join the Global Environments Network (Y1Q4-Y2Q2), within which a GLP hub is dedicated to them.
- 3.2 GLP in-person event organised (Y2Q3), during which participants co-develop a joint 'GLP 2030 strategy'
- 3.3 GLP 2030 strategy published on the GLP online platform (Y2Q4)
- 4.1 GLP training workshops designed and delivered in Y2Q2-3 to 40 graduating students
- 4.2 Dedicated GLP GEN in Conversation event delivered in Y2Q3
- 4.3 International conservation, leadership and indigenous education events (2025-2027) reviewed, identified and participated in for GLP global launch throughout Y1Q3-Y2Q4
- 4.4 At least 5 new donors approached, with proposals sent to two identified donors for the replication of the GLP in 5 new sites between Y1Q4-Y2Q4

Important Assumptions:

Please describe up to 6 key assumptions that, if held true, will enable you to deliver your Outputs and Outcome.

- National and global conservation actors are interested in local actions and ownership for sustainable biodiversity impacts and value for money
- 'Training of trainers' is an effective approach to establish successful replication processes in new geographies
- Networks of exchange, support and collaboration are an effective means for learning, improving and scaling up the project
- Indigenous youth leadership training, offered through the means of an applied conservation project, is welcomed within partner indigenous societies' norms and structures
- Communities are keen to enhance their conservation and leadership techniques to manage their territories better, protect and transmit knowledge, exercising decision-making power in their territory

Q24b. Standard Indicators

Standard Indicator Ref & Wording	Project Output or Outcome this links to	Target number by project end	Provide disaggregated targets here
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e.g. DI-A01: Number of people in eligible countries who have completed structured and relevant training	e.g. Output indicator 3.4 / Output 3	e.g. 60	e.g. 30 non-indigenous women; 30 non-indigenous men
DI-A01: Number of people in eligible countries who have completed structured and relevant training	Output Indicator 1.1 and 1.2	42	10 indigenous women from India, 6 indigenous women from Kenya, 20 indigenous men from India, 6 indigenous men from Kenya
DI-A03: Number of local or national organisations with enhanced capability and capacity	Outcome Indicator 0.1, Output indicators 1.4 and 1.5	6	3 indigenous youth associations India, 3 indigenous youth associations Kenya
DI-A04: Number of people reporting that they are applying new capabilities 6+ months after training	Output indicators 1.1, 1.2	42	10 indigenous women from India, 6 indigenous women from Kenya, 20 indigenous men from India, 6 indigenous men from Kenya
DI-A05: Number of trainers trained under the project reporting to have delivered further training	Output indicator 2.3	5	3 non-indigenous women (global), 2 non-indigenous men (global)
DI-C01: Number of best practice guides and knowledge products published and endorsed	Outcome indicator 0.2, output indicator 1.3	8	3 community guides in India (Upper Zeme Donet, Lower Zeme Jalukie and Gojri languages), 3 community guides in Kenya (Maa Language), 1 GLP adaptive design process (Global, English), 1 Training-of-Trainers manual (Global, English)
DI-C07: Number of webinar attendees	Output indicators 2.2 and 4.4	120	Global, 60 men, 60 women
No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response
No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response
No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response
No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response
No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response

No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response
No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response

If you cannot identify three Standard Indicators you can report against, please justify this here.

No Response

Section 11 - Budget and Funding

Q25. Budget

Please complete the appropriate Excel spreadsheet, which provides the Budget for this application. Some of the questions earlier and below refer to the information in this spreadsheet.

 [GDF DIR31CC-1283 project budget final](#)

 21/10/2024

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 xlsx 86.88 KB

Q26. Alignment with other funding and activities

This question aims to help us understand how familiar you are with other work in the geographic/thematic area, and how this proposed project will build on or align with this to avoid any risks of duplicating or conflicting activities.

Q26a. Is this new work or does it build on existing/past activities (delivered by anyone and funded through any source)?

