Evaluation of livelihoods programming in Biodiversity Challenge Funds projects

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Acronyms

BCFs	Biodiversity Challenge Funds
D+	Darwin Plus
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (UK)
DFID	Department for International Development (UK, 1997-2020; now part of FCDO)
DI	Darwin Initiative
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (UK)
GDP	Gross domestic product
IWT	Illegal wildlife trade
IWTCF	Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation, and learning
NTFP	Non-timber forest products
ODA	Official Development Assistance
TOC	Theory of change
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society

Cover photo by OG Mpango (@ogmpango)

Glossary

Alternative livelihoods	The promotion of a new livelihood strategy with the intention of it replacing another, less desirable livelihood strategy from an environmental sustainability perspective.
Commercial viability	The potential for a business or livelihood strategy to be financially profitable and endure over time (independent of donor subsidy).
Livelihood	The means of securing the necessities of life, often through income-generating activities within markets for goods and services.
Market	A system within which goods and services are traded.
Market actor	Any individual or organisation in the **market system**, be they **value chain** actors, or actors in the wider enabling environment of **rules** and **supporting functions**.
Market system	A way of conceptualising markets as complex systems made up of **value chains** plus a wider enabling environment of **rules** and **supporting functions**.
Market systems development	An approach to economic development that seeks to facilitate lasting change in complex market systems by working through existing market actors.
Rules (*of a market system*)	The formal and informal institutions that govern the market, including, e.g., policies, laws, regulations, traditions, and social norms.
Supporting function (*of a market system*)	The functions that **value chain** actors require to do their jobs, including, e.g., access to finance, skills, knowledge, technology, infrastructure, transport, and utilities.
Sustainable livelihoods approach / framework	An approach to rural development with an emphasis on individual livelihood assets and capabilities.
Value chain	The chain along which goods and services are traded from production through to consumption, including producers, traders, processors, retailers, and consumers.
Value chain approach / development	An approach to economic development focused on strengthening value chain linkages and better incorporating poor and marginalised people into formal value chains.

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Executive summary

Introduction

Today, livelihoods programming is central to conservation practice, driven by a growing recognition of the complex interdependencies between global goals relating to poverty reduction, climate change, and biodiversity conservation. Across the UK Government's Biodiversity Challenge Funds (BCFs; including the Darwin Initiative, the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, and Darwin Plus), livelihoods interventions have become increasingly common in grantee projects. The present study provides an evaluation of this programming, comparing performance with current best practice in the economic development sector, and making recommendations for future programming and fund management.

Note on terminology

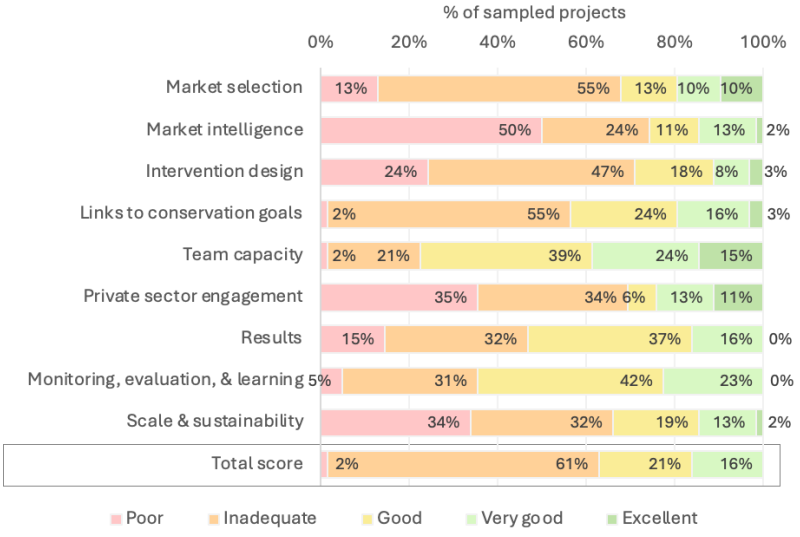
Throughout this report we use **"livelihoods"** to refer to **income-generating livelihoods strategies** (e.g., farming, fishing, or forestry). While important to BCF, broader aspects of livelihoods and poverty reduction - such as health, education, and general wellbeing - are beyond the scope of this study, as are non-income generating livelihood strategies such as subsistence agriculture.

Methodology

For the study, we randomly sampled 62 of 150 completed BCFs projects with goals relating to income-generating livelihood strategies funded between 2015 and 2020, stratified across the seven most common focal markets – agriculture, agroforestry, beekeeping, fisheries, non-timber forest products, livestock, and tourism. We designed an evaluation rubric based on best practice from the economic development sector and key informant interviews with BCFs management, focusing on nine priority dimensions for programming, including (1) market selection, (2) market intelligence, (3) intervention design, (4) links to conservation goals, (5) team capacity, (6) market actor engagement, (7) results, (8) monitoring, evaluation, and learning, and (9) scale and sustainability. The analysis drew evidence from project documents including proposals, final reports submitted by projects, and final report reviews conducted by independent reviewers. We scored each dimension on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent) and calculated an overall livelihoods score (1 to 5) as an unweighted average across the dimensions.

Findings

Overall results are summarised in the figure to the right. Most of the reviewed projects applied a model of livelihoods programming that does not reflect the latest best practice in the economic development sector. Interventions are often characterised by a lack of market analysis and limited private sector engagement, relying on "direct delivery" aid models (whereby the project directly provides inputs or services, which can lead to donor dependency and limited potential for scale or sustainability of



results) rather than systemic approaches (which seek to leverage lasting change at scale beyond a project's lifetime). While more than half achieve their logframe targets, these results tend to be limited in scope, with a high degree of uncertainty around the likelihood of results enduring beyond the life of the grant. Moreover, the links from livelihoods interventions to conservation goals are often based on tenuous assumptions that remain untested by projects.

Despite this, around one in six projects took approaches that were comparable to high quality programming in the development sector today, demonstrating a strong understanding of the focal market, deploying evidence-based interventions to unlock market constraints, and facilitating lasting change in incentives and behaviour through close relationships with private sector partners. While these projects remain the minority, enough exist to give confidence that sophisticated, ambitious approaches to livelihoods programming are possible in a conservation context, even with the limited time and budget constraints of BCFs grants.

Breaking results down by focal market, we find that projects were more successful when working in large, well-established markets (e.g., agriculture, fisheries) than in more niche markets (e.g., beekeeping, non-timber forest products). Given the high prevalence of the latter, there is a clear need to sharpen the focus on commercial viability of supported livelihood strategies in conservation programming.

The key success factors emerging from the evaluation are below condensed into five key points, with "red flags" noted to support appraisal of future grant applications.

Success factors in proposals	Red flags for reviewers
(1) A systemic approach rooted in market analysis and diagnostics: Evidence of potential commercial viability of the proposed livelihood strategy/business model. Good understanding of market structure and functioning. Interventions designed to address priority market constraints. *Evaluation rubric dimensions: (1) Market selection, (2) Market intelligence, (3) Intervention design*	• No evidence of a viable market. • No discussion of how the market functions or what the key constraints are. • Intervention design defaults to training and/or equipment provision without supporting evidence.
(2) Clear links to conservation goals: Robust theory of change, including key underlying assumptions, clearly maps the causal path between markets and livelihoods work and conservation outcomes, with plans to assess this via MEL. *Evaluation rubric dimensions: (4) Links to conservation goals*	• Lack of consideration of the specific incentives that need to be in place to shift behaviour from the status quo to more conservation-oriented outcomes.
(3) Facilitating lasting change through private sector partnerships: Private sector partners included on the bidding team and/or plans to collaborate with market actors (beyond immediate beneficiaries) during implementation. *Evaluation rubric dimensions: (5) Team capacity, (6) Market engagement*	• No private sector partners on the core team. • No proposed collaboration with private sector partners (beyond immediate beneficiaries) during implementation.

(4) Focus on incentives & behaviour: Project strategy focuses on facilitating long-term shifts in incentives and behaviour, paying attention to commercial viability of supported livelihood strategies / business models relative to the opportunity cost of alternative practices. *Evaluation rubric dimensions: (7) Results, (9) Scale and sustainability*	• Vague exit strategy / reliance on generalisations ("improved capacity"). • Lack of consideration of the specific incentives needed to sustain results beyond the project's lifetime.
(5) Strong monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems: MEL framework based on detailed theory of change mapping activities to outcomes without leaps of logic. Logframe features indicators of behaviour and incentives, including commercial performance of supported livelihood strategies/business models. Attention given to additionality and attribution, plus potential negative outcomes/displacement effects. *Evaluation rubric dimensions: (8) Monitoring, evaluation, and learning*	• Logframe/TOC includes leaps from activities (e.g., farmer training) to outcomes (e.g., income) without consideration of interim steps. • Simple before/after monitoring of outcomes (e.g., income, forest cover) without attempts to attribute effects to specific interventions. • No commercial indicators (e.g., sales, profitability, product quality).

The above success factors should, however, be caveated by a recognition that these more sophisticated approaches were typically found in the work of large international NGOs. While raising the standard of livelihoods programming should be an aspiration for BCFs, it will be important to avoid doing so in a way that only larger, better-resourced applicants can take advantage of, given the general priority across BCFs of encouraging more successful applications from local organisations across the Global South. In addition, it should be noted that any additional requirements or recommendations for grantees should not come at the expense of nimble, innovative implementation. While the best market development programming in the development sector is rooted in sound market intelligence, the risk of "paralysis by analysis" should be noted, particularly in the context of already thinly stretched challenge fund grantees. A range of more detailed recommendations for both projects and fund management are included at the end of the report.

Limitations and areas for further research

The main limitation of the present study was the desk-based approach, reliant on project documentation rather than evidence from the field or *ex-post* follow up with project staff and stakeholders. While this approach enabled a broad sample and comprehensive overview of markets and livelihoods programming in the BCFs, a more nuanced understanding would doubtless have been possible if the document review had been complemented with interviews with implementing teams. As well as capturing these opinions, future research should seek to assess the critical question of scale and sustainability of results via legacy evaluations and the often-untested hypotheses around impact pathways between markets and livelihoods results and conservation outcomes.

1. Introduction

Note on terminology: Throughout this report we use **"livelihoods"** to refer to **income-generating livelihoods strategies** (e.g., farming, fishing, or forestry) [1]. While important to BCFs, broader aspects of livelihoods and poverty reduction - such as health, education, and general wellbeing - are beyond the scope of this study, as are non-income generating livelihood strategies such as subsistence agriculture.

The UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (Defra) Biodiversity Challenge Funds (BCFs), comprising the Darwin Initiative (DI), the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund (IWTCF), and Darwin Plus (D+), have collectively disbursed some £239 million in grants to over 1,400 projects in 159 countries and UK Overseas Territories since the launch of the Darwin Initiative at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, making the Funds one of the largest and longest-running conservation initiatives in the world.

In recent years, livelihoods interventions (e.g., support for small enterprise development, sustainable agriculture, or tourism) have become central to many BCFs-supported projects, particularly since the requirement for some BCFs grants to be Official Development Assistance (ODA) compliant (i.e., contributing to economic development and human welfare) began around 2011. This shift reflects broader global trends of increased alignment of conservation and development goals and programming, seeking to simultaneously address the interlinked challenges of biodiversity loss, climate change, and poverty.

This report provides an assessment of the status and quality of livelihoods programming to date in BCFs projects, drawing on best practice in the economic development field to make recommendations for future design, selection, and management of grants. The remainder of this section outlines the importance of livelihoods in conservation, including the specific context of the BCFs, as well as a review of current best practice in livelihoods programming in the development sector. Section 2 sets out our methodology, including the evaluation rubric developed to assess BCFs projects. Results are presented in Section 3, followed by a discussion of limitations and areas for further research in Section 4, and conclusions and recommendations for both projects and BCFs management in Section 5.

1.1 Livelihoods and conservation

Livelihoods are of central importance to conservation programming. Biodiversity loss and climate change are being overwhelmingly driven by unsustainable economic behaviour in response to market-based incentives. Within these markets, the livelihoods of billions of people (particularly those in rural areas) remain heavily natural resource dependent, often concentrated in regions that are also home to the most precious remaining biodiversity on Earth. As economic activity and population growth transform these landscapes, excessive natural resource extraction undermines both conservation and development goals. Structural inequities exclude many of the global poor from the prosperity offered by formal markets, keeping many trapped in cycles of poverty and unsustainable natural resource extraction.

These interrelationships are increasingly recognised in conservation programming, with most projects now incorporating livelihoods objectives, seeking to incentivise pro-conservation behaviour through a recognition of the importance of sustainable livelihoods to both development and conservation goals. As well as basic ethical considerations, ensuring that conservation initiatives do not stand in the way of human development (as

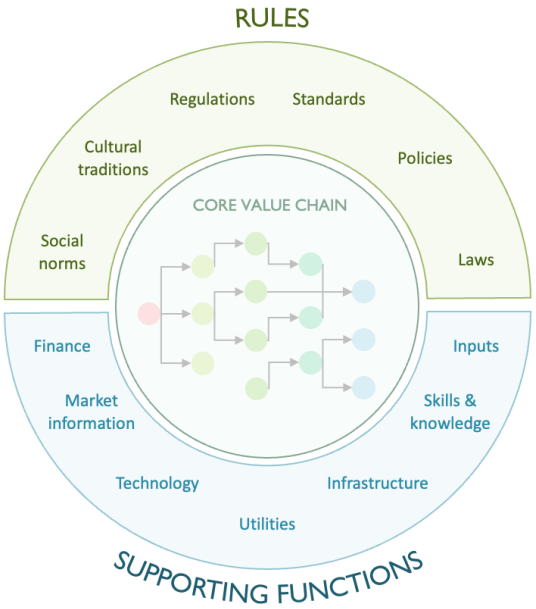
exclusionary "fortress conservation" approaches have tended to do) can help to strengthen relationships between conservation practitioners and local communities, further building support for conservation work.

1.2 Best practice in economic development

If conservation projects are to successfully promote sustainable livelihoods, it will be important to learn lessons from the long history of programming in the economic development sector. Over the decades, development practice has undergone several paradigm shifts in response to advances in underlying theory and scrutiny of the results delivered.

The initial post-war period focused primarily on macro-level factors such as trade, investment, and infrastructure, with gross domestic product (GDP) being the ultimate benchmark of success. In the 1980s and 1990s, the advent of "**sustainable development**" and "**human development**" concepts put individual freedom and capabilities centre stage, embracing a broader view of "poverty" than GDP alone, shifting the focus from the macro to the micro (Anand and Sen 1994). The **sustainable livelihoods approach** emerged from this thinking in the 1990s, focusing on the conversion of a range of capital assets (human, social, natural, physical, and financial) through livelihood strategies (such as farming and fishing) to livelihood outcomes (such as improved income, health, education, wellbeing) (Chambers and Conway 1992; Scoones 1998). The influence of this model of community-based rural development remains widespread in programming today, including in many community-based conservation initiatives (several BCFs projects evaluated for the present study cite the approach) (Natarajan et al. 2022).

Figure 1: The "market system" concept.



Between these development models, however, a lack of demonstrable results (in terms of sustained, tangible improvements in poverty reduction and human wellbeing) has led to a legitimacy crisis in the sector, with aid dependency seen as hindering meaningful sustainable development across the Global South while upholding neo-colonial power imbalances (Doucouliagos and Paldam 2009; Easterly 2002). Both the macro and micro

approaches have been criticised for failing to grasp the importance of meso-level politics, power, institutions, and complexity that shape the functioning of interconnected global markets (Ferrand, Gibson, and Scott 2004; Natarajan et al. 2022).

In the economic development field of the early 2000s, this led to the emergence of "**value chain development**", and "**market systems development**" approaches (Albu 2008; Ramalingam et al. 2008). The former sought to better integrate the rural poor into national and international value chains[1], adopting a more business-savvy approach to development that also sought to address the issue of scale beyond local communities (Donovan et al. 2015). Market systems development goes a step further to see markets as complex systems made up of value chains plus a wider **enabling environment** of **rules** (the formal and informal institutions that govern markets, including laws, policies, and traditions) and **supporting functions** (the services required by value chain actors to do their jobs, such as access to finance, skills, and technology) (Figure 1) (The Springfield Centre 2015). Through this vision of rural livelihoods as embedded in wider markets, and markets in turn as complex systems that go beyond simple financial exchange to include institutions, culture, and power, a more holistic approach to economic development can be taken.

Each of these approaches have well-documented guidelines on best practice, following a full project cycle from project design through implementation and monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) - analogous to the Conservation Standards in the conservation field (CMP 2020; The Springfield Centre 2015; USAID 2008, 2024). The key recommendations of these guidelines are synthesised below, which in turn informs our rubric design in Section 2.

Project design involves careful **analysis and diagnostics** to inform the selection of relevant markets to intervene in, and the identification of the root causes (or "**systemic constraints**") behind market failure (i.e., how the market is currently failing with respect to development goals):

- **Select markets based on a combination of relevance to project goals plus feasibility of intervention**. If your goal is reducing rural poverty, the target market should be one which the rural poor are already engaged in (or have potential to engage in). Feasibility of intervention should focus on commercial prospects – is the market, and the potential role of your target group, competitive, profitable, and resilient to shocks?

  e.g., Community members at the project site may be involved in horticulture, handicrafts, and mining. Intervention in handicrafts markets may be ruled out due to informality, low profitability, and limited growth potential. Intervention in the mining sector may be ruled out due to high social and environmental risks, plus intractable corruption challenges. Horticulture may prove the most promising market to expand smallholder engagement with high-value export markets.

