

Biodiversity Challenge Funds Projects
Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus

Half Year Report

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum of 2-3 pages** in length.

If there is any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website, please ensure you clearly highlight this.

Submission Deadline: 31st October 2024

Please note all projects that were active before 1 October 2024 are required to complete a Half Year Report.

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

Project reference	IIED ref 11461. Darwin ref DAREX011
Project title	Scaling-up equitable governance of protected and conserved areas (SEGA)
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Nepal, Madagascar, Kenya, Tanzania, Boliva
Lead Organisation	International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)
Partner(s)	RECOTFC - Nepal, MNP - Madagascar MV - Madagascar KWCA - Kenya Honeyguide - Tanzania ACEAA - Boliva
Project leader	<i>Phil Franks</i>
Report date and number (e.g. HYR1)	<i>HYR1</i>
Project website/blog/social media	Not yet established

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed project implementation timetable (if your project started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end of September).

Overall

The first three months of the project was designated an inception period during which were developed

- sub-contracts with partners and an MOU between all partners
- workplans for each partner based on the overall workplan attached to this report
- a M&E plan template that is applicable to all partners – exactly the M&E plan of the project but with more detail on means of verification

And during these first three months the Project Leader visited each partner to provide orientation and discuss and agree the country specific workplans. Implementation at country

level then started on July 1st. The following sections summarise progress on each activity in the period of July-September 2024 for those activities planned for the first half year.

A major emphasis of the period July-September has been M&E baselines and in particular the household survey for indicators 0.2-0.4 on well-being and participation in decision-making. IIED's social assessment for protected areas (SAPA) tool has been adapted for this purpose, and a detailed guidance document developed. During October the M&E officers of each project partner will receive training and mentoring and these baseline surveys in each country will start in November be completed by the end of March or not before.

By activity

1.1. Provide training, technical and financial support for the SAGE preparation and assessment phases (steps 1.1-2.4) at four demonstration sites per country (six in Madagascar)

In Tanzania and Bolivia the partners Honeyguide and ACEAA had already conducted SAGE assessments at four sites before the start of the project with support from other donors and these sites have been adopted by the project and are joining the project from the action phase of SAGE (activity 1.2).

In Kenya, the project partner KWCA selected the four landscapes that would be the focus on the project: Laikipia Conservancies Association, Baringo County Conservancies Association, Maasai Mara Wildlife Conservancies Association and Pwani Conservancies Association and supported a SAGE assessment at Chuine Conservancy in Baringo. In addition, with funding for another donor the partner support a SAGE assessment in Laikipia, and a second assessment in Baringo.

In Madagascar the small NGO partner MV with a target of just two SAGE assessments in year 1 supported a SAGE assessment in Bobamby protected area in the far north of Madagascar. A second assessment planned for Mangabe protected area in the east has been delayed because of major problem of illegal migration into the PA and rescheduled for January/February. Progress with the larger partner in Madagascar, Madagascar National Parks has been delayed by the fact that they had to recruit a new project leader who only joined in July. They are planning to support their first SAGE assessment at Andasibe Mantadia national park in December.

In Nepal the project partner RECOFTC had already supported SAGE assessments at two protected areas (Chitwan National Park buffer zone, Halkoria Collaborative Forest) before the start of the project and these two sites are joining the project from the action phase of SAGE (activity 1.2).

Overall, counting SAGE assessments at sites before April 2024 that have been adopted by the project we had by end of September 2024 a total of 12 against the annual target of 22. All partners have supported at least one SAGE assessment except for MNP in Madagascar which is significantly behind schedule owing to long delays with the contracting process and having to recruit a new project leader.

1.2. Provide training, technical support and limited financial support for the action phase of SAGE (steps 3.1-3.4) at four demonstration sites per country (six in Madagascar)

In Tanzania activity 1.2 has started at two sites – Liwale WMA and Uyumbu WMA with the prioritisation and planning workshop (SAGE step 3.1). All the other partners are yet to start activity 1.2 but will be moving on to this activity from mid November except for MNP which as noted above has yet to start activity 1.1.