☒ Development of existing/past activities

Please provide details:

This project was conceived during GDF's Darwin Initiative-funded 2023-25 Capabilities & Capacities grant that delivered the Conservation and Communities Fellowship (CCF) (<https://global-diversity.org/gdf-conservation-and-communities-fellowship/>). CCF fellows Preety Sharma, Rosebell Abwonji, and Akshay Chettri are co-developers, co-designers, and collaborators on the GLP. It also builds upon community-led conservation action processes facilitated by GroundUp Conservation in India and team members of Jasiri Sustainable Futures in Kenya.

In Nagaland, Preety's work focuses on landscape-level conservation actions with indigenous youth groups. The GLP responds to their aspirations to develop, fundraise and implement their own projects to safeguard ancestral lands, indigenous knowledge and traditional lifestyles. In Uttarakhand, Akshay has collaborated with the Van Gujjar youth association since 2021; his work focuses on research and advocacy for rights over lands and resources, cultural practices, and traditional. For four years, Rosebell has engaged Maasai youth from the Mara ecosystem by developing and managing an internship programme. Indigenous youth accessed opportunities to participate in conservation efforts, gaining skills and networks to support solutions for protecting Mara landscapes. The GLP addresses observed gaps, enabling youth to design, manage and fundraise for their own conservation projects.

Q26b. Are you aware of any current or future plans for work in the geographic/thematic area to the proposed project?

☒ Yes

Please give details explaining similarities and differences, and explaining how your work will be additional, avoiding duplicating and conflicting activities and what attempts have been/will be made to co-operate with and share lessons learnt for mutual benefit.

Our project seeks to enhance and support other projects or initiatives that seek to build indigenous youth leadership for conservation. We are aware of a few such projects emerging now.

1. We have been in communication with the UK-based organisation Well-Grounded (WG) that works in Central Africa, where WG is developing an indigenous conservation leadership programme. They are currently poised to deliver the pilot programme in Eastern DRC and Cameroon and are applying for funds from the R31 Capabilities & Capacities scheme for this purpose. Given the significant differences in geography and programme design and structure we believe that there is no duplication or conflict. We have discussed sharing experiences and learnings to support each other's programmes.

2. Through the ongoing CCF, we are mentoring another Darwin Initiative R31 Capabilities & Capacities proposal submitted by Iniciativa Amotocodie in Paraguay ('Strengthening Ayoreo territorial management capacity'). We are aware of their focus on training Ayoreo youth in territorial management and conservation leadership through their organisation Ayoreo Garaigosode Organization (AGDAP). Partners on this project and Iniciativa Amotocodie have begun discussing the possibility of offering the GLP to Ayoreo youth in 2027 with the support of a GEN grant.

Q27. Value for Money

Please demonstrate why your project is good value for money in terms of impact and cost-effectiveness of each pound spend (economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity). Why is it the best feasible project for the amount of money to be spent?

The proportion of the project budget for in-country partners is more than double that of the UK-based lead partner, and less than half of the latter covers salaries. This underscores our focus on financial equity, project cost-effectiveness and building the capacities of grassroots partners. Our approach, based in co-creation with communities, limits the need for expensive expert consultancy costs whilst ensuring local ownership and long-term sustainability. It also encourages in-kind contributions from project communities and youth associations that value the vision of empowering the grassroots and small Global South NGOs.

Building upon the existing experience of GroundUp's successful implementation of indigenous communities' projects in India and South Asia, as well as Rosebell's youth engagement in Kenya project sites, we avoid exploration and start-up costs. By incorporating pre-existing networks (e.g. GDF's Global Environments Network) and partnering with an established global conservation leadership programme (CCF) we also avoid start-up costs for scaling up, networking and sustainability components. All outputs are focused on replicating the process and results through these pre-existing means and teams that are primed to act rapidly and efficiently. Our costs are low for the expected impact: the experiential leadership development approach results in, simultaneously, leadership growth within 6 youth associations and 6 conservation projects designed, fundraised for, and delivered in situ.

Darwin funds are essential for piloting this systemic and adaptable approach to indigenous conservation leadership: a DI grant significantly enhances our ability to secure funds from other donors to replicate the GLP and rapidly extend our impact.