- **Conduct market analysis to diagnose systemic constraints as focal points for intervention**. Map the market system – who are the main actors in the value chain and wider enabling environment of rules and supporting functions? What are the relationships between different actors? What are the market trends and dynamics? Who holds power, and who is marginalised? Which elements of the system are working well, and which are weak/absent? What are main factors undermining the project's goals at present?

  e.g., Smallholder access to horticulture markets may be primarily held back by a lack of access to improved seeds, a lack of market linkages to potential buyers, and issues with post-harvest storage.

[1] The chain along which goods and services are traded, from producers through traders, processors, retailers, and consumers.

This analysis in turn informs **intervention design**, which adheres to several key principles:

- **Focus on root causes of system underperformance**, targeting leverage points with interventions to drive lasting change at scale.

  e.g., Instead of training farmers on use of improved seeds, seek to understand the barriers they currently face to accessing relevant information – perhaps information delivery systems could be built into the value chain (via buyers) or government extension services, thereby reaching far more producers than the project could directly.

- **Working through existing market actors to facilitate change**, rather than "direct delivery" of goods and services, which can serve to distort markets and create donor dependency effects.

  e.g., Instead of providing improved seedlings to farmers for free, work with existing village nursery operators to develop business models around improved planting material, thereby increasing the likelihood that improved seeds will continue to be cultivated and sold beyond the project lifetime.

- **Focusing on incentives, capabilities, and behaviour** to understand *why* market actors don't currently perform as desired, and to design interventions to shape incentives structures to create lasting behaviour change.

  e.g., If farmers are currently unwilling to pay for improved seeds, instead of providing them for free, seek to build farmer willingness to pay – help nurseries to establish demonstration plots, incorporate promotional offers into nursery business models, or negotiate buyer premiums for improved produce.

- **Focusing on scale and sustainability**, with a clear exit strategy based on a vision for how the market will function after the project ends, increasing the chances of transformational change in markets.

  e.g., If nursery providers are to carry on their role selling improved seedlings beyond the project, make sure you are building the requisite incentives and capabilities during the lifetime of the project, with a fully commercial business model running before end of project.

- **Adaptive programming**, drawing on strong MEL systems to inform flexible, innovative interventions without fear of "failure".

  e.g., If small village nurseries struggle to meet the required standards for raising and marketing seedlings, seek another implementing partner – potentially a larger commercial agribusiness with more experience and greater resources.

- **Piloting and scaling,** testing innovative business models on a small scale before promoting successful ones with wider market actors to encourage crowding in and replication effects.

  e.g., Once farmers are buying and using improved seeds, support nursery operators to break into wider markets, or pitch the same business model to suppliers elsewhere.

While market systems and value chain development projects are not without their challenges, projects that take a systemic approach with a focus on long term scale and sustainability have generally become the benchmark for livelihoods programming in the international development sector today (Conroy and Kessler 2019; Osorio-Cortes

and Albu 2021) The elements of best practice described above are accordingly factored into the evaluation rubric in Section 2.1.

1.3 Constraints and opportunities specific to the BCFs context

While the present evaluation draws on best practice from the development field, it is recognised that gold standard economic development programming often takes place in programmes with budgets in the tens of millions of dollars running for many years. Katalyst, one of the earliest and most widely cited market systems development programmes, ran for fifteen years in Bangladesh (2002-17), spending over US$100 million. While Katalyst is an extreme case, it is recognised that recommendations for livelihoods programming made here must be tailored to the specific context and constraints of BCFs projects:

- **Budget:** The average budget of projects evaluated for the present study was just under £500,000 (including average BCFs contributions of just over £300,000 plus match funding). While these are not necessarily "small" projects – with budgets in the hundreds rather than tens of thousands - a formal market study procured through an external consultancy firm would in most cases be prohibitively expensive, likely consuming 10-20% of the overall budget. As such, more affordable means of gathering and interpreting market intelligence are required than might be carried out in large-scale market development programs.
- **Timescale**: Perhaps a greater constraint is the three-year timescale of most BCFs grants – effective livelihoods programming often involves a substantial planning and analysis phase followed by an implementation process characterised by patient trial and error. Building partnerships, innovating new business models, and encouraging behaviour change can be a gradual process. Careful consideration is needed on the definition of "success" with respect to incremental progress towards systems change versus rapid delivery of conservation and development outcomes.
- **Objectives:** In most cases, livelihoods interventions make up one of several components in a BCFs project, effectively limiting the staff time and budget dedicated to livelihoods programming to a fraction of the total, further stressing the need for cost-efficient processes.
- **Grantee personnel:** BCFs applicants are typically a mix of conservation organisations and conservation-oriented academic departments, with skills and experience rooted predominantly in the natural sciences, and typically limited familiarity with approaches (and jargon) from the economic development field. Care should be taken to make recommendations understandable and applicable across multiple disciplines.
- **BCFs management personnel:** Likewise, given a long history rooted in conservation programming, BCFs fund management - including the fund manager (NIRAS), donor (Defra), and various expert committees involved in fund decision making – is mostly staffed with personnel with stronger credentials in the conservation field than in economic development (though efforts are underway to increase diversity in the range of expertise amongst those involved with fund management).
- **Trade-offs with local expertise:** The success of both economic development and conservation initiatives is heavily dependent on local expertise and relevance. While smaller local NGOs across the Global South may excel at this (a cohort that BCFs is actively working to encourage successful

applications from), they may be less likely to have capacity in modern economic development programming than some of their large international peers (see Section 3.1.1 on recurring BCFs grantees). Any recommendations should be mindful of the risk of raising the bar too high for these smaller organisations.

Despite these limitations, many BCFs grantees have the advantage of a **long-term presence in focal landscapes**, giving them **in-depth knowledge of the socioecological systems** in which they operate, and often **strong pre-existing relationships with local communities**. Within this context, BCFs grants tend to complement a range of other grant-based programming, often within an overarching organisational strategy for a given location. While certain "best practices" (e.g., in-depth market studies) may not be feasible within a BCFs project, they may therefore be possible at an organisational or landscape level, spanning multiple grants. By contrast, many economic development programmes, while typically larger and longer lasting than a single BCFs grant, suffer from a "fly in, fly out" approach, whereby early years are often spent building a team, getting established in a location, and learning the context, before disappearing again once the funding runs out.

These contextual considerations help to shape the recommendations made in Section 5 below.

1.4 Scope

The present study focuses on completed BCFs projects with livelihoods objectives that were funded between 2015-20. We define "livelihoods objectives" as those relating to income-generating livelihood strategies (e.g., increasing income from farming, fishing, or forestry), for which the best practices in market-based economic development programming outlined above is likely to have most relevance. In light of this, and as agreed in initial consultations with BCFs management, the following were considered beyond the scope of the study:

- Interventions that target dimensions of livelihoods and poverty beyond income generation, such as health or education (while noting that BCFs encourages a multidimensional view of poverty beyond income).
- Interventions that support livelihoods via the financial sector (e.g., village savings and loans associations, carbon finance), since access to finance is typically considered a supporting function of livelihood strategies such as farming, rather than a livelihood strategy in its own right.
- Interventions that otherwise indirectly support livelihoods (e.g., strengthening natural resource governance albeit without explicit objectives relating to income-generating livelihood strategies).
- Interventions to disrupt the illegal wildlife trade beyond alternative livelihood programming (e.g., demand reduction, policy, law enforcement).
- Interventions seeking strictly to minimise losses from human-wildlife conflict (e.g., interventions focused on animal deterrents to protect crops, but without active livelihoods work beyond this), given a lack of generalisable recommendations for wider livelihood programming.
- Interventions focused on subsistence livelihood strategies (i.e., production or harvest for own consumption without links to wider markets or income-generating effects).

2. Methodology

2.1 Evaluation rubric

To assess livelihoods programming in BCFs projects, an evaluation rubric was designed drawing on a combination of best practice from the economic development field, with a particular emphasis on market systems and value chain development approaches (Section 1.2, above) and a series of key informant interviews with BCFs management personnel at Defra and NIRAS. Focal areas of concern voiced by BCFs management included:

- Lack of sufficient market analysis / evidence of demand for livelihoods interventions.
- Lack of evidence on whether livelihood interventions are effective, i.e. do they actually deliver conservation and development benefits over the project lifetime and beyond? Are proposed market-based livelihoods interventions evidence-based?
- Lack of consideration for scale and sustainability of results beyond the project lifetime.
- Lack of clear articulation of the relationship between livelihoods (specifically increased income) and conservation outcomes in the theory of change.
- Lack of appropriate markets/livelihoods skills and experience in teams.
- Concern about potential risks/unintended negative consequences of promoting certain livelihood strategies.
- Questions relating to the choice of target group and potential trade-offs between reaching the 'poorest of the poor' vs. partnering with more capable/wealthier individuals who can champion conservation enterprises.

Based on the literature review and key informant interviews, nine priority dimensions of livelihoods programming were identified, including:

1. **Market selection**: The rationale for the choice of target market for a given livelihood strategy (e.g., livestock, tourism, or agriculture), including relevance to conservation and development goals, and feasibility of intervention (particularly the commercial feasibility of the promoted livelihood strategy).
2. **Market intelligence**: The project's degree of understanding of the how the target market functions, including the relationship between key actors, the mechanisms through which the market affects conservation and development outcomes, and the key constraints to be addressed through intervention.
3. **Intervention design**: The strength of the rationale for proposed interventions, including the strength of the TOC and any supporting evidence for the proposed approach.
4. **Links to conservation goals**: The extent to which livelihoods results are connected to conservation goals. Ideally, a clear and explicit conservation rationale should be made and tested via MEL.
5. **Team capacity**: The level of experience and technical expertise in the project consortium relating to market-based livelihoods programming.

6. **Market actor engagement**: The degree of engagement with market actors beyond the immediate beneficiaries (typically primary producers such as farmers and fishers). Market actors include value chain actors such as traders, processors, and consumers, plus actors in the wider enabling environment of rules (e.g., policymakers, regulators, certification bodies) and supporting functions (e.g., financial institutions, training providers, transport, and aggregation services).
7. **Conservation and development results**: The extent to which the project delivered against its logframe targets relating to income-generating livelihood strategies.
8. **Monitoring, evaluation, and learning**: The strength of MEL systems, including quality of reporting at each level of the logframe, and the ability of the project to generate useful, insightful explanations regarding intervention performance.
9. **Scale and sustainability**: The likelihood of results being sustained beyond the lifetime of the grant and/or scaled up to a wider set of beneficiaries.

Each dimension of the rubric was scored on a scale of one (poor) to five (excellent), with narrative descriptions of expected performance at each level developed to inform the scoring. An overall livelihoods score out of five was calculated as an unweighted average of the nine dimensions. The full rubric is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Evaluation rubric

			▼ Proposed minimum standard for future projects		
Dimension	Poor =1	Inadequate =2	Good =3	Very good =4	Excellent =5
Market selection	**No explicit rationale** given for the choice of target market.	Target market selection justified in terms of **relevance to *either* conservation**[2] ***or*** **development goals**[3]. **No evidence** of **commercial viability**[4] of focal market or livelihood strategy. No comparison with other potential target markets.	Target market selection justified in terms of **relevance to conservation *and* development goals**. **Moderate evidence**[5] of **commercial viability** of focal market or livelihood strategy. No comparison with other potential target markets.	**Multiple potential markets compared**[6] and prioritised according to **relevance to conservation *and* development goals**, **feasibility** of successful intervention[7], and **likely impacts**. **Strong evidence** of **commercial viability** of focal livelihood strategy.	*Level 4, plus:* Evidence of market selection decision being made based on **scoping fieldwork** and/or **participatory processes** with project target group/other stakeholders (vs. desk-based/remote decision).
Market intelligence	**No documented market analysis** to support proposed interventions.	Basic understanding of potential **demand** for target products / services (e.g., potential sales	Demonstrated understanding of wider **value chain**, including actors, structure, and relationships.	Demonstrated understanding of overall **market system**, including **value chain** plus **enabling**	*Level 4, plus:* **Stakeholder analysis** of the capacity and incentives of key market actors.

[2] "Relevance to conservation goals" refers to the potential for market intervention to reduce threats to the project's species and/or ecosystem(s) of interest.
[3] "Relevance to development goals" refers to the potential to reduce poverty.
[4] "Commercial viability" refers to the likelihood of a target market or livelihood strategy being sufficiently profitable to be favorable to alternatives (i.e., an activity needs to not just be profitable, but to outperform other – potentially less environmentally desirable – potential income sources).
[5] "Moderate" vs. "strong" evidence of commercial viability: Moderate evidence could be largely anecdotal demonstration of understanding of potential customers and level of demand for a product or service. Strong evidence would require a more robust data-driven approach (e.g., knowledge of current/potential sales volumes/values, specifics of end markets).
[6] Potential target markets could either be compared prior to the project (at proposal stage), or as an initial scoping activity during the project.
[7] "Feasibility of successful intervention" – some markets may be very relevant to both development and conservation goals but be characterised by intractable constraints that the project is unlikely to be able to address (e.g., high levels of corruption).

			▼ Proposed minimum standard for future projects		
Dimension	Poor =1	Inadequate =2	Good =3	Very good =4	Excellent =5
		volumes, prices, or customers).	Identification of **challenges** faced by the target group to be addressed by the project.	**environment** of **rules**[8] and **supporting functions**[9]. Identification of priority **systemic constraints** / **market failures** and **opportunities** for intervention.	Consideration of past market **trends / dynamics** and likely future directions.
Intervention design	**No evidence**[10] provided to justify proposed intervention strategy.	Intervention strategy justified based on **anecdotal** past experience, albeit with no documented evidence. **Theory of change** features large **leaps of logic** (e.g., farmer training leads to increased incomes), and no recognition of underlying assumptions.	At least **one evidence source** provided to justify the chosen approach. **Theory of change** considers multiple steps linking interventions to desired results (e.g., changes in attitudes, capacity, behaviour). No consideration of underlying assumptions.	Intervention logic informed by priority constraints identified in the **market analysis** and at least **one evidence source**. Robust **theory of change** linking activities to desired results, plus clear articulation of **risks / assumptions** to be tested.	Intervention logic informed by priority constraints identified in the **market analysis, multiple evidence sources**, and **participatory processes** involving market actors. Intervention logic mapped in a **theory of change** linking activities to desired results, plus clear articulation of **risks/assumptions**, and recognition of potential **feedback** loops and/or **unintended consequences** in complex systems.
Links to conservation goals	**No apparent link** between markets & livelihoods component of the project and	**Vague/implicit link** between markets & livelihood interventions and conservation goals. **Not tested** via MEL.	**Explicit link** between markets & livelihoods interventions & conservation goals. **Not tested** via MEL.	**Explicit** link between markets & livelihoods interventions & conservation goals, **tested via MEL** (e.g., did raising incomes lead to the desired conservation outcomes?).	*Level 4, plus:* Detailed understanding of the relationship between target market and species/ecosystem of interest. Recognition & evaluation of potential **risks and trade-offs** between

[8] Market systems thinking defines "rules" as the combination of formal and informal institutions that govern the operation of markets (e.g., laws, policies, cultural norms, traditions).
[9] Market systems thinking defines "supporting functions" as the functions that actors in the core value chain (producers, traders, processors, consumers) require to do their jobs (e.g., access to finance, technology, skills, infrastructure, utilities, etc.).
[10] See previous BCF deep dive study on the use and generation of evidence by funded projects.

			▼ Proposed minimum standard for future projects		
Dimension	Poor =1	Inadequate =2	Good =3	Very good =4	Excellent =5
	conservation goals.				conservation and development goals in complex systems.
Team capacity	Team **does not feature any livelihoods expertise or experience**.	Team has **limited prior experience** in livelihoods programming. Team has mostly natural science backgrounds and **limited markets & livelihoods expertise**.	Team has **good livelihoods experience & expertise**. At least one (non-leading) partner with relevant credentials, albeit primarily focused on community development, rather than wider market development.	Team has **very good livelihoods experience & expertise**. Multiple partners with relevant credentials, including market / sector development work beyond immediate beneficiaries / communities.	*Level 4, plus:* One or more **market actors** (beyond immediate beneficiaries) are part of the project consortium (e.g., private firms, finance providers, certification bodies, government development agencies, private training providers).
Market actor engagement	No market actor engagement beyond target group.	Minimal market actor engagement beyond target group (e.g., one-off meeting).	Project **engages with market actors** beyond target group, albeit in a limited or temporary way[11].	Project features **ongoing partnership arrangement**[12] with market actors in the target market (beyond target group).	Project features **very strong partnership arrangement** with multiple market actors in the target market (beyond target group).
Results[13]	Results relating to markets and livelihoods were **significantly below** project targets.	Results relating to markets and livelihoods were **slightly below** project targets.	Results relating to markets and livelihoods were **broadly on target** by project end.	Results relating to markets and livelihoods **slightly exceeded** project targets.	Results relating to markets and livelihoods **significantly exceeded** project targets.

[11] e.g., connecting intended beneficiaries (often primary producers) with traders, processors, consumers, or other market actors (see note on Level 4, below, for distinction between short-term and long-term private sector engagement).

[12] i.e., private sector actors (described in footnote to Level 3) are either part of the grantee consortium or are engaged on an ongoing basis on the project (rather than, e.g., being invited to a one-off workshop)

[13] Results are assessed using the project's own MEL reporting, plus any independent evaluations / results verification that has been carried out. Only results relating to markets & livelihoods components are considered.