1.4 Develop and test tools to improve SAGE, notably for action planning (step 3.2) and monitoring progress (step 3.4), and update the SAGE manual

With the preparation and assessment phases of SAGE, comprehensive guidance was published in June 2023. There is as yet no such guidance for the action phase of SAGE (steps 3.1-3.4). A

first draft should have been produced by IIED by the end of August but has now been produced and is currently being piloted before being shared with project partners in mid-November.

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

Developing and signing of the contracts with each of the six partners has taken a couple of months longer than expected. This has been partly due to the rigour of IIED's due diligence processes that require partners to produce a wide range of documents including safeguarding policies that are still work in progress for some. In such cases it might be better to have a system of provisional approval that would be confirmed once all documents are in place, rather than incurring major delays in the project start-up. Ill health of the IIED project manager was also a significant constraint on getting contracts completed and signed off and first financial transfers made.

The other challenge that has delayed start-up with MNP in Madagascar until August, and ACEAA in Bolivia until September (rather than starting on July 1st) has been the need to recruit new project leaders.

One other significant constraint has been that IIED's full time technical support officer who should provide most of the technical support to project partners can only start work in January rather than, as initially expected in September. This has been a deliberate choice by us in IIED as the candidate is just completing here PhD based on SAGE assessments in a number of countries and in-depth research in Bolivia. With fluent French and Spanish, she is the ideal candidate but not having this person in place has put a heavy burden on the project leader and delayed some IIED-led activities.

The combination of these three constraints means that the project is, depending on the country, between 2 and 3.5 months behind schedule with, as a consequence, a substantial underspend at this point in time which is likely to continue through to the end of year 1. We can catch up in year two but to do so will need to be able to carryover the underspend. We will submit a change request to this end by the end of November.

3. Have any of these issues been discussed with NIRAS and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with NIRAS:	No
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Formal Change Request submitted:	No
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Received confirmation of change acceptance:	No
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Change Request reference if known: *If you submitted a financial Change Request, you can find the reference in the email from NIRAS confirming the outcome*

4a. Please confirm your actual spend in this financial year to date (i.e. from 1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024)

Actual spend: £ [REDACTED]

4b. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g. more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this financial year (ending 31 March 2025)?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

4c. If you expect and underspend, then you should consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a re-budget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a re-budget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes to your project if necessary. Please DO NOT send these in the same email as your report.

NB: if you expect an underspend, do not claim anything more than you expect to spend this financial year.

5. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to BCF management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

No further issues to raise at this stage

6. Please use this section to respond to any feedback provided when your project was confirmed, or from your most recent annual report. If your project was subject to an Overseas Security and Justice Assistance assessment please use this space to comment on any changes to international human rights risks, and to address any additional mitigations outlined in your offer letters. Please provide the comment and then your response. If you have already provided a response, please confirm when.

Checklist for submission

For New Projects (i.e. starting after 1st April 2024)	
Have you responded to any additional feedback (other than caveats) received in the letter you received to say your application was successful which requested response at HYR (including safeguarding points)? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	
If not already submitted, have you attached your risk register ?	
For Existing Projects (i.e. started before 1st April 2024)	
Have you responded to feedback from your latest Annual Report Review ? You should respond in section 6, annexes other requested materials as appropriate.	
For All Projects	
Include your project reference in the subject line of submission email.	
Submit to BCFs-Report@niras.com .	

Have you clearly highlighted any confidential information within the report that you do not wish to be shared on our website?	n/a
Have you reported against the most up to date information for your project ?	
Please ensure claim forms and other communications for your project are not included with this report.	

ANNEX 1: Project workplan year 1

	Activity	No. of months	Year 1 (24/25)				Year 2 (25/26)				Year 3 (26/27)				Year 4 (27/28)			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Output 1																		
1.1	Provide training, technical and financial support for the SAGE preparation and assessment phases (steps 1.1-2.4) at four demonstration sites per country (six in Madagascar)	12																
1.2	Provide training, technical support and limited financial support for the action phase of SAGE (steps 3.1-3.4) at four demonstration sites per country (six in Madagascar)	36																
1.3	Provide training and technical support (but not financial support) for the use of SAGE (steps 1.1-3.4) at four additional sites (six in Madagascar)	39																
1.4	Develop and test tools to improve SAGE, notably for action planning (step 3.2) and monitoring progress (step 3.4), and update the SAGE manual	21																
1.5	Develop and deliver training on key governance and equity issues for actors at each site, e.g. respect for rights, participation in decision making, transparency/accountability and benefit sharing, grievance mechanisms, leadership	18																
Output 2																		
2.1	Facilitate a community of practice at national, regional or landscape level for peer-to-peer knowledge sharing and motivation, including thematic workshops, exchange visits, social media and other	39																

