



WWF

NP

2017

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a large bundle of rice seedlings. The person is wearing a red long-sleeved shirt and an orange apron. The background is a lush green rice field. The image is used as a background for the report cover.

WWF NEPAL LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS STRATEGIC PLAN (2017-2021)



LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS

Majority of people living in and around conservation landscapes in Nepal are dependent on natural resources such as land, water, and forests and their constituents. Natural resources are inherently associated with people's basic needs, well-being, and social and cultural identity. While these people have indigenous and local knowledge about conservation and sustainable utilization of natural resources, increasing unplanned anthropogenic activities and climate change is weakening this bond between natural resources and dependent communities.

Changing lifestyles, limited livelihoods opportunity, fragmented natural resources, market driven business, and a remittance-based consumer economy have accelerated people's ambitions creating challenges for sustainable use of resources. Likewise, socio-cultural, socio-economic, socio-political and gender-based exclusion practices, together with poor institutional governance have reduced community and household resilience to cope with unexpected vulnerability (shocks, stress and seasonality) generated from wildlife and extreme impacts of climate change.

These direct and underlying causes eventually affect sustainable livelihoods of local people, cause biodiversity loss, habitat degradation and economic deprivation which undermine their right to live in a healthy and safe environment.¹

¹ United Nations Commission on Human Rights Resolution 2003/71 on human rights and the environment: reaffirms the linkages between protection of the environment and protection of the human rights, 2003.



UNDERSTANDING THE LINKAGE BETWEEN POVERTY AND CONSERVATION

It is important for conservation practitioners and stakeholders to understand the linkage between poverty and conservation while drafting strategies for livelihoods and social safeguards so that generating additional pressure on biodiversity is prevented. People living in the fringes of national parks are often poor and marginalized due to which they are engaged in unsustainable use of forests and other natural resources for their livelihoods.

Social exclusion and marginalization are a result of discriminatory laws and practices which limit poor peoples' access to available resources. Similarly, poverty sometimes is also a result of poor environmental and institutional governance, unemployment, lack of human-responsive policy and regulations, competitive market, price fluctuations, political unrest, forced migration etc. These factors generate more pressure on the natural capital stock, disempower and exclude communities trapping them further in a vicious poverty cycle.

The Sustainable Livelihoods program of WWF Nepal addresses the biodiversity challenge of these poor, climate-vulnerable and socially excluded people by uplifting their livelihoods and ensuring their social safeguards.



MAINSTREAMING LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS INTO WWF NEPAL STRATEGIC PLAN (2017-2021)

WWF Nepal's Livelihoods and Social Safeguard Strategy is based on WWF Nepal Strategic Plan (2017-21), Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) Strategic Plan (2015-25), and Sustainable Development Goals (2015-30). It integrates livelihoods complexity and its underlying causes with broader biodiversity outcomes by balancing conservation and livelihoods improvement, and gender and social inclusion to safeguard people's fundamental right to live in a healthy and safe environment.

Likewise, diverse range of interventions have been designed and integrated within WWF Nepal's Strategic Plan, focusing on issues, spaces, species and livelihood interventions. A major aim of the Livelihoods and Social Safeguard Strategy is to enable achievements of biodiversity conservation with effective community stewardship, diversifying communities' natural resources-based livelihood options and improving their livelihoods in an equitable and inclusive way.



GOALS:

THE LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS STRATEGIC PLAN OF WWF NEPAL FOCUSES ON TWO MAJOR AREAS:

1. Improving Livelihoods of people dependent on natural resources particularly water and forest for agriculture and their day-to-day subsistence
2. Safeguarding Livelihoods of the people vulnerable to human wildlife conflict, climate change impacts, social and geographical exclusion and poor resource governance.

1: IMPROVING LIVELIHOODS

Some of the major causes of resource dependency are poverty, limited employment opportunities and social exclusion. Similarly, a domestic subsistence economy, over-extraction of natural resources, poaching, corruption, and forced migration have created pressures on natural resources. Under the Livelihood and Social Safeguard Strategy of WWF Nepal, livelihoods and income of socially excluded and wildlife and climate vulnerable communities are aimed to be improved through range of interventions and strategies developed from evidence-based learnings while ensuring natural capital bases aren't impacted negatively.

KEY INTERVENTIONS

Creating green enterprises and income generation opportunities through forest resources, smart agricultural practices, agroforestry, skill-based non-farm activities and water efficient technologies. These interventions will help the communities generate income, reduce their dependency on natural resources and contribute to the overall quality of life in the long term.