			▼ Proposed minimum standard for future projects		
Dimension	Poor =1	Inadequate =2	Good =3	Very good =4	Excellent =5
Monitoring, evaluation, and learning	No MEL efforts relating to markets & livelihoods work.	MEL focuses on **low-level results only** (activities, outputs - e.g., number of farmers trained). No evidence of higher-level results (e.g., farmer incomes).	MEL reports on all **logframe essentials** (activities, outputs, outcomes).	MEL goes beyond essential logframe reporting to provide **additional evidence** with greater **explanatory power** around the success or failure of interventions. Inclusion of market metrics (e.g., production / yields, sales values / volumes, product quality).	*Level 4, plus:* Triangulation of findings via mixed quantitative and qualitative methods. Evidence of MEL informing in-project learning & adaptive management. Insightful reflections on lessons for future programming.
Scale & sustainability [14]	**No consideration** of potential scale or sustainability of results beyond project lifetime.	Consideration of project "**exit strategy**" during design phase, but **no evidence** to demonstrate potential scale or sustainability of results by end of project.	**Moderate evidence** of potential for results to be **sustained** beyond the project (e.g., farmers are positive about new practices, but long-term commercial viability remains untested).	**Strong evidence** of potential for results to be **sustained** beyond the project (e.g., farmers proven to make more money as a result of recommended practices, creating lasting incentives for sustained behaviour change *independent of donor subsidy*).	*Level 4, plus:* Evidence of results being **scaled** by market actors beyond direct beneficiaries (e.g., other farmers replicate observed behaviour change; buyers start to demand sustainably sourced produce)

[14] "Sustainability" in this context refers to the ability of results to be sustained over time (rather than *environmental* sustainability).

2.2 Sampling

Projects were selected based on a random sample of completed BCFs projects with outcome targets relating to increasing incomes through livelihood interventions, stratified according to the most common focal markets. Analysis focused on the 'Main' funding schemes of DI, IWTCF, and D+. Other funding schemes were excluded due to either (a) schemes being too recent to have sufficient completed projects to sample, or (b) schemes not having a sufficient focus on livelihood interventions.

The analysis focused on a sample of five years of completed projects from each fund, covering five rounds of funding (2015-19), with projects being completed by 2022 at the latest, ensuring that project completion documents and MEL data could be included in the review. The sampling frame included the following:

- Completed DI Main and D+ Main projects (2015-20) with livelihoods goals, identified as logframe outcome indicators containing any of the words "income", "market", or "livelihood" (DI =117, D+ =2).
- Completed IWTCF Main projects (2015-20) contributing to the Fund's theme of "developing sustainable livelihoods to benefit people directly affected by IWT"[15] (IWTCF =31).

Figure 2: Livelihoods projects by year & fund

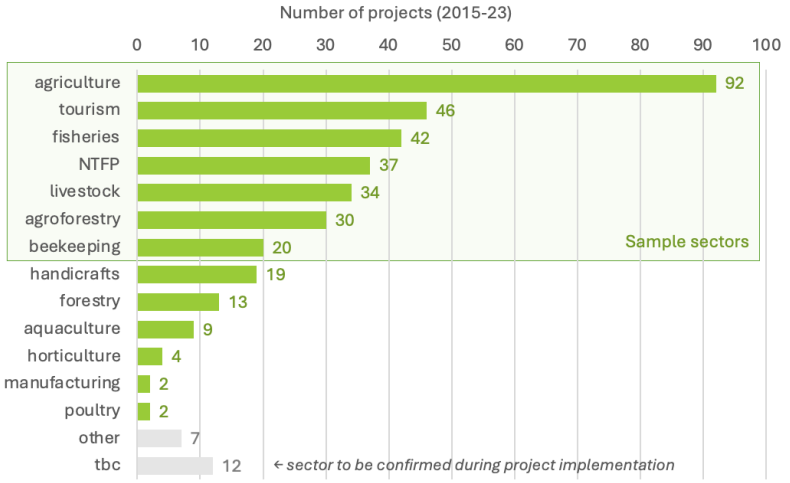
The proportion of DI projects with livelihoods goals has been steadily rising, with almost all (93%) ongoing DI Main projects having such goals (Figure 2). The proportion is lower (and stable) in IWTCF, with around a third of projects working towards the "sustainable livelihoods" theme[16]. Very few D+ projects have livelihoods goals, focusing more on conservation biology and the natural sciences, given their remote settings, small human

[15] IWTCF applicants indicate on their application forms which of the Fund's four themes they are working towards: (1) reducing demand for IWT products; (2) ensuring effective legal frameworks and deterrents; (3) strengthening law enforcement; (4) developing sustainable livelihoods to benefit people directly affected by IWT.

[16] In practice, all IWTCF projects can be understood to be intervening in (IWT) markets in some way (e.g., via demand reduction or enforcement efforts) – however, to ensure comparability with programming in the other Funds, we focus here on the "sustainable livelihoods" theme within IWTCF.

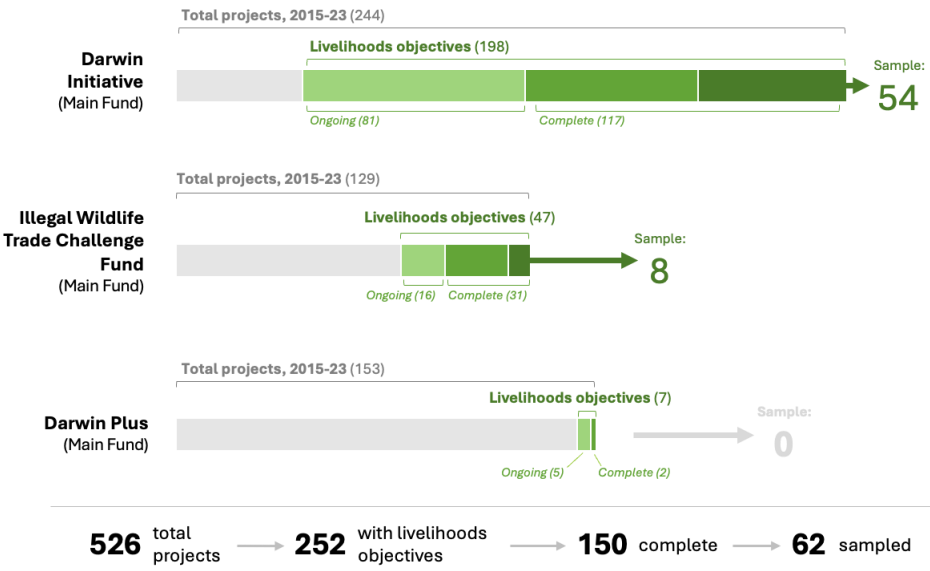
populations, and lower relevance in terms of UK Official Development Assistance. As such, D+ projects did not make the final random sample.

Figure 3: Market clusters (complete and ongoing projects, 2015-23, all Main funds)



The 150 relevant projects (DI: 117, IWTCF: 31, D+: 2) were next coded according to the focal market(s) in which they sought to intervene, before stratifying the sampling frame across the seven most common market clusters - agriculture, tourism, fisheries, non-timber forest products (NTFP), livestock, agroforestry, and beekeeping (Figure 3). The final sampling strategy is summarised in Figure 4. Ultimately, 41% of completed projects with livelihoods goals since 2015 were selected for inclusion in the final sample, including nine projects per market cluster (except beekeeping, with eight).

Figure 4: Sampling (BCFs projects, 2015-23)



2.3 Analysis

Projects were assessed against the evaluation rubric primarily using evidence included in project proposals, final reports (prepared by the project teams upon completion), and "final report reviews" (independent post-completion reports of each project based on their final report, conducted by independent reviewers). Where necessary, additional information was sought from annual and half-year reports submitted by the projects during the grant. Evidence on market selection, market intelligence, intervention design, links to conservation goals, and team capacity primarily came from project applications. Evidence on market actor engagement, results, MEL, and scale and sustainability primarily came from final reports and final report reviews.

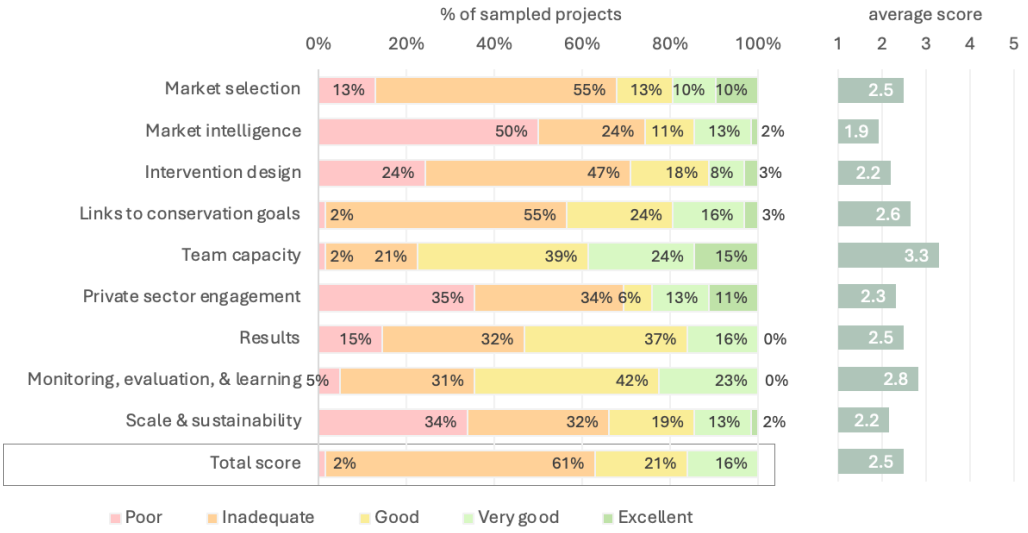
Application of the evaluation rubric was first piloted on a single cluster and cross-checked by multiple authors to ensure consistency in scoring and clarity of the rubric. Final rubric edits were made based on the findings from the pilot analysis, before proceeding to evaluate the full sample.

3. Results

3.1 Overall markets & livelihoods scores

The scores by each dimension of the rubric and total composite score for the full sample is shown in Figure 5. Overall, around two thirds of projects were assessed as either "poor" or "inadequate" in their approach to markets and livelihoods programming. Weak points included market intelligence, intervention design, and prospects for scale and sustainability. These findings point to many areas for potential improvement, which are discussed with respect to each dimension and market cluster in turn below.

Figure 5: Summary of overall results[17]

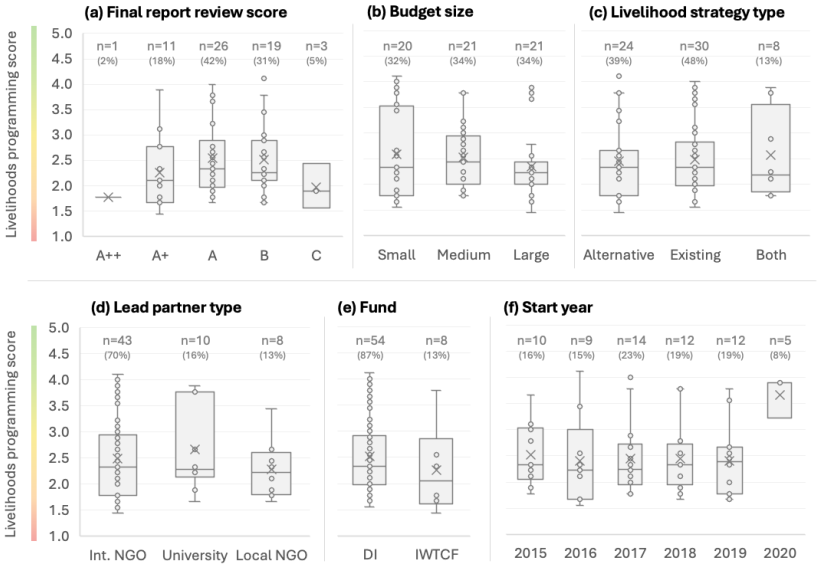


Despite these shortcomings, several projects demonstrated livelihoods programming on a par with best practice in the economic development sector, featuring carefully considered interventions driving lasting change in the

[17] Note that since the total score is an unweighted average of scores in every dimension, very few projects receive an overall rating of "poor" or "excellent" – while many projects are poor in some dimensions (e.g., market intelligence), very few projects are poor (or excellent) across the board.

complex relations between livelihoods and conservation outcomes. Examples from this cohort are used throughout the following sections to illustrate a promising direction for both BCFs and wider conservation programming.

Figure 6: Markets and livelihoods score crosstabs



Examining the crosstabs in Figure 6 reveals surprisingly little variation according to a wide range of project characteristics, including (a) final project overall score, (b) budget size, (c) whether the project was supporting existing or alternative livelihoods, (d) the lead partner type, (e) the fund, and (f) the start year. In almost all of these, the mean score fell between two (inadequate) and three (good).

Notable in particular is the consistency in standards of livelihoods programming irrespective of the level of overall project performance (Figure 6 [a]), which may be explained by a combination of (a) the fact that livelihoods interventions are typically only one element of a larger project, and (b) questions as to whether project logframes (the basis for final project scores) are adequate measures of success (see *Monitoring, evaluation, and learning*, below).

With respect to the latter, consider a hypothetical project that aims to increase the incomes of 100 farmers through training and seed handouts. If the project instead delivers income gains to 120 farmers through the free inputs provided, the project will be considered to have exceeded expectations (as defined by its logframe outcome targets) and may be granted an A+ or A++ rating. This assessment would hold even if no market analysis was done, substantial market constraints remain unaddressed, the intervention has little bearing on conservation outcomes, and farmers revert to the status quo once the project ends. To avoid situations such as this, greater scrutiny is required of proposed livelihood interventions and subsequent performance in BCFs grants, looking beyond the narrow lens of the logframe.

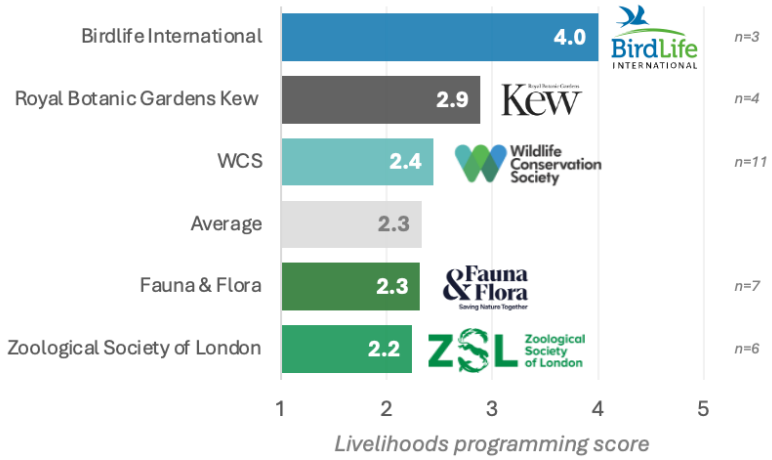
Also notable is the fact that, with the exception of sample projects starting in 2020 (a small sample size and potentially anomalous result), approaches to livelihoods programming did not shown signs of improving over

time during the review period. This is indicative in a lack of organisational development and capacity building across the field of grantees, with approaches being consistent over time.

3.1.1 Recurring grantees

Given the longevity of BCFs, it is unsurprising that many leading conservation organisations have been recipients of multiple grants. Figure 7 shows the performance of grantees with more than two projects in our sample, with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) (n=11), Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (n=4), and particularly BirdLife International (n=3) outperforming the average.

Figure 7: Performance of most common grantees (n>2)



Notably, the three BirdLife International projects were the top three highest scoring projects in the entire sample, characterised by strong private sector partnerships, robust analysis of market constraints and corresponding intervention targeting, and careful attention to evidence of commercial performance both in the intervention rationale and subsequent reporting. While the sample is a small one, the fact that these characteristics were observed across three markets (agriculture, agroforestry, and tourism) and three continents/teams (in Paraguay, Cambodia, and Tanzania) is indicative of strong organisational credentials in markets and livelihoods programming.

However, it is also important to note that all of the recurring grantees in Figure 7 are large international conservation-oriented NGOs, suggesting that more work is needed to support smaller, local NGOs in strengthening their livelihoods programming as well as successfully accessing BCFs grants more generally. While adopting best practice from the development sector may be considered an aspiration in the medium term, it is also important not to raise the bar too high for applicants in the short term in a way that may further restrict access to funds for smaller organisations across the Global South in the absence of adequate support and capacity on livelihoods programming.

3.2 Results by dimension

3.2.1 Market selection

While the choice of focal market is often self-explanatory (e.g., marine conservation organisations naturally tend to work on fisheries – though not always), in many cases the market selection rationale was unclear. Relevance to conservation and development goals is often more implicit than explicit, with applications tending to be stronger on development grounds (e.g., describing the importance of a certain livelihood strategy to local communities). Link to conservation goals were more often assumed or implied, often with tenuous or uncertain links (see *Links to conservation goals*, below).

Most projects gave no indication of the likely commercial viability of the supported livelihood strategy at the proposal stage (see *Market intelligence*, below) – a particular concern when introducing new and untested alternative livelihood strategies, or when operating in thin/niche markets (e.g., many NTFPs). Even in larger, well-established markets where the market's overall commercial strength is apparent (commodity agriculture, fisheries), a case still needs to be made for why the proposed intervention relating to the target group is expected to be feasible (e.g., feasibility of securing a smallholder foothold in coffee export markets, or commercial viability of environmentally friendly practices).

In some cases, projects made commendable efforts to select focal markets and livelihoods strategies via participatory processes, allowing for community inputs as to areas where support was most needed (Box 1). These were either conducted prior to the grant or proposed as an in-project activity (see, e.g., the projects with "to be confirmed" focal markets in Figure 3).