ANNEX 2: SEGA Country-level M&E plan

Indicator	Information source (P= primary, S=secondary)	Information collection			Information compilation, analysis, reporting		
		Method	Frequency (incl baseline if needed)	Who	Method	Frequency	Who
Outcome level							
0.1. Number of PCAs with improved governance/ equity (governance outcome)	P: Key informants	Outcome harvesting (OH) (including key informant interviews (KIIs))	2 years after start of the action phase. SAGE assessment is the baseline	Local consultant or project M&E officer with technical support as needed from IIED	Quantitative and basic qualitative analysis (eg using coding)	Within a month of data collection at each of the PCAs	Project M&E officer with technical support as needed from IIED
0.2. Number of IP&LCs with increased participation in local management organisations (governance and social outcome)	P: at least 100 local people per site per country (50 men, 50 women)	Household survey with KOBO toolbox at two of the demonstration sites where taking action starts in year one. Impact evaluation is based on a repeat of survey plus focus group discussions for sharing results with communities and further enquiries	Baseline by the end of December 2024.. Repeat assessment 3 years later	Local consultant	SAPA-SAGE app	Within a month of data collection at each site	Project M&E officer with technical support as needed from IIED
0.3. Number of households reporting improved livelihoods, disaggregated by household well-being status and ethnicity (social outcome)	Same as 0.2,	Same as 0.2,	Same as 0.2,	Same as 0.2,	Same as 0.2,	Same as 0.2,	Same as 0.2,
0.4. Number of IP&LCs with strengthened (recognised/clarified) tenure and/or rights (governance outcome)	Same as 0.2, plus S: relevant policies, plans, laws	Same as 0.2,	Same as 0.2,	Same as 0.2,	Same as 0.2,	Same as 0.2,	Same as 0.2,

Indicator	Information source (P= primary, S=secondary)	Information collection			Information compilation, analysis, reporting		
		Method	Frequency (incl baseline if needed)	Who	Method	Frequency	Who
0.5. Percentage reduction in incidents of illegal activities at sites that started in years 1 and 2 (ecological outcome)	S: PCA law enforcement records (eg from SMART monitoring) P: key informants	Review PCA law enforcement records for the site Outcome harvesting on a 20% sample of sites which retrospectively creates a baseline.	Baseline within 9 months of project start, 2 years after the start of the SAGE action phase	Local consultant	Quantitative and basic qualitative analysis (eg using coding)	Within a month of data collection at each of the PCAs	Local consultant
0.6. Increase in hectares of habitat (in this case PCAs) under sustainable management practices (ecological outcome)	S: PCA management records and remote sensing data (eg from Global Forest Watch)	Review documents and remote sensing of vegetation cover	In the last 6 months of the project	Project M&E officer	GIS	Within a month of data collection at each of the PCAs	Project M&E officer with technical support as needed from IIED
0.7. National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans including measures for more equitable PCA governance	P : roughly 10 Key Informants S: NBSAP documents	Reviewing NBSAPs to check for mentions of promotion of equitable governance aspects or principles or tools (including SAGE), followed by KIIs to assess attributions	First review of NBSAPs in November 2024 to establish a baseline followed by a second review of NBSAPs and KIIs at the end of the project	M&E officer at one partner in each country, with technical support as needed from IIED	Quantitative and basic qualitative analysis (eg using coding)	End of the project	Project M&E officer with technical support as needed from IIED
0.8. NOT RELEVANT AT COUNTRY LEVEL							
0.9. Number of PCAs interested in using SAGE in addition to the 16 supported by the project	P: Email or WhatsApp messages from other organisations	Desk review of messages	End of year 2, End of project	Project M&E officer	Quantitative and basic qualitative analysis (eg using coding)	End of year 2, End of project	Project M&E officer
0.10. Funding for SAGE assessment and action from sources other than Darwin	P: key informants	Key informant interviews to identify funding that has been secured for	End of years 2 and 4	Project M&E officer	Quantitative and basic qualitative analysis (eg using coding)	End of year 2, End of project	Project M&E officer