Q28. Capital items

If you plan to purchase capital items with Darwin funding, please indicate what you anticipate will happen to the items following project end. If you are requesting more than 10% capital costs, please provide your justification here.

Since we are working with youth associations, project-purchased laptops and binoculars will be institutional items that will be safeguarded in their offices. We incorporate best practices in maintaining organisational registers for equipment and their use into the leadership training, hence ensuring the safety of the capital investments made through this and future projects.

Section 12 - Safeguarding

Q29. Safeguarding

All projects funded under the Biodiversity Challenge Funds must ensure proactive action is taken to promote the welfare and protect all individuals involved in the project (staff, implementing partners, the public and beneficiaries) from harm. In order to provide assurance of this, projects are required to have specific procedures and policies in operation.

Please outline how your project will ensure:

(a) beneficiaries, the public, implementing partners, and staff are made aware of your safeguarding commitment and how they can confidentially raise a concern,

(b) safeguarding issues are investigated, recorded and what disciplinary procedures are in place when allegations and complaints are upheld,

(c) you will ensure project partners also meet these standards and policies.

Indicate which minimum standard protocol your project follows and how you meet those minimum standards, i.e. CAPSEAH, CHS, IASC MOS-PSEA. If your approach is currently limited or in the early stages of development, please clearly set out your plans to address this.

GDF's safeguarding policy is shared with all team members and throughout our partnership agreements. Following an in-progress website update we will have a page dedicated to safeguarding from which all our policies can be downloaded. Our Safeguarding Lead handles complaints and ensures processes are followed and adhere to data protection and confidentiality principles. Our team is trained on all of our policies; our anonymous reporting mechanism removes barriers to whistleblowing.

We have developed procedures to ensure safety during fieldwork, and our team has to conduct thorough risk assessments and compile a Fieldwork Safety Plan before any visit to a new community. We share our safeguarding commitments and expectations regularly with our field partners, and we ensure that we only work with partners (as well as funders) whose policies and values adhere to our own, especially when it comes to safeguarding and data protection. We have a thorough evaluation procedure for new partnerships or collaborations, and we are in the process of formalising this into a published policy.

We have clear policies in place to prevent any incidences of SEAH, both internally and in our work. This includes ensuring that our code of conduct and the ISE standards of Ethics are binding in all our staff contracts, and that partners and stakeholders also adhere to our code of conduct and relevant policies. Currently our disciplinary procedures are outlined across our policies. We are working on refining and capturing them in a detailed policy for release in December 2024. Investigations are prompt, impartial and thorough.

We will review our Safeguarding Policy in October 2024 in order to be more specific about our commitments and adherence to Core Humanitarian Standard on Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (CAPSEAH) guidelines, which are the minimum standards that most closely relate to our approach.

Defra recommend you appoint a safeguarding focal point to ensure the project's PSEAH work is taken forward. This can be a separate member of staff or a current member of staff who spends a proportionate amount of time for safeguarding and PSEAH activities. Please name this individual here - this person should also be included in your overall staff list at Q31 and in your budget.



Section 13 - British Embassy or High Commission Engagement

Q30. British embassy or high commission engagement

It is important for UK Government representatives to understand if UK funding might be spent in the project country/ies. Please indicate if you have contacted the relevant British embassy or high commission to discuss the project and attach details of any advice you have received from them. Please note that some embassies or high commissions may not be able to respond to you but your project will not be penalised for a lack of response.

☒ Yes

Please attach evidence of request or advice if received.

-  [Global Diversity Foundation - Darwin Initiative proposal for a project based in India - FCDO email & response](#)
-  09/10/2024
-  09:00:24
-  pdf 230.55 KB

Section 14 - Project Staff

Q31. Project staff

Please identify the core staff (identified in the budget), their role and what % of their time they will be working on the project.

Name (First name, Surname)	Role	% time on project	1 page CV or job description attached?
Emily Caruso	Project Leader	25	Checked
Preety Sharma	Project Manager and India Lead	80	Unchecked
Radhika Kothari	Knowledge and Development Coordinator	20	Unchecked
Aringle Hiekha	Community Lead - India	80	Unchecked

Do you require more fields?