Box 1: Fauna & Flora and the Participatory Market Systems Development approach (27-017, 24-006)

In recent years, Fauna & Flora have been applying a modification of the market systems development approach, Participatory Market Systems Development (PMSD), in several conservation projects (Mohanan, Nicolas, and Slade 2018). The approach is rooted in a participatory market selection and analysis process during intervention design, working with community members to identify priorities for conservation and development programming.

The approach was applied in two sampled DI projects – an agroforestry project in Uganda (27-017) and a NTFP project in Tajikistan (24-006), allowing for target markets to be selected based on relevance to the communities and their expected commercial potential. While the projects accordingly scored highly on our market selection and intelligence dimensions, performance in other dimensions was less convincing. Notably, the participatory process in Tajikistan only included primary producers, and the project overall lacked engagement with wider market actors. In both projects, the links to conservation goals were not well evidenced, and there appeared limited scope for long-term commercial viability. As such, while participatory approaches are commendable, participation beyond immediate community members is important to ensure that enduring commercial relationships are developed.

Details at:
https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/project/DAR24006/
https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/project/DAR27017/

3.2.2 Market intelligence

The degree of demonstrated market intelligence was generally poor, with 50% of projects providing no information on the state of the market and the implications for intervention design. Without such information at the proposal stage, it is difficult to assess the feasibility of intervention, both in terms of the likely commercial viability of the promoted livelihood strategy, as well as the relevance of the project's proposed activities in addressing market constraints.

In the case of support to existing livelihoods, an assumption can be made that the focal livelihood strategy is currently commercially viable, otherwise people would not be practicing it. However, a case still needs to be made that proposed *changes* to existing livelihood practices are commercially viable – e.g., how might fisher profit margins differ with and without temporary closures and no-take zones? For sustainable livelihood practices to be upheld, they not only need to be profitable, but likely *more* profitable than unsustainable practices (or coupled with enforcement, regulation, or compensation to bridge the gap).

The lack of market intelligence is even more problematic in the case of alternative livelihood promotion (e.g., introducing beekeeping), where there tends to be far greater uncertainty around commercial viability. In this case, questions go beyond the simple existence of demand (e.g., honey markets in local urban centres) – itself rarely evidenced in proposals - to questions of whether producers can navigate the vast array of new business challenges relating to skills, finance, transport, processing, marketing, quality control, packaging, aggregation, regulations, licencing, and so forth.

3.2.3 Intervention design

The design of markets and livelihoods interventions tends to suffer from a lack of supporting evidence for the proposed approach, as well as substantial leaps of logic in the theory of change that leave it unclear how exactly the desired results are expected to be delivered. Moreover, the limitations of *Market intelligence* noted above leave it unclear whether interventions are targeting the most relevant constraints.

While most projects offered no supporting evidence to justify a chosen approach, where evidence *was* provided, the most common form was reference to earlier work by the grantee, either at the same project site or elsewhere. However, such evidence is often anecdotal and not supported by specific references or details of past findings, leaving judgement of proposals to no more than trust. Elsewhere, a similar lack of specificity was observed with applicants referring ambiguously to "research" or "studies" justifying an approach, albeit without verifiable references. Detailed discussion and recommendations for improved use of evidence in BCFs proposals is available in the previous BCFs deep dive on use and generation of evidence in BCFs projects (NIRAS 2023).

With regards to the theory of change underpinning interventions, many projects' livelihoods interventions feature large leaps of logic between low-level activity-oriented "outputs" (training of farmers, provision of inputs) and high-level "outcomes" (typically focused on income generation). This simplification of expected results overlooks a great deal of nuance and complexity present in any market system, including the values, attitudes, incentives, capacity, and behaviour of a diverse array of market actors. Omitting these intermediate steps from the TOC creates significant risks around the likelihood of successful intervention and limitations in terms of the explanatory power of MEL (see *Monitoring, evaluation, and learning*, below).

These TOC shortcomings are in large part due to the current BCFs templates and reporting requirements stipulated by the donor, and designed to ensure the application process is not prohibitively challenging (especially for smaller organisations with less monitoring, evaluation and learning capacity). As of the 2023 BCFs application guidelines, while a "pathway to change" narrative is required, none of the Main funding schemes of the three Funds require a TOC diagram[18]. Visual mapping of intended results via TOC diagrams can help to clarify complex causal relationships (in a way that can often be obscured in narrative theories of change), not only as an external communication tool, but as an aide to project teams in carefully thinking through their proposed strategy.

In the absence of TOC diagrams, narrative TOCs are split across multiple proposal sections ("problem the project is trying to address", "methodology", "change expected", "exit strategy", among others) – giving a fragmented picture that often overlooks key details and assumptions (particularly since markets and livelihoods interventions tend to be one component of a wider strategy). At the same time, the logframe template (consistent with logframes across UK government and elsewhere) effectively forces a three-step results chain (activities to outputs to outcomes[19]), with little room to explore the relationships between different steps (beyond an "assumptions" section relating to connections between the three steps).

Finally, in the absence of market analysis and diagnostics, it is unclear whether many projects are targeting the right constraints. Many projects default to the approach (common also in development work) of providing training and inputs. This "direct delivery" model has two shortcomings. First, it is often unclear how results will be sustained once the project's free provision of goods and services ends (see *Scale and sustainability*). Second, it presupposes that a lack of knowledge and inputs are the binding constraints standing between the status quo and the desired outcome. In reality, greater knowledge may not be sufficient – or even necessary – to achieve the desired results. Fishers may know that overfishing depletes fish stocks in the long run but choose to maintain an unsustainable level of fishing effort due to weak governance, short-term income necessity, or a lack of incentives for sustainable sourcing. Instead of assuming that people do not know how to practice desired behaviours, projects should make more effort to understand – and influence – the incentive structures that shape peoples' behaviour.

3.2.4 Links to conservation goals

The sampled projects sought to influence conservation outcomes via livelihoods interventions via multiple impact pathways, including:

1. **Reducing the environmental impact of existing livelihoods strategies** by, e.g., promoting conservation agriculture, sustainable fisheries, or reducing overgrazing on rangelands.
2. **Promoting alternative livelihoods to discourage participation in less desirable livelihood strategies**, e.g., providing new income sources (from, e.g., NTFPs, tourism, agroforestry) to deter people from participating in poaching and illegal wildlife trade.
3. **Promoting pro-conservation attitudes and behaviour by enhancing nature-based incomes** (particularly through tourism and NTFP work), with the rationale that people will conserve nature if they can derive income from it.

[18] Theory of change diagrams are currently required for Darwin Initiative *Extra* and *Innovation* projects, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund *Extra* projects, and Darwin Plus *Strategic* projects.

[19] An impact statement is required at the top of the logframe hierarchy but does not have measurable indicators associated with it.

4. **Reducing the need to convert natural areas by increasing agricultural productivity**, typically in a forest conservation context, whereby increasing food security in neighbouring communities is thought to reduce the need for further agricultural expansion.

5. **Conserving wild species through introduction of domestic cultivation** (e.g., Kew's work on yams [22-005] and the World Vegetable Center's work on traditional vegetables [26-015] in Madagascar; Kew's work on orchids in Zambia [23-034]).

6. **Promoting livelihood strategies that are less vulnerable to human-wildlife conflict** (e.g., the Southern Tanzania Elephant Program's beehive fences as elephant deterrents [26-007, IWT052], Fauna & Flora's promotion of chimp-friendly crops in Uganda [27-017], Chester Zoo's work on alternative livelihoods to reduce bear interactions in Bolivia [25-011]).

However, in most cases, the link is implicit, with large leaps of logic and assumptions in the TOC, and ultimately the relationship between livelihoods and conservation are often not adequately tested via MEL (see *Monitoring, evaluation, and learning*, below). This leaves many important questions unanswered.

In the case of **alternative livelihoods** (pathway #2), project success (as per the logframe) is often defined in terms of beneficiary participation in, and earnings from, the promoted livelihood, without an evaluation of how returns to the alternative livelihood compare to those of the livelihood being discouraged, or the likelihood of beneficiaries continuing to practice the promoted livelihood. For example, a household may initially take up beekeeping (especially if all the necessary training and equipment is provided for free by the project, or cooperation with a project is expected to bring ongoing subsidised benefits), but if poaching is a more lucrative livelihood strategy, the possibility of (lower) earnings from beekeeping is unlikely to be a sufficient incentive to switch livelihood strategies.

Moreover, even if returns to the preferred livelihood strategy *are* greater, there is a chance that this may complement, rather than replace, the undesirable activity if a household has capacity to do both. Since the possibility of an alternative livelihood strategy on its own may be insufficient to incentivise the switch, an active deterrent is typically required at the same time (e.g., law enforcement, social pressure). These incentive structures that shape a household's cost-benefit analysis with respect to its overall livelihood strategy are typically overlooked by grantee strategy and MEL. A more holistic approach to influencing the incentives (financial and otherwise) that drive household livelihood strategies should inform combinations of interventions relating to livelihoods, governance, social norms, and other incentive drivers.

The case of **nature-based livelihoods** interventions (pathway #3) is similar – the definition of success typically stops at household income being generated from the supported source, often without an evaluation of how this shapes attitudes and behaviour with regards to conservation. For example, supporting the development of an eco-lodge in a community may encourage the direct beneficiaries to protect the immediate surroundings – but what of the non-benefiting community members, or of beneficiary attitudes to natural resource harvesting further afield (see discussion of displacement effects in *Monitoring, evaluation, and learning*)?

The list of largely untested assumptions goes on. In sustainable livelihoods programming (pathway #1), are the recommended practices sufficiently more profitable than the status quo to incentivise long-term adoption without ongoing subsidy? If financial returns from agriculture are increased, will this not incentivise *more* forest clearing to maximise income (pathway #4)? While domestic cultivation of a wild species may avoid its total

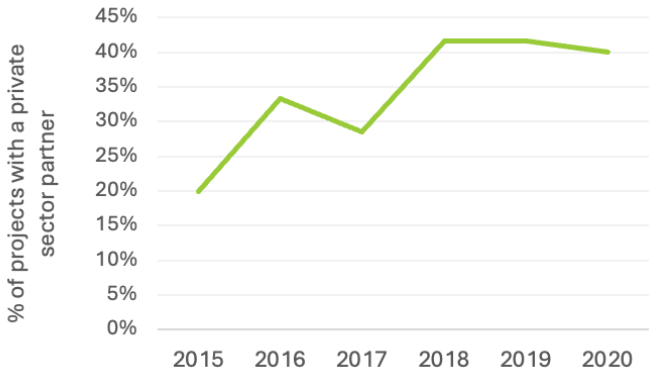
extirpation, what is there to stop the free collection of the remaining wild population (pathway #5)? Are alternative livelihoods promoted in a human-wildlife conflict setting sufficiently profitable to be preferred to the status quo (pathway #6)?

In many projects, while positive conservation outcomes are observed, it remains difficult to ascertain the specific effect of markets and livelihoods interventions on these outcomes (relative to other interventions in a project; see *Monitoring, evaluation, and learning*, below), and uncertain whether these results can be sustained beyond the project lifetime (see *Scale and sustainability*).

3.2.5 Team capacity

Grantee team capacity for markets and livelihoods programming was the highest scoring dimension in our rubric. While most BCFs applicants are conservation organisations or conservation-oriented academic departments, the wide prevalence livelihoods programming in conservation today means that many of these organisations now have staff with many years of experience in livelihoods work. Several teams and grantee organisations demonstrated credentials on a par with high-performing teams in the economic development sector, including demonstrated knowledge of markets and an ability to work closely with private sector partners.

Figure 8: Percentage of assessed projects with a private sector partner on the team



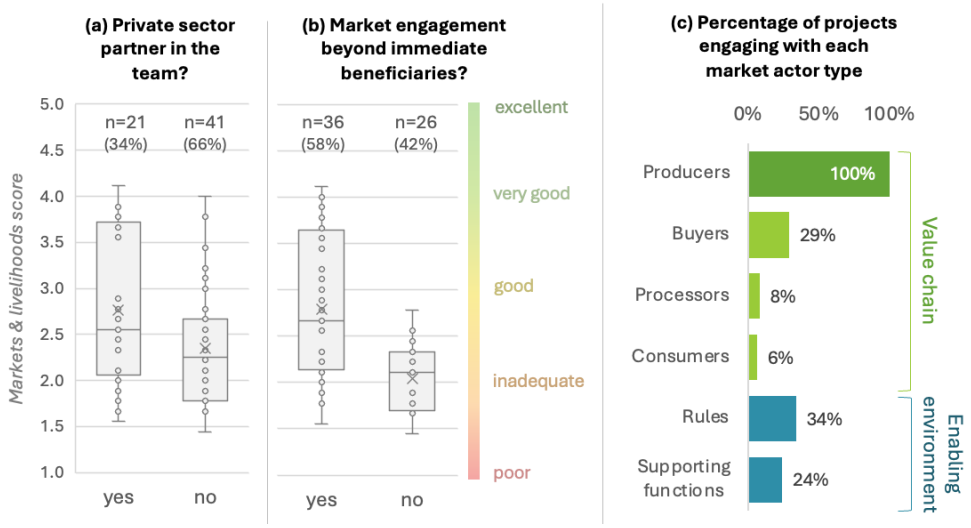
However, these were the exception rather than the rule. While most conservation organisations today have a track record of livelihoods programming, this experience does not necessarily guarantee strong credentials or effective performance. Given the lack of progress in livelihoods programming over time (Figure 6), it is likely that many teams have repeatedly applied an approach to livelihoods programming that is unlikely to deliver lasting results at scale.

A more promising trend is the marked increase over time in the proportion of projects with a private sector partner in the team, doubling from 20% in 2015 to 40% in 2020 (Figure 8). This is a welcome improvement, in line with best practice in the development sector, drawing on vital "real-world" business expertise to facilitate lasting change in markets, and one of the few aspects of markets and livelihoods programming assessed here that has seen a steady improvement over time.

3.2.6 Market actor engagement

Market actor engagement was generally mixed, with a little over half of projects engaging with market actors beyond the immediate beneficiaries (the latter typically being primary producers such as farmers and fishers), and a third including private sector partners on their teams as noted in the previous section. As Figure 9 shows, projects that did either of these things tended to have higher overall livelihood programming scores. Market engagement beyond immediate beneficiaries tended to focus on either buyers (e.g., agribusinesses, tour operators) or actors in the wider enabling environment of rules (e.g., trade associations, government agencies) and supporting functions (most commonly finance providers). The highest-scoring projects in the sample were characterised by close work with market actors to facilitate lasting relationships between producers and buyers, creating lasting incentives for sustainable livelihoods practices through, e.g., contract farming or sustainability premiums.

Figure 9: Private sector engagement



3.2.7 Results

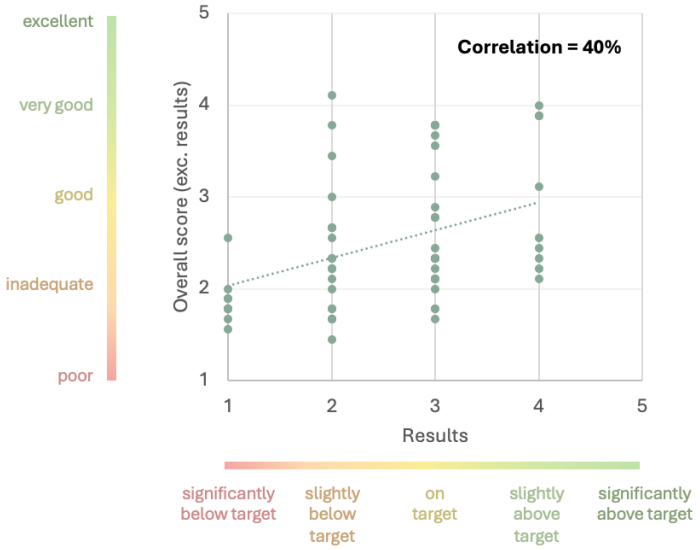
Just over half (53%) of sampled projects either achieved or slightly exceeded their logframe targets relating to livelihoods (almost always focused on income generation), with around a third falling slightly below and 15% significantly below target. Project logframe outcomes almost always focus on household incomes, though outputs varied (e.g., numbers of farmers trained, adoption of improved practices, productivity, sales). Overall, projects scoring highly on the other livelihoods dimensions assessed here performed better in terms of delivery of results, lending weight to the rubric design (Figure 10). Projects achieving or exceeding their goals had an average score across the other eight markets and livelihoods dimensions of 2.6, compared to 2.3 on projects falling short of their targets.

However, there were also several cases of projects with strong markets and livelihoods credentials failing to meet their logframe targets, as well as cases of projects with poor credentials achieving or exceeding their targets. In many cases, this raises questions around the definition of success, and the nature of the targets that projects set

for themselves (see discussion of the suitability of logframes in Section 3.1, above). Reported successes most often take the form of projects providing training and inputs to a (typically small) group of direct beneficiaries in local communities and observing corresponding income gains. While short-term incomes may be expected to increase in response to subsidised support, in most cases questions remain over whether significant lasting change has been delivered (see *Scale and sustainability*, below).

Conversely, some projects with more ambitious and sophisticated approaches to markets and livelihoods programming (scoring highly on many dimensions of our rubric) ultimately struggled to deliver against their own logframe targets. This reflects a problem widely seen in the development sector – while meaningful market development programming often requires patient, adaptive programming in complex and unpredictable environments, with an ability to embrace risk and innovation, donor logframes tend to incentivise the easily quantifiable "quick wins" of direct delivery aid models (training farmers, providing inputs) whereby the project has close control over results and a relative high likelihood of delivering against targets. This rigidity of reporting frameworks and fear of perceived failure risk discouraging more ambitious programming. At the same time, a highly competitive grant writing environment can incentivise applicants to over-promise in proposed logframes.