STRATEGIES

- Creating employment opportunities from forests, agriculture, eco-tourism, agroforestry, skills-based labor and small scale enterprises
- Promoting smart agricultural practices and water efficient technologies

KEY OUTCOMES

- 3,000 households benefitted from improved livelihoods assets and its productive use
- 5,000 full-time employment/economic engagement opportunity generated of which 2,000 will be from women and excluded groups
- 20 forest, agriculture, eco-tourism and off-farm-based green enterprise established out of which five will be led by women and excluded groups
- 3,000 households adopted Smart Agriculture Practice
- At least one private and public sector partner engaged in livelihoods and safeguard intervention





2: SAFEGUARDING LIVELIHOODS

Ambitious wildlife targets such as doubling the tiger numbers, restoring rhino population to its historical size and increasing snow leopard population have a direct impact on human-wildlife conflict. People living in buffer zones, wildlife corridors and around dense national forests are already facing crop raiding, livestock depredation, and loss of human lives and property. These incidents will but increase as above mentioned conservation targets are met, eventually resulting in communities' grievances and dissatisfaction. Likewise, local people commuting through these wildlife-prone areas risk their everyday lives to get access to education, employment, health services, etc. To decrease disparity and vulnerability, and ensure safeguarding of communities' fundamental human and socio-cultural rights, livelihoods safeguard standards and appropriate strategies, interventions and related policies will be implemented.

KEY INTERVENTIONS

Identify baseline for climate/wildlife vulnerable sites and socially-excluded groups to engage them in viable conservation and livelihoods opportunities.

Develop and mainstream Social Safeguard Standards manual, Community Forests Development guideline and other existing gender and social policies and directives of Government of Nepal and WWF.

Promote relief mechanism through insurance schemes (covering livestock, crop, education, health, etc).

Introduce global standards formats such as Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC), Environmental and Social Standard Management Plan (ESMP), Gender Responsive Budget Planning & Auditing and Human Rights Auditing while addressing issues related to social safeguards.

STRATEGIES

- Mainstreaming of pro-poor conservation approaches, Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI)/Gender Responsive Budget (GRB) Planing and Auditing Human Wildlife Conflict Manual
- Implementation of Conservation Initiative for Human Right (CIHR)
- Adoption of Good Governance Principle

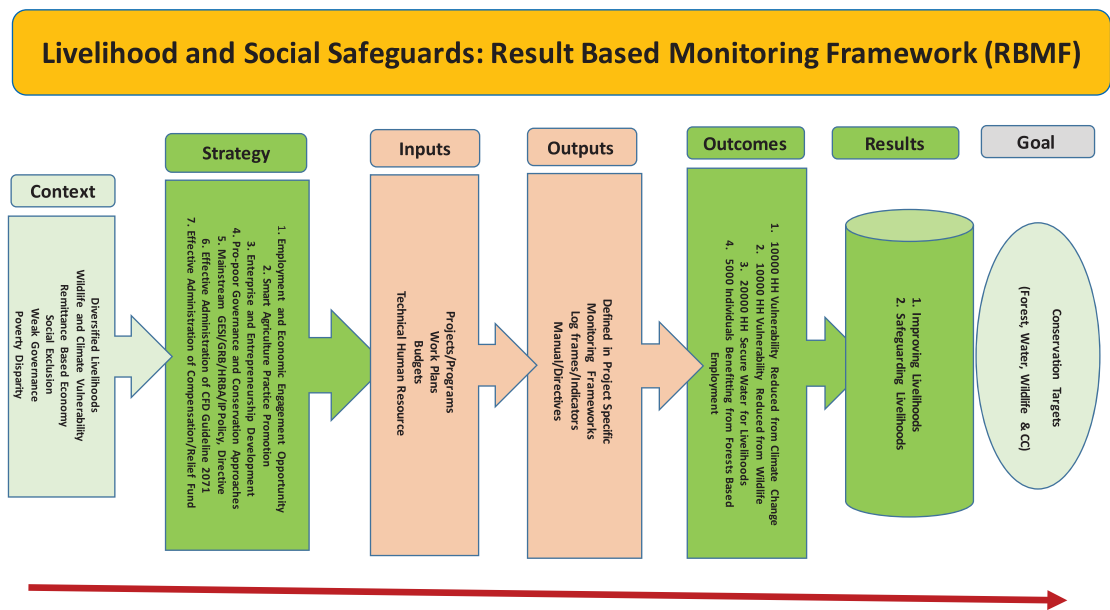
KEY OUTCOMES:

- GESI responsive Budget reached by 30%
- Vulnerability of 10,000 households reduced from wildlife shocks, stress and trend
- Vulnerability of 5,000 households reduced from climate shocks and stress
- 20 natural resource management institutions practice GESI, GRB, Human Rights Based Approach and Social Safeguards standards

MONITORING AND EVALUATION:

A Results-Based Monitoring Framework (RBMF) will clarify the linkages and relevancy of recommended strategies and interventions in achieving broader conservation targets. WWF Nepal's earlier strategic plan explicitly referenced the livelihoods component while the recent strategic plan (2017-21) has integrated livelihoods and social safeguards results within broader conservation targets. Therefore, it is necessary to establish linkages between livelihoods and conservation strategies and interventions to ensure both results are simultaneously achieved. A results-based monitoring framework (see figure: 1) to measure livelihoods and social safeguards outcomes would be useful, as it will show the results chain from input to impact level that the strategic plan aims for by the end of 2021. This framework would also clearly disaggregate the role of different stakeholders and human resources, and clarify strategy relevancy, broader livelihoods outcomes, and linkages with broader conservation targets.

Figure: 1



Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature

www.wwfnepal.org

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