☒ Yes

Name (First name, Surname)	Role	% time on project	1 page CV or job description attached?

Rosebell Abwonji	Kenya Lead & Knowledge Coordinator	30	Checked
Agnes Seleyian Partoip	Community Lead - Kenya	20	Checked
Youssef Rochdane	Project Assistant	20	Checked
Aarti Gor	M&E and Reporting Lead	10	Checked
Manish Panjabi	Finance Lead	5	Checked
Lorenza Arnaboldi	Safeguarding Lead	5	Checked
No Response	No Response	No Response	Unchecked
No Response	No Response	No Response	Unchecked

Please provide 1 page CVs (or job description if yet to be recruited) for the project staff listed above as a combined PDF.

 [GDF DI proposal CVs merged](#)

 16/10/2024

 12:19:08

 pdf 1.2 MB

Have you attached all project staff CVs?

☒ Yes

Section 15 - Project Partners

Q32. Project Partners

Please list all the Project Partners (including the Lead Organisation who will administer the grant and coordinate delivery of the project), clearly setting out their roles and responsibilities in the project including the extent of their engagement so far.

Lead Organisation name: Global Diversity Foundation

Website address: global-diversity.org

GDF's mission is to support changemakers to grow their ideas, projects and leadership. Since 2000, we have supported grassroots organisations to build long-term biodiversity and livelihoods field programmes in diverse global regions. We currently partner with communities on the High Atlas Cultural Landscapes programme in Morocco which is funded by Darwin Initiative. Since 2012 we run the Global Environments Network to support environmental leaders globally to amplify their impact through intensive training, mentoring and communications skills-building.

Why is this organisation the Lead Organisation, and what value to they bring to the project? (including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):

In 2022, Darwin Initiative funded our 'Mentoring GEN fellows to incubate Global South biodiversity-livelihoods initiatives' project. With this grant, Project Leader Emily Caruso led the highly successful Conservation and Communities Fellowship (CCF), which was a springboard for the conception of the Grassroots Leadership Programme (GLP) proposed here. From 2025, the CCF will be run as a biennial programme, and act as a springboard for scaling up the GLP globally.

Emily will oversee the project and support the fellows and their organisations in grant management, mentoring training and output development, supported by Youssef who leads on networking, online events and logistics. The remaining GDF team is dedicated to administrative, financial, safeguarding and M&E support and to building robust capacity among partner organisations on these topics.

International/In-country Partner ☒ International

Allocated budget (proportion or value):



Represented on the Project Board (or other management structure) ☒ Yes

Have you included a Letter of Support from this partner? ☒ Yes

Do you have partners involved in the Project?

☒ Yes

1. Partner Name: GroundUp Conservation

Website address: www.groundupconservation.com

What value does this Partner bring to the project?

GroundUp Conservation engages with grassroots organisations of South Asia, formal and informal, to enhance their capacity and compliance with national and international systems. This is currently in progress with 6+ communities across the region, in-situ, with a vision for them to design, implement and fundraise for the conservation and development issues affecting their land and people. Our engagement has shown great traction with the youth of the communities, especially enhancing their existing skills of problem solving and technical know-how of their land, thus leading to a unique pathway to grassroots developments through leadership and in-situ capacity building.

(including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):

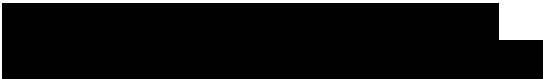
The project's India lead and project manager, Preety, belongs to Nagaland's indigenous Lotha tribe and leads GroundUp's work with the indigenous communities in the Eastern Himalayan region. Project Community lead Aringle is a Jalukie youth association participant who will be dedicated in leading the indigenous knowledge and practice integration throughout the leadership program. We have identified Akshay as the consultant to lead the work in Uttarakhand as he has extensive field experience and relationships with the nomadic pastoralist youth association of the place. Radhika's 14+ years of experience and knowledge of organisational development will be crucial for the youth associations leadership journey.