Figure 10: "Results" score vs. livelihoods programming score (excluding "results")



More work is needed to reward intelligent, innovative programming through learning and adaptation, and to move away from a focus on easily attainable results that may ultimately have little lasting impact. For example, consider the different forms that project "failure" can take:

1. Poor project management leading to poor delivery.
2. Projects knowingly over-promising in order to have a better chance of securing funding in a competitive environment.
3. Interventions making good progress but taking longer than expected to deliver against ultimate outcome targets.

4. Interventions being tested and proven not to work (e.g., promotion of a new business model).

While (1) and (2) are clearly undesirable, projects with otherwise strong management and delivery models can easily "fail" under (3) and (4) – intuitively, these latter cases should be treated differently than the first two.

In the case of (3), reducing poverty and delivering on conservation goals is not easily done in short timeframes – projects should be rewarded for progress towards goals, so long as meaningful interim indicators of success can be developed. The case of point (4) speaks to DI and IWTCF's identities as challenge funds, one objective of which is typically to nudge behaviour towards more desirable social outcomes through the de-risking of innovation using as little public funding as possible (Pompa 2013). Considering that business start-up failure rates are often as high as 90%, it is natural to expect that many (if not most) attempts to innovate more sustainable business models or promote alternative livelihoods would "fail" under point (3) (Keeler 2012). However, the rationale of challenge funds (also embraced in market systems development programming) is that by taking an innovative approach with a reasonably high risk appetite, even if 1 in 10 projects succeed, in the long run they may leverage greater impact than 10 "successful", albeit small scale and short-lived, direct delivery aid projects.

The fact that many BCFs projects are considered a success according to their logframe results despite limited prospects for lasting impact at scale (while more innovative and ambitious projects occasionally fall short of their logframe targets) suggests that a realignment of the Funds' definitions of success/failure may be required in line with the risk appetites and incentives for innovation seen in challenge funds elsewhere.

3.2.8 Monitoring, evaluation, & learning

Across the sample, MEL efforts were generally satisfactory insofar as basic logframe reporting is concerned, with most projects providing sufficient evidence to explain progress against planned activities, outputs, and outcomes. However, several areas for improvement were noted:

- **Links to conservation goals:** Most projects report both conservation outcomes (e.g., forest loss, ecosystem health, species abundance) and development outcomes (typically household income). However, little effort is made to draw links between the two, and specifically to isolate the effects of markets and livelihoods interventions on conservation outcomes. In projects with multiple conservation and development interventions, this makes it challenging to assess the effectiveness of markets and livelihoods interventions on their own.

  In the case of alternative livelihoods programming (where a new livelihood strategy is intended to replace a previous, less desirable one), projects almost never present evidence of the extent to which the new strategy is able to displace the previous one. For example, if beneficiaries are trained on beekeeping as an alternative to the illegal wildlife trade, even if they participate in and increase their income from beekeeping (the typical benchmark of success on a project), questions will remain as to whether these individuals will then reduce their effort with regards to wildlife trade.

- **Interim TOC steps:** In the absence of detailed TOCs and corresponding monitoring plans, project reporting is largely limited to a three-step process of activities, outputs, and outcomes (see *Intervention design*, above). The leaps of logic implied by this simplified results chain often lead to substantial evidence gaps and limited explanatory power of MEL.

For example, a project may report that *X* number of farmers were trained (output) and that their incomes increased (outcome). However, it tends to be unclear what the specific effect of the training was on attitudes, behaviour, incentives, and other interim steps that lead to the outcome. This "black box" makes it difficult to assess why projects succeed or fail, and to extract lessons for future programming.

- **Commercial viability**: The sustainability of results over time depends largely on the commercial viability of supported livelihood strategies, independent of ongoing subsidy (see *Scale and sustainability*, below). However, few projects provide evidence on the commercial viability of supported business models, instead focusing largely on short-term household income effects. While the latter may be expected to temporarily increase when receiving subsidised support from a project, it is typically unclear (and often doubtful) whether beneficiaries may reasonably be expected to continue practicing the promoted livelihood strategy in future.

  As well as understanding the profitability of a particular livelihood strategy, it is important to compare this to the *opportunity cost* – i.e., the profitability of other competing livelihood strategies. Even if beekeeping is profitable, is it sufficiently profitable to be chosen over, e.g., poaching or logging? Agroforestry systems may be profitable, but are they more profitable than intensive monoculture agriculture?

  In each of these cases, there are likely to be other factors at play in a household's cost-benefit analysis of livelihood strategies. Beekeeping may be less profitable than poaching, but if law enforcement is strengthened at the same time, the downside risks of potentially being caught poaching may tip a household towards the more environmentally sustainable strategy. Agroforestry may be more profitable than monoculture agriculture in the long run but may involve an initial income shortfall while waiting for fruit trees to mature – a gap that could potentially be bridged using additional subsidy or value chain credit from buyers. A detailed understanding not only of the profitability of a livelihood strategy, but its relative profitability compared to other livelihood strategies, can help projects to design combinations of interventions that build incentive structures for lasting pro-conservation behaviour change.

  While detailed commercial analysis can be challenging, the observed behaviour of market actors can serve as a useful proxy. Farmers may adopt sustainable practices with project support in the first planting season – but are they voluntarily repeating this in subsequent seasons? Are there signs of replication and "crowding in" from other farmers, independent of project support? Are market linkages being established with buyers?

- **Additionality and attribution**: Higher level results such as household income and ecosystem health tend to be influenced by a complex range of factors beyond the project's control, making it difficult to assess the degree of (a) *additionality* of observed results relative to what would have happened in the absence of the project (the counterfactual), and (b) *attribution* of results to the project relative to other factors at play in the system.

  Most logframe reporting among sampled projects involved no attempt to isolate either the effect of the project (relative to external forces) or of individual interventions within a project (e.g., the extent to which livelihoods interventions influenced conservation goals), making it difficult to make an unbiased assessment of project performance.

Additionality and attribution can be challenging to estimate with any degree of confidence, and are often estimated through complex counterfactual-based statistical methods such as randomised control trials, placing significant demands on projects in terms of financial resources and technical know-how. However, lighter touch qualitative methods (e.g., farmer testimonials) can help to provide a basic understanding of the effect of project interventions on observed outcomes – for example, asking farmers to assess which of a range of factors have the greatest effect on their overall incomes.

- **Displacement effects and other unintended negative consequences**: None of the sample projects provided an analysis of potential negative side-effects of their actions, of which the potential displacement of unsustainable behaviour is perhaps the most pertinent. If "illegal" fishers are pushed out of an area through strengthened enforcement of licensed fishing, is unsustainable fishing effort not simply displaced to nearby areas, and/or anti-conservation attitudes fomented by denying resource access and harming livelihoods of these actors? If new ecotourism revenue streams incentivise community members to protect their immediate environment, what is to say that villagers won't simply harvest firewood unsustainably from neighbouring areas instead?

3.2.9 Scale & sustainability

The likelihood of projects leaving behind a legacy of improved conservation and development outcomes as a result of markets and livelihoods interventions is perhaps the most uncertain and contentious of the dimensions assessed here. As noted in the previous section, very few projects provide evidence of the commercial viability of supported livelihood strategies in the absence of continued subsidy, and none of the sampled projects sought to compare this with competing (less environmentally sustainable) strategies. While projects are required to detail "exit strategies" in proposals, those assessed typically referenced factors such as a legacy of "increased capacity" after training, without meaningful consideration of the incentives needed to bring about lasting behaviour change.

The most promising projects in the sample shared a common focus on these incentives, working closely with private sector actors to facilitate lasting change. In Uganda, WCS facilitated contract farming arrangements via local agribusinesses to incentivise conservation agriculture (22-011). In Cambodia, BirdLife International implemented a sustainable organic rice scheme, with contracts with an international buyer involving results-based payments tied to ecological monitoring (27-005). In Nepal, the Zoological Society of London innovated new nursery and veterinary business models before transferring full business operation to local stakeholders (22-009).

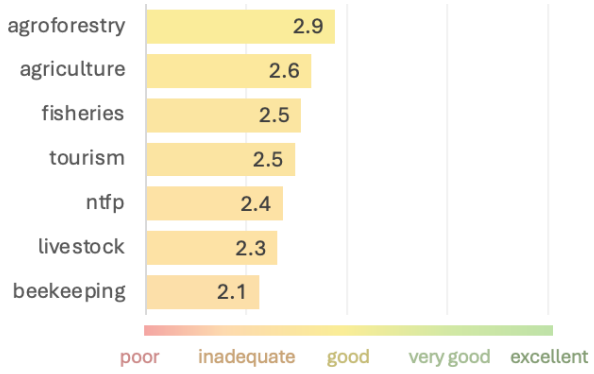
While these are exceptions, they stand as evidence that lasting change in the way that markets operate and fundamental shifts in livelihood strategies can be delivered within the short timeframe of BCFs grants, so long as there is close cooperation with existing market actors and a clear a vision for sustainability beyond the project based on a detailed understanding of the required commercial incentives.

With regards to scale, very few projects showed signs of crowding in or replication during project lifetimes – though this is perhaps unsurprising given the short timeframes involved (BCFs "Extra" funding streams, not examined here, may be more appropriate for the evaluation of scaling). In a few cases, producers beyond the immediate beneficiaries showed interest in participating – though these appeared to be more of an interest in wider distribution of project support than genuine commercial interest in replicating a particular business model.

3.3 Results by market cluster

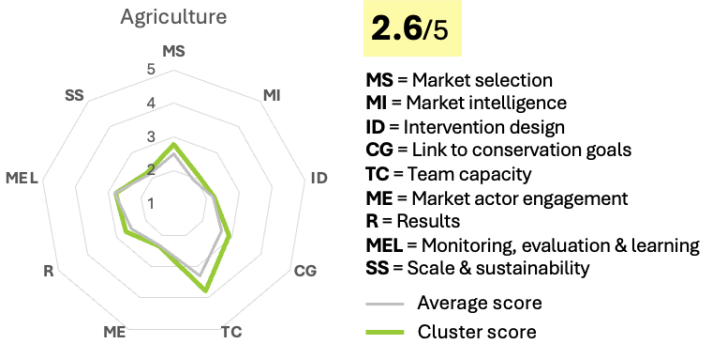
The overall score by market cluster is shown in Figure 11, ranging from the strongest performing (agroforestry) to the weakest (beekeeping). In general, projects working in large, well-established, formal markets (commodity agriculture/agroforestry, fisheries) performed better than those in more stereotypical "conservation" markets such as NTFPs, beekeeping, or ecotourism. However, average scores did not vary greatly by market, with all averages falling between two ("inadequate") and three ("good") – suggesting a degree of consistency (including common shortcomings) regardless of the focal market. Each are discussed in turn below.

Figure 11: Average livelihoods programming score by market cluster



3.3.1 Agriculture

Sampled agriculture projects primarily worked on promoting sustainable practices in existing agricultural work, with a few projects also seeking to protect native plants by promoting their domestic cultivation. Target markets included a mix of rice, maize, and vegetables, among others. Overall, agriculture scored the second highest in the sample, with performance on most dimensions being slightly above average.



The highest scoring projects were characterised by strong market linkages, both in terms of private sector partners on the team, as well as work with buyers during the project, with a clear focus on facilitating business relationships between supported producers and formal value chains. While most projects failed to demonstrate a commercial rationale for the upkeep of sustainable practices (rather than reversion to the status quo), the strongest in the group worked with buyers specifically to create incentives for sustainable or organic produce, rewarded by price premiums (Box 2).

Box 2: The Ibis Rice scheme in Cambodia (27-005)

In Cambodia, BirdLife International worked to expand the sustainable organic rice scheme of Ibis Rice Conservation Co. Ltd, a conservation enterprise originally founded by WCS, to over 500 new famers in forest frontier communities in the northeast of the country. The business model involves the not-for-profit conservation enterprise, Ibis Rice, providing inputs and technical support to growers, who supply sustainably grown organic jasmine rice in return for a price premium. In addition, growers commit to conservation contracts, which serve to deter deforestation in adjacent forests. The project was successful in raising household incomes via sustainability premiums and improving conservation outcomes via conservation contracts.

More broadly, an independent evaluation found the Ibis Rice model to be successful in delivering against conservation and development goals, though the reviewers noted that poorer households struggled to access the scheme, since their small landholdings tend to limit them to subsistence agriculture, with little in the way of marketable surplus product (Clements et al. 2020). This points to a broader challenge of intervention targeting in conservation and development programming, whereby the poorest of the poor are often the most in need of support, yet have limited capacity to engage with conservation initiatives.

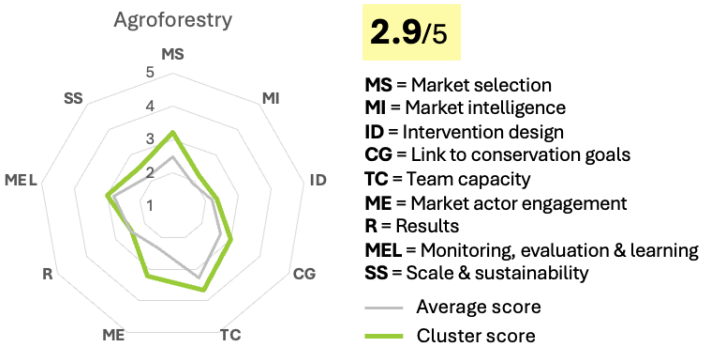
Despite this question of targeting and access, the project generally serves as a good example of innovative and enduring incentive structures being built among existing market actors in pursuit of conservation and development goals.

Details at: https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/project/DAR27005/

Despite these success stories, projects in the cluster were more commonly characterised by a lack of market analysis, little to no market engagement, and limited evidence to suggest results could be sustained beyond the lifetime of the project – even if logframe targets were broadly on track.

3.3.2 Agroforestry

The highest scoring cluster overall, agroforestry projects exceeded the average score in most dimensions, often working in established markets for commodity crops with high earning potential such as coffee, cacao, bananas, rubber, and various fruit trees. Perhaps as a result of this, the agroforestry cluster tended to feature more commercially savvy project teams and stronger market linkages than those observed elsewhere (e.g., in the more informal, less developed markets for honey and NTFPs). The cluster also featured one of the highest scoring projects in the sample, a BirdLife International project working on yerba mate in Paraguay (Box 3).



Box 3: Shade-grown yerba mate in Paraguay (23-016)

In Paraguay, BirdLife International worked with four communities within the San Rafael Reserve to build capacity in shade-grown yerba mate cultivation, connecting growers to buyers, pursuing Fairtrade and sustainability certifications, and seeking to gain government endorsement of scheme. The proposal demonstrated a strong understanding of the yerba mate market and commercial potential, including the importance sustainability premiums, as well as close relationships with private sector buyers.

The project made good progress in building capacity, developing business plans, securing buyer commitments, and facilitating shade-grown yerba production in line with Fairtrade and sustainability standard requirements, though final prices were still being negotiated at the close of the project, and formal accreditation did not appear to have been finalised during the project lifetime. In addition, despite the commendable goal of seeking government endorsement of the model in pursuit of scalable solutions for Paraguay's wider Atlantic Forest, little progress was made in this respect, due to turbulent relations between relevant ministries and conservation NGOs in light of unforeseen changes to the forest policy during the project period.

Despite falling short on a number of targets, the project is another example of evidence-based programming with close private sector linkages, and a clear vision of scale and sustainability beyond the project, with value chain-based incentives for sustainable production showing potential for both positive conservation and development outcomes.

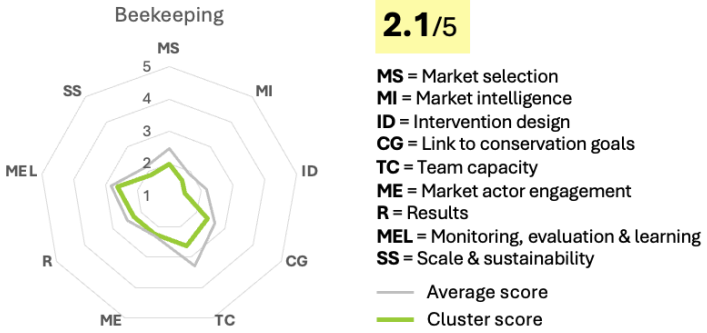
Details at: https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/project/DAR23016/

Links to conservation goals were clear in the sense of improved ecosystem services arising directly from the agroforestry regimes themselves (compared to monoculture agriculture) – though little to no evidence was provided as to the ability of agroforestry to relieve pressure on neighbouring natural forests, or the comparative ecosystem services of agroforestry vs. natural forest (given that conversion of natural forest to agroforestry would presumably be a net loss in biodiversity).

In several cases, projects failed to achieve logframe targets and were consequently marked down in their final review scores as a result of planted trees not yielding produce and generating revenue within the timeframe of the grant – something which ought to have been foreseeable in most cases (e.g., newly planted coffee and cacao trees each take three to five years to start producing). As noted elsewhere, means of rewarding projects for commendable progress in livelihood development aside from rapid income generation should be sought.

3.3.3 Beekeeping

Beekeeping projects scored lowest of all sector clusters. In all sampled cases, beekeeping was introduced as a completely new livelihood activity, albeit typically with little to no evidence of its potential commercial feasibility or consideration of the market constraints that might need to be addressed beyond the provision of training and equipment.