Indicator	Information source (P= primary, S=secondary)	Information collection			Information compilation, analysis, reporting		
		Method	Frequency (incl baseline if needed)	Who	Method	Frequency	Who
		SAGE in addition to that from the project.					
0.11. Number of people from key national and local stakeholders completing structured and relevant training	P: Reports by project staff of every training event	Review these reports	Monthly	Project M&E officer	Quantitative and basic qualitative analysis (eg using coding)	Monthly	Project M&E officer
0.12. Number of local/ national organisations with improved capability and capacity	P: key informants from each organisation	Key informant interviews	End of years 2 and 4	Project M&E officer	Quantitative and basic qualitative analysis (eg using coding)	End of year 2, End of project	Project M&E officer
Output level							
1.1 By month 48, all 3 phases of SAGE (preparation, assessment, taking action) successfully implemented in at least 8 sites per country	P: key informants - field staff of country partner or site-level partners	Key informant interviews	End of every year	Project M&E officer	Quantitative and basic qualitative analysis (eg using coding)	End of every year	Project M&E officer
1.2 By month 24, 4 sites per country have started a SAGE process that they are themselves funding	P: key informants - field staff of country partner or site-level partners	Key informant interviews	End of every year	Project M&E officer	Quantitative and basic qualitative analysis (eg using coding)	End of every year	Project M&E officer
1.3 By month 24, at least 4 people per country certified by IIED as having knowledge and skills to lead all three phases of SAGE - preparation, assessment, action	Key informants	Key informant interviews	Month 24	IIED TSRO	Quantitative and basic qualitative analysis (eg using coding)	Month 24	IIED TSRO
2.1. In each country, 10 men and 10 women engaged in peer-to-peer knowledge sharing by end year 1, and 25 + 25 by end of year 3	S: Report of the annual meeting S: WhatsApp traffic on the SAGE users WhatsApp group	Review report Review WhatsApp traffic	End of every year End of every year	Project M&E officer Project M&E officer	Quantitative and basic qualitative analysis (eg using coding)	End of every year	Project M&E officer

Indicator	Information source (P= primary, S=secondary)	Information collection			Information compilation, analysis, reporting		
		Method	Frequency (incl baseline if needed)	Who	Method	Frequency	Who
2.2. At least 200 posts in each country on social media and other learning platforms on improving PCA governance	S: Relevant social media platforms and newspaper articles	Review social media platforms and look out for articles in newspapers	Monthly	Project M&E officer	Quantitative and basic qualitative analysis (eg using coding)	End of every year	Project M&E officer
2.3. In each country at least ten requests by actors from other PCAs and national level to visit PCAs where SAGE is used	S: Email or WhatsApp messages	Review the messages	End of every year	Project M&E officer	Quantitative and basic qualitative analysis (eg using coding)	End of every year	Project M&E officer
2.4. Four guides per country for improving PCA governance and equity on four specific topics	S: the guides	Review the guides	Just before each on is published	Project M&E officer	Quantitative and basic qualitative analysis (eg using coding)	Just before each on is published	Project M&E officer
3.1. Number, nature and quality of other publications produced by country partners	S: publications supported by the project, data on hard copies distributed and download data	Review publications and usage data	End of every year	Project M&E officer	Quantitative and basic qualitative analysis (eg using coding)	End of every year	Project M&E officer
3.2. Number, nature and quality of country partners' publications for a national audience on impact of SAGE on PCA governance, equity, social and conservation outcomes, policy recommendations (sub-set of 3.1 above)	S: publications supported by the project, data on hard copies distributed and download data	Review publications and usage data	End of every year	Project M&E officer	Quantitative and basic qualitative analysis (eg using coding)	End of every year	Project M&E officer
3.3. Presentations of project results and experience at relevant national, regional and global events and audience reaction	P: brief reports of all meetings where project results presented	Review reports	End of every year	Project M&E officer	Quantitative and basic qualitative analysis (eg using coding)	End of every year	Project M&E officer