International/In-country Partner	☒ In-country
Allocated budget:	
Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure)	☒ Yes
Have you included a Letter of Support from this partner?	☒ Yes

2. Partner Name:	Jasiri Sustainable Futures
Website address:	

	Jasiri Sustainable Futures is dedicated to building partnerships that promote collaboration and create lasting, sustainable impacts in locally-led conservation projects. The team brings extensive experience in capacity building for youth in the Maasai Mara community, with a strong emphasis on increasing the participation and decision-making roles of local women and youth.
What value does this Partner bring to the project?	As the Kenya country lead, Rosebell brings over seven years of experience working with the indigenous Maasai Mara community, where she developed and managed an internship program for youth. She will oversee and monitor activities in Kenya and contribute to the development of the toolkit. Agnes Partoip, a native of the Maa community, has led programs focused on youth, education, and community sustainability within the community. As the communication liaison, Agnes will offer insights on indigenous knowledge and practices, ensuring that all learnings are well-documented, translated and shared with stakeholders.
(including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):	Given JSF's recent incorporation, the website is still under construction.
International/In-country Partner	☒ In-country
Allocated budget:	
Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure)	☒ Yes
Have you included a Letter of Support from this partner?	☒ Yes
3. Partner Name:	Indigenous youth associations form India and Kenya (6)
Website address:	N/A
What value does this Partner bring to the project?	The six youth associations, the Jalukie Students' Union Nagaland, DONetS and Van Gujjar Tribal Yuva Sangathan of India and Mara Osero Volunteer Program, Bless A Soul Foundation, and Olderkesi Youth CBO of Kenya are uniquely positioned to support this project. Holding territory-based identities concurrently embedded in community-based governing systems will help the project adapt to the realities of the three different ecological and social systems.
(including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):	The associations are all formalised and locally-rooted, providing a structure at the hyperlocal level which is key to the sustainability of this highly adaptive program especially alleviating language barriers. Their community-centric organisational approach will tactfully help disseminate the learnings while creating avenues and mentorship for more youth. These groups ensure that youth participation in the project is well-balanced and inclusive, addressing the specific challenges faced by each association.

International/In-country Partner	☒ In-country
Allocated budget:	<i>No Response</i>
Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure)	☒ Yes
Have you included a Letter of Support from this partner?	☒ Yes

4. Partner Name:	Indigenous Pedagogy Expert Organisation: Indigenous Science
Website address:	

What value does this Partner bring to the project?	Yolanda Lopez-Maldonado is an Indigenous scholar and systems thinker in integrative science for sustainability, working on understanding the social dimensions of nature conservation and with robust knowledge in the promotion and defense of the diversity of ideas, knowledge, values and forms of self-expression of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities. She possesses a deep understanding of the role of the biosphere in regulating Earth system's stability and on the role of indigenous peoples in maintaining biodiversity.
(including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):	Yolanda is recruited by the project as an indigenous pedagogy expert, to support and mentor the creation of the adaptive design process, Training of Trainers process, and community guides. She will provide ongoing expertise, review and a sounding board for the site leads as they deliver the programme in situ with indigenous youth, providing insights when they face challenges or need new perspectives on their work. She will also support with the design and delivery of the in-person event in Nagaland and the finalisation and publication of the GLP toolkit.
	The budget contribution to Indigenous Science is managed by the Lead Partner, GDF.

International/In-country Partner	☒ International
Allocated budget:	<i>No Response</i>
Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure)	☒ Yes
Have you included a Letter of Support from this partner?	☒ Yes