The most promising beekeeping projects were carried out by the Southern Tanzania Elephant Project, featuring a strong conservation rationale and work to create market linkages – though results were mixed even in this case (Box 4).

Box 4: STEP beekeeping projects (26-007, IWT052)

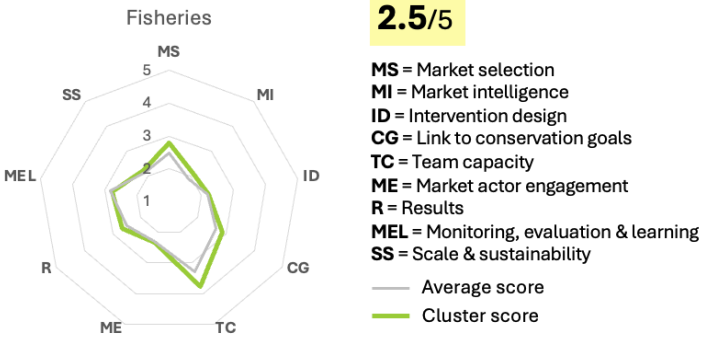
The two strongest beekeeping projects, both carried out by the Southern Tanzania Elephant Program (STEP), were notable for (a) a clear evidence-based conservation rationale for beekeeping as an elephant deterrent via beehive fences (rather than the somewhat tenuous and unproven alternative livelihood hypothesis of other beekeeping projects), and (b) support for promotion of "elephant-friendly" honey in local tourism markets, helping to increase the likelihood of commercial success. However, despite these strengths, even STEP found limited success in terms of both elephant deterrence (conservation goals) and honey sales (development goals) in one of their projects (though adaptive management in response to this, informed by their MEL work, should be commended).

Details at: https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/project/DAR26007/ https://iwt.challengefund.org.uk/project/XXIWT052

Household incomes were increased in five of eight sampled projects, though it was typically unclear whether (a) commercial incentives were sufficient for households to continue beekeeping beyond project support, or (b) whether beekeeping as an alternative livelihood was successful in discouraging participation in less sustainable livelihoods. In the remaining three projects, hive occupancy, honey production, and/or sales fell below expectations.

3.3.4 Fisheries

Fisheries projects performed relatively well, with the distinct advantage of a direct and unambiguous link between conservation and development goals – i.e., sustainable management of the underlying resource (fish stocks) has a direct effect on fisher incomes.



Interventions typically focused on regulatory measures such as no-take zones and temporary closures, which benefit from a strong existing evidence base as well as demonstrable effects on productivity (catch per unit effort, CPUE) and ecosystem health within the short timeframes of BCFs projects. While such natural resource governance work may not typically be considered as markets and livelihoods interventions by conservation practitioners, a market systems framing helps to see these "rules" as a crucial in helping to ensure the market's commercial and environmental sustainability.

However, as with interventions in other markets, fisheries projects tended not to analyse or engage with the value chain beyond primary producers (fishers), potentially missing opportunities to further develop fisher incomes or drive environmental sustainability norms in the wider market. LI-BIRD's work in Nepal was one promising exception (Box 5). It was also typically unclear whether projects' community based natural resource governance interventions would be upheld in the long term (e.g., the strength of community institutions in the face of infringements from within or outside of the community), and none addressed the potential risk of displacement effects (pushing unsustainable fishing practices beyond the project's area of control), or the negative consequences for fishers who were denied access to the resource under new regulations.

Box 5: LI-BIRD Pokhara Valley Lake Cluster fisheries (26-008)

In Nepal's Pokhara Valley, local conservation NGO Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research, and Development (LI-BIRD) collaborated with public and private sector partners to promote sustainable freshwater fishing in Pokhra's Lake Cluster. Fisher incomes increased after the introduction of more sustainable fishing practices, and commitments were secured with a private sector buyer to pay corresponding sustainability premiums. In addition, a portion of profits from both the partner fisher association and buyer were directed to a biodiversity fund in support of ongoing conservation work around the Lakes.

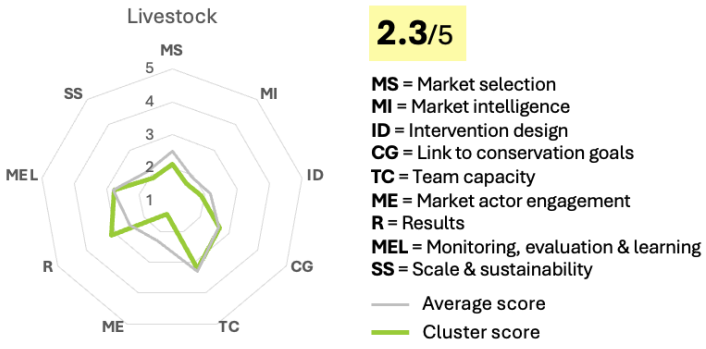
Details at: https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/project/DAR26008/

Finally, despite the apparent success of sustainable fisheries models in several projects, there were few signs of innovative attempts to scale the approach other than through intensive community-by-community implementation of the model by conservation NGOs. WCS's work in Belize (22-014) is one promising counterexample, whereby the Belize Fisheries Department, a consortium partner on the project, was closely involved in efforts to introduce sustainable fishing practices to pilot communities, with a view to potentially rolling out the model via wider government fishing regulations. Beyond government partners, private sector partners

(e.g., multinational seafood buyers) could be used to leverage change in the wider market – though no such collaborations were observed in the sample.

3.3.5 Livestock

Livestock projects scored slightly below average on most dimensions and received the lowest score of any cluster for the market engagement dimension, with only one of nine sampled projects engaging with buyers.



Most projects sought to promote sustainable grazing practices to reduce pressure on grasslands. While generally successful at this during the project lifetime, none of the projects provided analysis of the commercial incentives behind grazing practices, or evidence to suggest that recommended practices would be upheld in future.

One notable project, led by the Zoological Society of London in Nepal, serves as a useful example of the identification of critical constraints in the wider enabling environment (in this case, the "supporting function" – in market systems terms – of veterinary services), and subsequent support to build up these services with a clear succession plan to ensure sustainability.

Box 6: Veterinary clinics in Nepal (22-009)

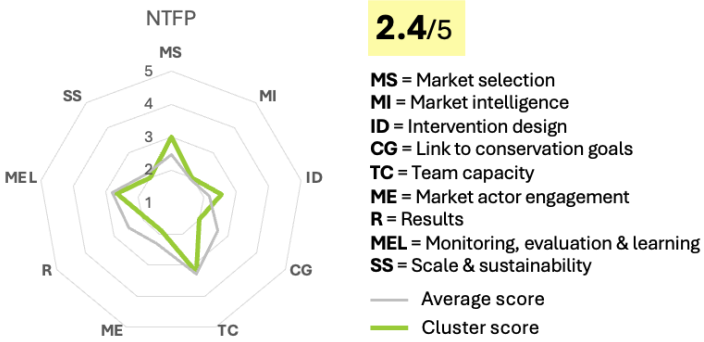
As part of a grassland conservation project in Nepal, the Zoological Society of London identified a lack of access to veterinary services as a key constraint in the livestock market, and worked to establish two veterinary clinics before handing over their operation to the local government. Two clinics were upgraded with new physical infrastructure and four veterinarians hired, leading to the number of households using veterinary services more than doubling (to almost 10,000 households), and a fivefold increase of foot and mouth disease vaccinations being issued. The full operation of the clinics was handed over to the District Livestock Services Office, who continued to run them at the close of project.

The project serves as a good example of a clear exit strategy for project support – and particularly one where sustainability does not hinge on private sector cooperation. As permanent actors in the market system, government agencies can also play important roles in the provision of the market's rules and supporting services (e.g., veterinary services). However, despite the positive signs, more evidence is required to confidently assess the viability of the government continuing to provide these services, including the business model of the clinics and proposed funding modalities.

Details at: https://www.biodiversitychallengefunds.org.uk/project/DAR22009

3.3.6 Non-timber forest products

NTFP projects performed slightly below average overall. Focal products included various fruits, nuts, mushrooms, seeds, and flowers, with a general rationale that income generated from sustainable harvest of products from natural forests will attach greater value to these forests and support their conservation.



While most projects in this cluster struggled, two standout projects raised the overall score – a Huddersfield Business School project working on enterprise development in Ethiopia (Box 7), and a Royal Botanic Gardens Kew project in the Chiquitano region of eastern Bolivia. Both of these documented participatory approaches to market selection from a range of options, working closely with local communities to identify products of the greatest relevance to both conservation and development goals, as well as those with the greatest commercial potential. Both used market studies to support their intervention design, both had strong private sector partners in their teams, and both demonstrated promising commercial performance and intent from beneficiaries to continue growing their NTFP businesses.

Box 7: Enterprise development in Ethiopia (25-013)

In Ethiopia, Huddersfield Business School conducted a series of market studies to scope NTFPs with the strongest combination of commercial potential plus conservation and development impacts, involving local communities in a participatory decision-making process to select target markets. The team then worked with existing producer cooperatives to establish microenterprises for the selected products, and to connect producer groups with commercial buyers. Through its monitoring, evaluation, and learning work, the project provided useful insights into progress in the development of the microenterprises, providing evidence of processing activities, purchasing commitments from buyers, production volumes, prices, and marketing activities.

Details at: https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/project/DAR25013/

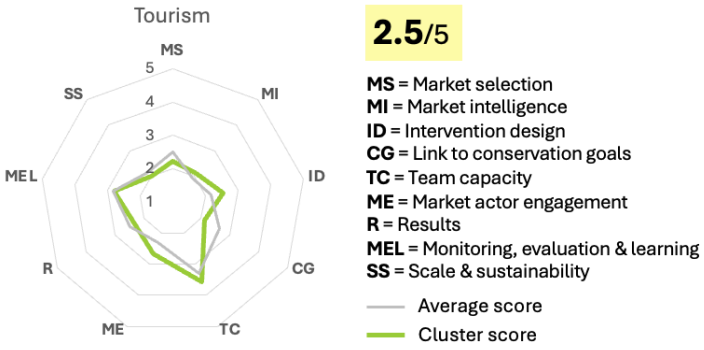
In the absence of these two projects, however, the cluster's overall score would have been just 1.9, the lowest of the sample (slightly behind beekeeping), with most projects failing to demonstrate the commercial viability of their target markets (a particular concern in niche markets for NTFPs, compared to, say, commodity agriculture or fisheries), and lacking any supporting analysis to inform intervention decision, market engagement, or evidence of scalable and sustainable results.

Notably, despite their strong livelihoods credentials, even the two standout projects in this cluster failed to provide strong evidence of their conservation impacts. As noted elsewhere, the key question is not whether income can be generated from these forests, but whether *sufficient* income can be generated to make conservation more profitable than the alternatives (e.g., clearing for agriculture). Even in well-governed protected

areas where clearing is not a practical option for communities, if the earnings from NTFPs are substantially less than alternative land uses, negative perceptions of resource restrictions through conservation may persevere.

3.3.7 Tourism

Tourism projects worked on a mix of existing and alternative livelihood development, promoting homestays, lodges, guiding, trekking, birding, and catering, among other services. Around half of the sampled projects worked with tour operators to establish market linkages to community-based tourism initiatives. While many projects in the study were severely disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on global tourism, several still conducted meaningful work that may yet yield promising results in the post-COVID recovery.



Box 8: Conservation social networking in Maputaland (25-003)

In Maputaland, a biodiversity hotspot in Southern Africa spanning South Africa, Eswatini, and southern Mozambique, the Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology (DICE, University of Kent) worked to build the online presence of ecotourism businesses in Mozambique via the conservation social media site, izele.org. The intervention was informed by prior experience in tourism development in the area, which found that tourism businesses on the Mozambique side of the transboundary landscape struggled to gain publicity and attract customers, most of whom were drawn to the more developed South African side. Despite significant disruptions to the tourism sector from the COVID-19 pandemic, the project remained largely on track in the delivery of its goals.

Details at: https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/project/DAR25003/

As with other clusters, most tourism projects provided no analysis of the tourism markets or constraints to be addressed. While the conservation rationale for nature-based tourism is clear (tying community livelihoods to the preservation of local nature), this effect was hardly ever tested via MEL (e.g., assessing how conservation attitudes and behaviours change as a result of new or improved tourism revenues). Little to no evidence was again provided on the commercial feasibility of supported tourism enterprises.

Two standout tourism projects – including the Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology's work in Maputaland and BirdLife International's work in Tanzania – were characterised by well-targeted interventions based on specific constraints identified through market analysis and prior experience in the sector (Box 8, Box 9).

Box 9: Community-based ecotourism at Lake Natron, Tanzania (24-019)

BirdLife International worked with a range of public and private partners in the tourism sector to develop a Tourism Development Plan for Lake Natron, a soda lake at the Tanzania-Kenya border. Despite its iconic red waters and flamingo population, the lake is often overlooked by tourists favouring the Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater of Tanzania's "northern circuit".

Market selection and intervention design was informed by a combination of pre- and in-project analysis, including a cost-benefit analysis comparing potential sustainable livelihood opportunities for communities bordering the lake. Identified market constraints were clearly set out in the "problem" section of the proposal (including skills, infrastructure, inefficient tourism levies, unsustainable use of local freshwater, and land rights issues), and a further market study was carried out at the start of the project in support of the new tourism development plan. The plan was ultimately endorsed by the government, and while COVID-19 temporarily suppressed visitor numbers, there are positive signs that conservation and development benefits could be delivered under the plan going forward.

Details at: https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/project/DAR24019/

4. Limitations and areas for further research

4.1 Limitations

The limitations of the study are noted as follows:

- **Desk review:** The deep dive drew exclusively on project documents (mainly proposals, final reports, and final report reviews), and did not include interviews with either grantees or wider project stakeholders and beneficiaries, or any primary data collection via fieldwork. While enabling a cost-efficient exercise and a large sample, the obvious drawbacks include limited access to more nuanced project information, including the perspectives of implementing teams on livelihoods programming (e.g., perceived challenges and opportunities, areas for additional support, or efforts not otherwise captured by project documents).
- **Sampling completed projects only:** In order to sample completed projects for which full end-of-project documentation was available, we only sampled up to projects starting in 2020. Any more recent developments in markets and livelihoods will not therefore have been captured.
- **Sampling recent projects only:** Related, the decision to only sample as far back as 2015 was made in order to ensure relevance of findings to current programming. While approaches to markets and livelihoods were noted as largely consistent over the 2015-20 time period, comparison with earlier years may shed more light on how these have changed over time in the conservation field.
- **Sampling funded projects only:** Only funded BCFs projects were included in the sampling frame, so as to ensure a full set of documentation related to completed projects. The proposed approaches of unsuccessful applicants may prove a useful comparison point.

- **COVID-19 disruption:** Many of the sampled projects encountered disruptions to planned activities resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 onwards (a timespan at least partially coinciding with almost half of the sampled projects). However, this is not thought to have significantly affected performance against most dimensions of the rubric, with the exception of the "results" dimension. Where shortfalls in results were attributable to the pandemic (mainly in the tourism cluster), this was noted in the coding. For the most part, it is noted that projects made commendable efforts to adapt to the challenging circumstances through changes in strategy or delivery models.
- **Sampling of projects with predetermined focal markets:** In order to stratify the sample by target market, only projects with predetermined target markets were selected. This may have led to a slight underestimation of the overall strength of the "market selection" dimension, since 5% of projects with markets and livelihoods objectives (2015-23) were coded as market "to be confirmed", based on proposed market selection exercises to be completed early in implementation. It is likely that the handful of projects taking this approach would have scored highly on our "market selection" criteria, having gone through a dedicated scoping and selection process.
- **Focus on income:** While the present study focused specifically on projects that sought to raise incomes via markets and livelihoods interventions, it is noted that BCFs generally takes a broader view of poverty reduction as a core goal alongside biodiversity conservation, potentially including aspects related to health, education, gender equity, nutrition, and so forth.

4.2 Areas for further research

Given the limitations outlined above, we see the present report as a useful high-level overview of the approach taken to markets and livelihoods programming in projects in a range of sectors spanning both DI and IWTCF. Going forward, further research could focus on the following:

- **Legacy evaluations**: The present review casts significant doubt on the scale and sustainability of markets and livelihoods results achieved by most BCFs projects. Further work is needed to follow up with past projects to better understand the legacies that they have left behind. Such research could range from phone interviews with implementing teams, stakeholders, and beneficiaries, to in-country fieldwork to gather empirical evidence of post-project results. Sampling of projects could take place from within the sample of completed projects assessed here, with efforts to ensure coverage of a mixture of high- and low-scoring projects according to our rubric.

  This would enable a set of rich case studies to complement the analysis presented here, verifying our findings and assumptions, and refining recommendations for future programming through a better understanding of the key factors explaining success or failure of projects in the long run.
- **Testing of markets, livelihoods, and conservation hypotheses:** The six impact pathways noted in the *Links to conservation goals* section each feature critical assumptions that are central to the rationale for markets and livelihoods interventions in conservation programming. However, the projects reviewed here provided scant evidence for these hypotheses in their final analysis – a result of oversimplified TOCs as reflected in project logframes and limited MEL capacities.

Additional research could seek to test clusters of common hypotheses through legacy evaluations as described above, or through research designs in collaboration with existing or future grantees (enabling action research that might strengthen the efforts of current projects).

- **Priority landscape market studies:** A lack of market intelligence underpinning interventions is one of the main weak points identified in BCFs markets and livelihoods programming. Since large-scale, in-depth market studies are typically prohibitively expensive and time consuming for the average BCFs project (particularly for smaller/local NGOs with limited past experience), market studies with a biodiversity focus could be commissioned by BCFs (or Defra/FCDO more broadly), providing an evidence base for potential future applicants and conservation practitioners more broadly.

  Studies could focus on specific priority landscapes of high conservation and development interest, examining the current markets and livelihoods threats to biodiversity, scoping opportunities for more sustainable livelihoods, and identifying the systemic constraints to be targeted via future programming in support of pro-conservation market development. However, the risk of such products leading to "top-down" solutions that lack contextual nuance or local expertise should be noted.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

Most of the reviewed DI and IWTCF projects applied a model of livelihoods programming that does not reflect the latest best practice in the development sector. Interventions are often characterised by a lack of market analysis and limited private sector engagement, relying on "direct delivery" aid models (whereby the project directly provides inputs or services, which can lead to donor dependency and limited potential for scale or sustainability of results) rather than systemic approaches (which seek to leverage lasting change at scale beyond a project's lifetime). While more than half achieve their logframe targets, these results tend to be limited in scope and unlikely to endure beyond the life of the grant. Moreover, the links from markets and livelihoods work to conservation goals are often based on tenuous assumptions that remain untested by projects.

Despite this, around one in six projects took approaches that were comparable to high quality programming in the development sector today, demonstrating a strong understanding of the focal market, deploying evidence-based interventions to unlock market constraints, and facilitating lasting change in incentives and behaviour through close relationships with private sector partners. While these projects remain the minority, enough exist to give confidence that sophisticated, ambitious approaches to markets and livelihoods programming are possible in a conservation context, even with the limited time and budget constraints of BCFs grants.

The key success factors emerging from the evaluation are below condensed into five key points, with "red flags" noted to support appraisal of future grant applications. Beyond these summary points, a range of additional recommendations are provided for both projects (including potential applicants and current grantees) and BCFs management in the following sections.

Success factors in proposals	Red flags for reviewers
(1) A systemic approach rooted in market analysis and diagnostics: Evidence of potential commercial viability of the proposed livelihood strategy/business model. Good understanding of market structure and functioning. Interventions designed to address priority market constraints. *Evaluation rubric dimensions: (1) Market selection, (2) Market intelligence, (3) Intervention design*	• No evidence of a viable market. • No discussion of how the market functions or what the key constraints are. • Intervention design defaults to training and/or equipment provision without supporting evidence.
(2) Clear links to conservation goals: Robust theory of change, including key underlying assumptions, clearly maps the causal path between markets and livelihoods work and conservation outcomes, with plans to assess this via MEL. *Evaluation rubric dimensions: (4) Links to conservation goals*	• Lack of consideration of the specific incentives that need to be in place to shift behaviour from the status quo to more conservation-oriented outcomes.
(3) Facilitating lasting change through private sector partnerships: Private sector partners included on the bidding team and/or plans to collaborate with market actors (beyond immediate beneficiaries) during implementation. *Evaluation rubric dimensions: (5) Team capacity, (6) Market engagement*	• No private sector partners on the core team. • No proposed collaboration with private sector partners (beyond immediate beneficiaries) during implementation.
(4) Focus on incentives & behaviour: Project strategy focuses on facilitating long-term shifts in incentives and behaviour, paying attention to commercial viability of supported livelihood strategies / business models relative to the opportunity cost of alternative practices. *Evaluation rubric dimensions: (7) Results, (9) Scale and sustainability*	• Vague exit strategy / reliance on generalisations ("improved capacity"). • Lack of consideration of the specific incentives needed to sustain results beyond the project's lifetime.
(5) Strong monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems: MEL framework based on detailed theory of change mapping activities to outcomes without leaps of logic. Logframe features indicators of behaviour and incentives, including commercial performance of supported livelihood strategies/business models. Attention given to additionality and attribution, plus potential negative outcomes/displacement effects. *Evaluation rubric dimensions: (8) Monitoring, evaluation, and learning*	• Logframe/TOC includes leaps from activities (e.g., farmer training) to outcomes (e.g., income) without consideration of interim steps. • Simple before/after monitoring of outcomes (e.g., income, forest cover) without attempts to attribute effects to specific interventions. • No commercial indicators (e.g., sales, profitability, product quality).

The above success factors should, however, be caveated by a recognition that these more sophisticated approaches were typically found in the work of large international NGOs. While raising the standard of livelihoods programming should be an aspiration for BCFs, it will be important to avoid doing so in a way that only larger,

better-resourced applicants can take advantage of, given the general priority across BCFs of encouraging more successful applications from local organisations across the Global South. In addition, it should be noted that any additional requirements or recommendations for grantees should not come at the expense of nimble, innovative implementation. While the best market development programming in the development sector is rooted in sound market intelligence, the risk of "paralysis by analysis" should be noted, particularly in the context of already thinly stretched challenge fund grantees. A range of more detailed recommendations for both projects and fund management are included at the end of the report.

5.1 Recommendations for projects

- Adopt an approach to livelihoods programming more strongly rooted in current best practice in **market systems** and **value chain** approaches in the economic development field (see resource libraries at, e.g., the BEAM Exchange and DCED).
- Provide justification for the choice of focal market both in terms of relevance to **conservation and development goals** as well as **commercial feasibility** of intervention.
    - Take particular care to ensure commercial feasibility/existence of a viable market in the case of niche products (e.g., NTFPs), or when promoting alternative livelihood strategies that are entirely new to a particular area/target group.
    - Even if well-established markets exist (e.g., commodity agriculture/agroforestry, fisheries), be sure to make a commercial case for the specific intervention proposed (e.g., adopting more sustainable practices or integrated marginalised smallholders into formal value chains).
- Ensure that project design is informed by **strong knowledge of how the focal market works**.
    - **Map the market system**, including the value chain and wider enabling environment of rules and supporting functions. What is the nature of relationships between different actors? Where are the strengths and weaknesses of the system? What effect does the system currently have on your conservation and development interests (e.g., what role do poor/marginalised actors play? What is the environmental impact of the market?)
    - If dedicated market studies are not feasible due to time/resource constraints, use more **cost-efficient evidence sources** such as key informant interviews, case studies, focus groups, and secondary literature. Close relationships with market actors can help to keep projects in touch with latest developments at little to no cost.
    - Develop **overarching organisation- or landscape-level markets and livelihoods strategies** that multiple grants/projects (BCFs or otherwise) can build on over time. Evidence underpinning such strategies could then be referred to as justification for the proposed approach when writing new grants.
    - Identify the **root causes of market underperformance** with respect to conservation and development goals in order to develop well-targeted interventions that can leverage lasting change in the system.

- Keep on top of market developments during implementation to ensure the project can respond to emerging opportunities and threats.

- Ensure that intervention design **avoids leaps of logic in the theory of change** – be clear exactly how project activities are expected to deliver results, and the assumptions underpinning this logic.
    - Ensure that the **link between markets and livelihoods interventions and conservation goals** is made explicit in the proposal, with underlying assumptions clearly spelled out, and tested via MEL.
- **Design interventions with the sustainability of results in mind from the outset**, focusing on the required incentives for behaviour change.
    - Be specific about the commercial conditions and incentives necessary for conservation goals to be achieved. Is the proposed livelihood strategy sufficiently profitable to avoid a reversion to the status quo once the project ends? If not, what **complementary interventions** are needed to create incentives for more sustainable behaviour? (e.g., natural resource governance, law enforcement)
- Focus on **facilitating change through existing market actors** (beyond immediate beneficiaries) rather than directly delivering support to communities, thereby building relationships and market linkages that will outlive the project.
    - Where possible and relevant, seek to **include private sector partners in the core team** who can help to facilitate lasting business relationships and bring commercial expertise to bear on the project.
- Seek to **build organisational capacity in markets and livelihoods programming**, drawing on resources from the international development sector (literature, training courses, webinars, conferences, tools/guidelines), particularly with regards to market systems and value chain approaches.
    - Consider **partnering with development practitioners**, particularly those with experience in market systems and value chain development.
- **Pilot** innovative livelihoods strategies and business models on a small scale before using additional interventions to stimulate **scale-up** through replication in the wider market.
- Ensure that MEL systems generate timely and insightful lessons to inform ongoing adaptive management as well accountability.
    - Ensure the TOC and MEL framework include **interim indicators of success** (e.g., attitudes, behaviour) to enable results tracking in between low-level activities (e.g., farmer training) and outcomes, (e.g., household income).
    - Seek to provide evidence of **attribution and additionality**, assessing the extent to which results are additional to what would have happened anyway (the counterfactual), and the degree of attribution of results to different interventions.

- Be mindful of **potential negative side-effects** (e.g., displacement effects) when designing the TOC and MEL framework. Monitor and mitigate these effects where possible.

- Ensure that the proposed **exit strategy** includes a detailed vision of how supported livelihood strategies are expected to be sustained beyond the project, with a clear focus on incentives and behaviour change. Avoid relying on generic legacy effects such as "improved capacity".

5.2 Recommendations for BCFs management

- Provide potential applicants with **resources on best practice in livelihoods programming**, drawing on examples from the international development sector.
- Provide guidance to applicants on the importance of **market intelligence** underpinning livelihoods interventions, along with recommendations for efficient methods of gathering such information.
    - Provide additional **guidance on what constitutes a good "exit strategy"** in proposals, with a strong focus on incentives and behaviour change.
    - **Review grantee MEL guidance in light of the common MEL shortcomings identified**, providing additional guidance / resources where necessary. Link applicants and grantees to resources on MEL best practice in market development, with an emphasis on assessing systems change.
- Require that the **choice of market** be justified in proposals not only in terms of relevance to conservation and development goals, but also the **commercial viability** of intervention.
- **Require a TOC diagram for all funding streams**, allowing for (a) greater **nuance** than can be communicated through simple logframe indicators and (b) greater **clarity** than the narrative TOC included in existing proposals.
- **Reconsider the risk appetite of the challenge funds** and the corresponding definitions of success/failure in markets and livelihood programming on BCFs grants, seeking to incentivise facilitation of private sector innovation, and moving away from "quick wins" of direct delivery programming.
    - Seek to **reward projects for incremental progress in market systems change**, avoiding an emphasis on rapid income gains at the expense of more meaningful, lasting results.
    - Encourage logframe indicators that focus on **interim results** (e.g., shifts in attitudes, behaviour, business practices, responses of private sector partners), allowing a more nuanced appraisal of progress beyond activity monitoring and before/after household income assessments.
    - Encourage the use of **multiple funding schemes** to enable **sequencing of interventions in complex market systems** - e.g., market studies could be carried out under "Evidence" projects (IWTCF); new business models could be piloted under "Innovation" projects (DI); successful pilots could be scaled via "Extra" projects (potentially enabling a shift away from seeking quick

income gains towards a greater appetite for risk and innovation on "Innovation"/"Main" projects).

- Conduct **further research** to build evidence around the range of hypothesised **impact pathways linking livelihoods work to conservation goals**.
- Host events such as **trainings or workshops** for grantees to share experiences in livelihoods programming, building capacity and spreading best practice.
- Provide reviewers with guidance on **what kinds of livelihoods results are realistic** to expect within the budget and timeframe of BCFs grants, helping to avoid the funding of unrealistically ambitious projects.
- Use Fund-level networking/events to **connect market actors** (e.g., international buyers with environmental sustainability commitments) **to potential applicants/grantees**.
- **Encourage development practitioners to apply for BCFs grants** (potentially via collaboration with FCDO) given the growing emphasis on climate and biodiversity in development programming.

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Annex 1: Projects reviewed

The below table summarises the projects and the markets and livelihoods scores awarded. Full coding of projects is available in a separate Excel file.

Project Ref	Project title	Cluster	Score	Summary
22-005	Conserving Madagascar's yams through cultivation for livelihoods and food security	agriculture	**2.33**	Enhanced livelihoods and improved food security by project communities through cultivation, sustainable harvesting and conservation. Native yam species, particularly threatened species, cultivars and biocultural information conserved and accessible in Madagascar.
22-007	Establishing Sustainable Management of the Lake Sofia Catchment Madagascar	agriculture	**2.11**	Over 10,000 wetland-dependant people have secure access to natural resources and are part of a community-based management regime which improves food security/wellbeing/livelihoods and ecological conditions.
22-011	Conserving biodiversity by improving farming practises and livelihoods in Hoima	agriculture	**3.67**	The threat of critical forest and wetland habitat destruction is mitigated by training Hoima district farmers in conservation farming and providing them access to more profitable markets.
24-010	Mobilising useful plant conservation to enhance Atlas Mountain community livelihoods	agriculture	**2.33**	Integrated conservation of 12 threatened culturally important plant species and management of Important Plant Areas in the Atlas Mountains is achieved through community action and capacity building, accompanied by improved livelihoods through agroecological production, water resource rehabilitation, access to medical care, secondary education for girls and sustainable harvest of useful plants.
25-030	Biodiversity Conservation and Community Development in Al-Makhrour Valley in Bethlehem, Palestine	agriculture	**1.67**	British and Palestinian collaboration to conserve biodiversity in Al-Makhrour Valley of Bethlehem (Palestine) benefitting the local communities through sustainable use of ecosystem services, including (a) promoting agriculture/green practices, (b) developing ecotourism, and (c) reducing human impact via environmental awareness and education programs while promoting sustainable lifestyles. Project outputs delivered will focus on biodiversity conservation, traditional farming reviving, eco-tourism enhancement, and capacity building. All activities will be supported with project committees' consultation, gender inclusion, media coverage, and evaluation.
26-015	Traditional African vegetables strengthen food	agriculture	**1.67**	The project aims to secure benefits of agro-biodiversity for poor farmer households in two vegetable production regions in Madagascar: Itasy and Antsirabe. First, the project will protect genetic

Project Ref	Project title	Cluster	Score	Summary
	and nutrition security in Madagascar			resources of traditional vegetables through ex-situ and on-farm conservation. Second, the project will support Malagasy women farmers with practise-oriented research and quality-seed production to grow promising varieties of traditional vegatables. This will make farming systems more climate-resilient, secure increased income for women farmers, and improve food and nutrition security of Malagasy households.
27-005	Organic livelihoods conserving Cambodia's big five	agriculture	**3.89**	This project will enable 2,750 rural people to improve food security via an organic rice scheme at nine villages surrounding two globally irreplaceable protected areas in Cambodia; seven at Siem Pang (SPWS) and two at Lomphat (LWS) wildlife sanctuaries. The project will work closely with local authorities and communities to support farmers and reduce illegal activities and establish two additional Community Protected Areas within the two sanctuaries, allowing for stable populations of Cambodia's Big Five Critically Endangered bird species.
IWT014	Bi-national Collaboration to Eradicate Wildlife Trafficking in Belize and Guatemala (£499,345.00)	agriculture	**2.33**	Belize and Guatemala governments demonstrate improved capacity and collaboration to eradicate cross-frontier wildlife trafficking in the Chiquibul-Maya Mountains ecoregion, through strengthened intelligence, law enforcement and prosecution, and improved awareness to deter trade in highly endangered psittacines, while Civil Society Organizations mobilize improved coordination between governments by supporting national, bilateral, and multilateral initiatives that protect emblematic species, conserve natural resources, and propel economic alternatives for rural communities on targeted wildlife trade routes.
IWT036	Implementing park action plans for community engagement to tackle IWT (£458,780.00)	agriculture	**3.78**	In Uganda many people poach because of human wildlife conflict or lack of income earning opportunities. Uganda Wildlife Authority has a community programme to address such problems, but it is hampered by weak capacity and limited HQ support. This project will pilot community engagement through park-level action plans; and build UWA capacity to support the plans as a complement to law enforcement.
22-003	Sustainable Manu: Biodiversity conservation through sustainable development and rainforest regeneration (£289,728.00)	agroforestry	**2.22**	Demonstrate to the conservation community how rainforest regeneration can deliver high-priority biodiversity conservation and enhanced livelihoods for communities currently dependent on unsustainable exploitation of rainforest habitat in Manu Biosphere Reserve.

Project Ref	Project title	Cluster	Score	Summary
23-016	Yerba mate – a market-driven model for conserving Paraguay's Atlantic Forest (£309,244.00)	agroforestry	**4.11**	Partnership between the indigenous Mbya Guarani, campesinos, private sector, government and civil society, will support and promote shade-grown yerba maté cultivation at San Rafael reserve, providing culturally and environmentally appropriate land use that reduces poverty, respects rights and conserves globally-threatened forest biodiversity, and informs conservation of Paraguay's remaining Atlantic Forest fragments.
23-029	Investing in agroforestry options for forest restoration in Indonesia (£298,896.00)	agroforestry	**3.44**	Indonesia has >80Mha of exhausted logging concessions. Restoration of these forests is a high priority for biodiversity conservation, but is undermined by smallholder encroachment. Working in Harapan Rainforest, an Ecosystem Restoration Concession, Sumatra, we will develop and implement agroforestry options to reconcile restoration goals and livelihood aspirations of local communities.
24-011	Wildlife-friendly agroforestry and sustainable forest management in Bolivian indigenous territories (£398,872.00)	agroforestry	**2.89**	This project will conserve over 1 million hectares of highly biodiverse forests in Bolivia. It will increase the capacity of indigenous communities to control and protect their forests, strengthen their livelihoods by improving coffee and cacao agroforestry management, and increase avian diversity in and around agroforestry plots.
24-025	Community reforestation for biodiversity, livelihood diversification and culture (£309,182.00)	agroforestry	**2.44**	Biodiversity and livelihoods enhanced through expansion of community led reforestation that integrates agroforestry, farmer managed natural regeneration, biodiversity conservation and carbon payments through an internationally recognised carbon accreditation scheme. Indigenous knowledge and Timorese customary law (Tara Bandu) will guide project activities to ensure alignment with community values and goals.
25-005	Enabling ecosystems to deliver sustainable development goals at Lake Indawgyi (£329,590.00)	agroforestry	**2.11**	The project will protect forest and wetland biodiversity including habitat for >20,000 birds and numerous threatened species, such as vultures, cranes, turtles, hog deer, pangolins, bears, langurs, gibbons and others, in the globally important Indawgyi Lake Biosphere Reserve. It takes an ecosystems approach at watershed scale, building capacity for collaborative conservation management and improving natural resource management and local livelihoods, benefitting 10,000 people. The project is particularly innovative in engaging the emerging private sector in Myanmar to support sustainable practices.