5. Partner Name:	Universities and Colleges: Patkai College, Tetso College and Cambridge University
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Website address:	www.patkaicollege.edu.in, www.tetsocollege.org, www.cam.ac.uk/
What value does this Partner bring to the project? (including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):	The GLP will be disseminated to the youth from indigenous communities as well as students who want to engage with communities in furthering conservation and developmental goals. In this regard, the interest of colleges such as Patkai and Tetso in Dimapur is crucial so that the learnings of GLP can be disseminated to the graduating scholars who step into the real world. Having undergone academic rigour, it will be valuable for the GLP to be endorsed and used by the college as well as the youth. The colleges have shown interest in incorporating the GLP training during their semesters which proves the need and importance of our program. These colleges will also allow for greater interaction because youth of different social groups and settings who, through the GLP process learn to co-develop, co-lead and co-implement projects - which is a goal of this project itself. The University of Cambridge, having initiated a groundbreaking course on Conservation Leadership Program since 2010, and a partner to GDF's Conservation and Communities Fellowship, is an important potential partner for the future of our project. It acknowledges the need of such experiential leadership development among Global North practitioners and students as well.
International/In-country Partner	☒ In-country
Allocated budget:	No Response
Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure)	☒ No
Have you included a Letter of Support from this partner?	☒ Yes
6. Partner Name:	Nagaland State Biodiversity Board
Website address:	nsbb.nagaland.gov.in

What value does this Partner bring to the project?	In Nagaland, the pattern of land ownership is such that the land is owned either by the village community as a whole or by a clan within the village or by individuals. There are no records for conferring ownership rights upon them, but individual rights are exclusively determined by traditions which are also referred to as "Customary laws". These Customary Laws are un-codified, and yet very effectively applied and interpreted by the traditional Village Councils in the event of any dispute. The Forest Department owns certain areas of land considered to be in its pristine state. It supports community-owned forest management through various government schemes such as Joint Forest Management and supporting bodies.
(including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):	The Nagaland State Biodiversity Board, established in 2005, is an autonomous body which looks after its administrative and financial matters aided by the Central and State government, and carries out its technical and scientific functions under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and in conformity with Naga customs and traditions. It also supported the people in developing their People's Biodiversity Registers, thereby generating local knowledge and its documentation.
	These are crucial stakeholders that will ensure larger national and state policy support to the project.
International/In-country Partner	☒ International
Allocated budget:	No Response
Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure)	☒ No
Have you included a Letter of Support from this partner?	☒ Yes

If you require more space to enter details regarding Partners involved in the project, please use the text field below.

In addition to the above partners, we have also secured a support letter from one of our current donors who firmly believe in the concept and approach and would be potential future partners for the scaling up of the GLP. The letter has been included in the compiled Support Letter PDF.

Please provide a combined PDF of all letters of support.

-  [DIR31CC-1283 - GDF proposal - Merged Support Letters](#)
-  21/10/2024
-  13:32:02
-  pdf 5.47 MB

Section 16 - Lead Partner Capability and Capacity

Q33. Lead Organisation Capability and Capacity

Has your organisation been awarded Biodiversity Challenge Funds (Darwin Initiative, Darwin Plus or Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund) funding before (for the purposes of this question, being a partner does not count)?

☒ Yes

If yes, please provide details of the most recent awards (up to 6 examples).

Reference No	Project Leader	Title
DARCC026	Emily Caruso	Mentoring GEN Fellows to incubate Global South biodiversity-livelihoods initiatives
DIR28EX\1039	Gary Martin	Ensuring the socio-ecological viability of High Atlas
CV19RR20	Gary Martin	Online local product commercialization, marketing and promotion sustains biodiversity-friendly livelihoods
27-001	Gary Martin	Conserving High Atlas agrobiodiversity to improve Amazigh livelihoods in Morocco
24-010	Gary Martin	Mobilising useful plant conservation to enhance Atlas mountain community livelihoods
20-013	Gary Martin	Medicinal plant trade, conservation and local livelihoods in southern Morocco

Have you provided the requested signed audited/independently examined accounts (or other financial evidence as indicated in the Finance Guidance)?

☒ Yes

Section 17 - Certification

Q34. Certification

If this section is incomplete the entire application will be rejected.

Please note if you do not upload the relevant materials below your application may be made ineligible.

On behalf of the

Company

of

Global Diversity Foundation

I apply for a grant of

£199,979.00

I certify that, to the best of our knowledge and belief, the statements made by us in this application are true and the information provided is correct. I am aware that this application form will form the basis of the project schedule should this application be successful.

(This form should be signed by an individual authorised by the applicant institution to submit applications and sign contracts on their behalf.)

- I have enclosed CVs for key project personnel, a cover letter, letters of support, a budget, logframe, theory of change, Safeguarding and associated policies, and project workplan.
- Our last two sets of signed audited/independently verified accounts and annual report (or other financial evidence – see Finance Guidance) are also enclosed.

Checked

Name	Emily Caruso
Position in the organisation	Strategic Advisor & Programme Lead
Signature (please upload e-signature)	 Emily Caruso signature  21/10/2024  13:28:07  png 57.16 KB
Date	21 October 2024

Please attach the requested signed audited/independently examined accounts or other financial evidence (see Finance Guidance)

 GDF 2021 -22 Annual Accounts YE Change  15/10/2024  13:19:29  pdf 922.73 KB	 GDF final 2023 accounts  15/10/2024  13:17:57  pdf 750.24 KB
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Please upload the Lead Organisation's Safeguarding Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and Code of Conduct as a PDF. Optionally you can also upload your Health, Safety and/or Security policy or Security Plan here.

 GDF Safeguarding & associated policies  16/10/2024  11:24:07  pdf 2.22 MB

Section 18 - Submission Checklist

Checklist for submission

Ensure you submit this application on	Check
I have read the Guidance, including the "Darwin Initiative Guidance", "Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Guidance", "Standard Indicator Guidance", "Risk Guidance", and "Finance Guidance".	Checked
I have read, and can meet, the current Terms and Conditions for this fund.	Checked
I have provided actual start and end dates for the project.	Checked
I have provided the budget based on UK government financial years i.e. 1 April – 31 March and in GBP.	Checked

I have checked that our budget is complete, correctly adds up and I have included the correct final total at the start of the application.	Checked
The application been signed by a suitably authorised individual (clear electronic or scanned signatures are acceptable).	Checked
I have attached the below documents to the application:	Checked
• a cover letter from the Lead Organisation.	Checked
• a budget (which meets the requirements above) using the template provided.	Checked
• a signed copy of the last 2 annual report and accounts for the Lead Organisation (or other financial evidence – see Finance Guidance), or provided an explanation if not.	Checked
• a completed workplan as a PDF using the template provided.	Checked
• a copy of the Lead Organisation's Safeguarding Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and Code of Conduct (Question 29).	Checked
• a copy of the Lead Organisation's Health, Safety and/or Security policy or Security Plan (Question 29)	Unchecked
• 1 page CV or job description for all the Project Staff identified at Question 31, including the Project Leader, or provided an explanation of why not, combined into a single PDF.	Checked
• a letter of support from the Lead Organisation and partner(s) identified at Question 32, or an explanation of why not, as a single PDF.	Checked
I have been in contact with the FCDO in the project country/ies and have included any evidence of this. If not, I have provided an explanation of why not.	Checked
The additional supporting evidence is in line with the requested evidence, amounts to a maximum of 5 sides of A4, and is combined as a single PDF.	Checked
(If copying and pasting into Flexi-Grant) I have checked that all the responses have been successfully copied into the online application form.	Checked
I have checked the Darwin Initiative website immediately prior to submission to ensure there are no late updates.	Checked
I have read and understood the Privacy Notice on the Darwin Initiative website.	Checked
Ensure you submit this application on Flexi-Grant.	

We would like to keep in touch!

Please check this box if you would be happy for the lead applicant (Flexi-Grant Account Holder) and project leader (if different) to be added to our mailing list. Through our mailing list we share updates on upcoming and current application rounds under the Biodiversity Challenge Funds. We also provide occasional updates on other UK Government activities related to biodiversity conservation and share our regular newsletter. You are free to unsubscribe at any time.

Unchecked

Data protection and use of personal data

Information supplied in the application form, including personal data, will be used by Defra as set out in the **Privacy Notice**, available from the [Forms and Guidance Portal](#).

This **Privacy Notice must be provided to all individuals** whose personal data is supplied in the application form. Some information may be used when publicising the Darwin Initiative including project details (usually title, lead organisation, project leader, location, and total grant value).