Project Ref	Project title	Cluster	Score	Summary
25-014	Landscapes and Livelihoods: Participatory Restoration of the Mt Bamboutos Ecosystem (£248,668.00)	agroforestry	**1.78**	Working with nine villages on the degraded Bamboutos mountain, we will commence reestablishment of key biodiversity habitat and catchment areas through community-led forestrestoration. Increasing tree cover on farms through agroforestry and the development of tree-based valuechains will improve food security and income for poor mountain communities, leading toimproved livelihoods, as well as biodiversity. We will engage local, regional and national stakeholders in participatory planning to agree on aprocess for the long term conservation of the ecosystem.
27-014	Coffee Natural Capital for Environmental and Livelihood Sustainability in Uganda	agroforestry	**3.89**	Uganda's coffee sector comprises c. 1.7 million householders and over 3.5 million people in related activities,generating c. 25% of the country's export earnings. Sustainability of the sector in Uganda is paramount. Theaim of this project is to demonstrate the substantial value of Uganda's coffee natural capital for: Uganda'scoffee economy, livelihood sustainability, climate change adaptation, and ecosystem service provision. It willalso reveal the positive synergies between climate change adaptation, biodiversity, the ecosystem, andcommercial activity (coffee farming).
27-017	Community-led approaches to reforestation benefitting chimpanzees and livelihoods in Uganda	agroforestry	**3.22**	Uganda's endangered eastern chimpanzees live in forests fragmented by agriculture, exacerbated by extractives development. Smallholders lack food security due to marginal yields and high levels of crop raiding by wildlife. Reforesting and maintaining riverine corridors that bridge larger forest blocks is essential to humanwildlife co-existence. Equipping communities with training and inputs for reforestation, agroforestry system development and human-wildlife conflict mitigation, provision of tree seedlings (indigenous reforestation and agroforestry), and the establishment of conservation enterprise will help to secure this co-existence.
24-021	Empowering Ivorian communities to conserve biodiversity and improve their livelihoods (£300,000.00)	beekeeping	**1.78**	The project will support the cocoa industry to remove deforestation and poaching from itssupply chain, as well as the Ivorian government's commitment to a deforestation-freeagricultural economy, by facilitating the creation of a Landscape Management Board in SouthWest Taï to rehabilitate degraded land in and around forest reserves.

Project Ref	Project title	Cluster	Score	Summary
25-011	Andean bears and people: coexistence through poverty reduction (£266,625.00)	beekeeping	**2.33**	By linking poverty reduction, improved wellbeing and benefits from biodiversity conservation, this project works towards human-bear coexistence in the southern Bolivian Andes. It focusses on developing livelihoods and increasing benefits from the protection of the bears, alongside research towards a better and transferrable understanding of the ecological and social dynamics of human-wildlife conflicts.
25-031	Partnering with Business for Restoration of Mt Kenya ecosystem services (£336,276.00)	beekeeping	**2.11**	Commercial water users, who extract water from rivers emanating from Mt Kenya'sforests make strategic commitments to support forest restoration in order to sustain thequality of their water supply. Twelve local forest communities, empowered as waterproviders/suppliers, secure financing agreements with commercial downstream waterusers (buyers) to fund restoration of 500 hectares of forest annually to protect MtKenya's biodiversity and sustain and improve its water provision services. Lessonslearned enhance Nature Kenya's capacity to mainstream biodiversity financing intobusiness.
26-003	Securing the long-term future of Kenya's largest freshwater wetland (£341,972.00)	beekeeping	**2.44**	We will secure globally important biodiversity and local livelihoods in Kenya's Yala Delta through gazettementof an 8,404-ha Community Conservation Area, underpinned by an integrated management plan implementedby a trained multi-stakeholder management committee within the framework of a Land Use Plan adopted asgovernment policy. Livelihoods will be improved by strengthening producer cooperatives (for papyrus,vegetables, fish, tourism, honey and chicken), benefiting c250,000 people and ensuring continued provision ofvital ecosystem services. Project lessons will be widely shared.
26-007	Enhancing Tanzanian human-wildlife coexistence through corridor restoration and livelihood projects (£241,796.00)	beekeeping	**2.67**	The project will address the fundamental drivers of human-wildlife conflict in the Kilombero Valley, Tanzaniathrough resoration of a key wildlife corridor and facilitation of community-led livelihood projects along thecorridor. A bottom-up land use planning process will be followed to create and manage the corridor. Workingwith farmers and the wider community, beehive fence projects, agroforestry, community banks andcoexistence tourism will increase and diversify incomes, reduce crop losses from wildlife, and conservebiodiversity and ecological connectivity.

Project Ref	Project title	Cluster	Score	Summary
26-019	Secure Wetland Ecosystems to improve livelihoods through Community Conservation Agreements (£299,939.00)	beekeeping	**1.67**	The project will address the multiple threats to the 21,000 hectares of interlinked wetlands that are Nyamuriroswamp, Ruhuhuma valley and Lake Bunyonyi in Kabale, Kigezi region. These threats constitute mainlyunregulated drainage and unsustainable extraction of products, including proposed peat extraction forelectricity generation. Community Conservation Agreements will empower people (10,000 households) toenhance benefits from wetlands' ecosystem services, improve their farming practices, protect globallythreatened species such as the Endangered Grey Crowned-Crane and increase carbon sequestrationpotential
IWT052	Increasing Capacity for Anti-Poaching and Enhancing Human-Elephant Coexistence (£123,700.00)	beekeeping	**2.56**	This three-year project will strengthen the capacity of wildlife authorities in Rungwa-Kizigo-Muhesi Game Reserves to combat wildlife poaching, and enhance human-elephant coexistence via community beehive-fences and community-led elephant monitoring networks and awareness days. STEP will work with protection departments to expand aerial surveillance and capacity for integrating patrol and surveillance data into intelligence-led ranger mobilizations. Coexistence interventions will increase food security, provide additional income, eliminate human and elephant deaths, and reduce tolerance for elephant poaching.
IWT076	Cross-Border Coordination to Reduce IWT in the Guatemala-Mexico Green Corridor	beekeeping	**1.44**	Increased poaching of valuable hardwood species and fauna is impacting Guatemala's Maya BiosphereReserve, the Calakmul Biosphere Reserve and Balamku State Reserve in Mexico. Poaching is controlled bypowerful Mexican syndicates, penetrating the Green Corridor between Guatemala and Mexico. In response,the project will: 1) strengthen patrolling/law enforcement in frontier protected areas; 2) increase awareness about IWT; 3) propel effective legal frameworks; 4) advance sustainable livelihoods in Guatemalan and Mexican communities; and 5) consolidate a binational network for long-term collaboration.
22-014	Maximizing Benefits of Marine Reserves and Fisheries Management in Belize (£273,150.00)	fisheries	**3.00**	Sustainable fisheries management increases catch-per-unit-effort and income, strengthens ecosystem health, and provides a model for expansion of no-take zones and managed access programs in marine reserves across Belize.
22-019	Supporting community conserved areas in Uganda for biodiversity and livelihoods (£293,993.00)	fisheries	**2.78**	Ecosystem services and cultural values support the establishment and participatory management of three CCAs, which conserve biodiversity, reduce ecosystem degradation, and improve the wellbeing of 3,000 households.

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23-011	Transforming marine resource management in the Republic of Congo (£299,436.00)	fisheries	**2.22**	Improved food security and poverty reduction in fisheries-dependent coastal communities in the Republic of Congo, resulting from more effective marine resource governance; and stakeholder-led design of an evidenced-based marine spatial plan that includes MPAs and community and industrial fishing zones, that enhance ecological integrity, reduce conflict and conserve biodiversity.
23-024	Securing marine fisheries, livelihoods and biodiversity in Myanmar through co-management (£299,870.00)	fisheries	**2.56**	Building on emergent political, legal and economic transformations to support fishing communities and government authorities establish a co-management plan for Thandwe District coastline in Myanmar. Planning will improve governance and sustainability of inshore fisheries by introducing practices that recover stocks, increase income and food security, while mitigating threatened species bycatch.
24-015	Community conservation of Chitwan National Park's freshwater ecosystems and Gharials (£397,755.00)	fisheries	**2.11**	A four year project to safeguard the future of the critically endangered gharial population and the vital Narayani and Rapti river ecosystems, harnessing community engagement and support. Through these conservation efforts, local communities' access to clean water, food security, sustainable fisheries, agro-biodiversity and other livelihoods will be secured.
25-009	Fish for Tomorrow – Community sustainable fisheries management, Nkhotakota District, Malawi (£314,269.00)	fisheries	**2.33**	A community-led conservation initiative protecting endangered, vulnerable and economically important fish species in Lake Malawi, preserving biodiversity and sustaining livelihoods and food security in Nkhotakota District. The project teaches local communities about natural resource management, family and financial planning and how to reduce the environmental impact of harmful fishing practices. Community members are empowered to work in partnership with government fisheries staff to conserve fish through local bylaws. Women are active participants, reflecting their key role in the value chain.
25-022	Restoring Coastal Fisheries through Sustainable Development in Indonesia (£388,560.00)	fisheries	**2.33**	Our project focuses on creating nature-based solutions to catalyse sustainable development in coastal communities. We create conservation compacts with communities which are bilateral partnerships to both promote fair and equitable development in tandem with conservation. This project utilizes temporary mangrove reserves to restore coastal fisheries through providing community-based services.
25-024	Securing marine biodiversity and fishers' income through sustainable fisheries, Mozambique (£349,974.00)	fisheries	**2.00**	The growing coastal population in Northern Mozambique due to gas sector industries will increase seafood demand and pressure on this fragile marine biodiversity hotspot. Our Sea Our Life aims to improve socio-ecological resilience in a way that is pro-poor and gender inclusive. We will enhance a

Project Ref	Project title	Cluster	Score	Summary
				scalable model for sustainable solutions in two Cabo Delgado communities while fostering saving groups of vulnerable female fishers to farm bivalves as an alternative to illegal mosquito net fishing.
26-008	Market-led approach to sustainable management of agrobiodiversity for livelihood outcomes (£240,223.00)	fisheries	**3.56**	The project will generate alternative livelihoods for 3,000 smallholder farmers in a Ramsar site the LakeCluster of Pokhara Valley through a scalable place-based marketing approach. A Unified Landscape Brandwill be used to differentiate agricultural and fishery products from the Ramsar site in local and regional marketsto generate income. The project will forge multi-stakeholder partnerships with public and private sectors,cooperatives and communities to mobilize local resources and foster stewardship for sustainable managementof agricultural and wetland biodiversity.
22-009	Securing Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve's grasslands and wellbeing of local communities (£284,417.00)	livestock	**3.11**	Healthy grassland ecosystems in and around Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve improve the well-being for 2500 households through productive livestock, better access to veterinary services and more accessible fodder resources.
23-009	Sustainable rangeland management to protect red pandas and herder livelihoods (£290,000.00)	livestock	**2.33**	Community-based landcare program builds herder and agency capacity to achieve sustainable rangeland management and red panda conservation in eastern Bhutan. Herder livelihoods improved through better pasture and livestock management, forest regeneration, alternative energy technology, women's savings group and vegetable gardens. Research and education on red pandas galvanises community-agency conservation action.
23-015	Guinea pigs as guinea pigs, reducing bushmeat hunting while improving communities wellbeing (£299,494.00)	livestock	**2.11**	This project will reduce bushmeat hunting pressures on threatened mammal species in DRC's Kahuzi-Biega National Park while improving wellbeing in target mining communities by 1) introducing improved livestock husbandry practices; 2) building financial capacity and launching micro-credit initiatives to target households; and 3) increasing knowledge and enforcement of hunting laws.
24-002	Cattle, water and wildlife: enhancing socio-ecological resilience in Laikipia (£399,382.00)	livestock	**2.00**	An inclusive approach to strengthening rangeland and water resource management will contribute to reduced natural resource conflict, safeguard pastoralist cattle-based livelihoods, support innovative livelihood diversification by smallholders, and extend dispersal areas for endangered wildlife including predators and black rhino, in the greater Ol Pejeta Conservancy landscape.

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25-012	Steppe-up: Community-led recovery of Mongolia's iconic species and forest-steppe ecosystem (£329,952.00)	livestock	**2.78**	We will establish a local protected area to promote socio-ecological resilience to support the recovery of the globally-endangered Saker falcon, Steppe eagle, Marmot and Musk deer and disincentivise over-exploitation and degradation of their threatened forest-steppe habitat, by securing the economic wellbeing and food security for the forest-steppe dependent community in Arkhangai. Scalable, equitable, community-driven initiatives will be delivered through: biological monitoring; sustainable forest management; pasture management; sustainable livelihoods and strengthened governance, providing a model for LPA expansion across the forest-steppe.
26-001	Community livelihood and capacity support for securing Zimbabwe's wetland biodiversity (£295,610.00)	livestock	**1.78**	Driefontein Grasslands is a Ramsar site, supporting many threatened species and more than half of Zimbabwe's crane population. These wetlands are a vital habitat for wildlife but also for rural communities whohave become increasingly dependent on them. There is recognition of the importance of wildlife but poverty isdriving unsustainable use. This project seeks to balance biodiversity conservation and human livelihoodsthrough capacity building and demonstrating viability of sustainable livelihoods. Lessons learnt will be sharedacross Zimbabwe and beyond.
26-012	Ghodaghodi's Guardians: Communities restoring a Ramsar wetland at watershed scale (£320,931.00)	livestock	**1.78**	Ghodaghodi Lake Area (GLA) is a globally-significant Ramsar wetland with high natural capital andbiodiversity, playing a crucial role in enabling conflict-free species movement through the transboundaryWestern Terai Complex. However, fast-growing tourism, agro-pollution, over-grazing and over-fishing threatenthis critical ecosystem. This project will begin restoring GLA's ecological integrity through community-led, natural capital-basedsustainable management. This will increase well-being and water security, while protecting biodiversity andconnectivity through sustainable tourism, women-led cooperatives, land-use planning, biological monitoringand Bird Sanctuary declaration.
26-013	Conservation and poverty alleviation through sustainable ranching in Paraguay (£399,132.00)	livestock	**2.56**	This project will stem forest and biodiversity loss while mitigating socio-economic vulnerability by buildingcapacity for, and implementing, sustainable ranching practices in collaboration with local communities,government, and academia. Paraguay's leading meat processing company will support these efforts andcontribute to large-scale industry standard adoption.Interventions will be scaled by large and small-scale Chacoan ranchers committing to sustainable practices inexchange for market access and multi-disciplinary expertise, thus reducing deforestation pressure, enhancing biodiversity protection and improving welfare of vulnerable communities.

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26-021	Biodiversity conservation, vicuña health and local livelihoods in Apolobamba, Bolivia (£292,302.00)	livestock	**2.33**	We will improve pasture and peatland management in the Apolobamba protected area and the overlappingMarka Cololo de Antaquilla indigenous land to reduce threats to critical biodiversity habitat, improve the overallhealth of vicuña populations, and increase local capacity for fiber processing and marketing, thereby improvinglocal livelihoods. Lessons learned will be shared with other vicuña herder organizations to promote biodiversityconservation and improve local livelihoods.
22-013	Conserving pine woodland biodiversity in Belize through community fire management (£298,998.00)	ntfp	**1.89**	Biodiversity of pine woodlands in southern Belize is conserved by developing community-based wildfire management, with local communities incentivised to participate through a more just and sustainable use of woodland resources.
23-034	Edible wild orchid trade: sustaining livelihoods and biodiversity in Zambia	ntfp	**1.56**	Food security and livelihoods of poor rural women and girls1 in Zambia are enhanced through development of a community based natural resource management plan for wild orchids, preventing their over-exploitation (that includes trade across national borders), while building capacity for participatory biodiversity conservation, research, environmental education and policy development.
24-001	Improving forest governance for Cross River gorillas and Nigerian farmers (£303,641.00)	ntfp	**2.22**	The project will protect critically endangered Cross River gorillas by providing economic incentives (through improved livelihoods) and governance incentives (through land tenure) for rural communities to improve conservation and governance of a community-managed protected area – Nigeria's Mbe Mountains - and a critically important adjacent forests.
24-003	Conservation and poverty alleviation through scalable agro-biodiversity practice in Laos (£433,478.00)	ntfp	**1.78**	This project will deliver sustainable climate-smart forest resource use through promoting scalable agro-biodiversity practices that are successfully adopted by local communities bordering Laos' second largest and most biodiverse protected area, Nam Et Phou Louey National Protected Area; leading to greater biodiversity protection, reduced deforestation and improved welfare of vulnerable communities.
24-006	Enhancing forest biodiversity and community resilience to Tajikistan's changing climate (£383,708.00)	ntfp	**2.67**	Local communities and forest service will be motivated, empowered and supported to take collaborative action to conserve, restore and sustainably use the globally important fruit-and-nut forest at two sites in Tajikistan. This results in improved livelihoods, through participatory NTFP market development, and greater resilience to climate change and other shocks.

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25-013	NTFP micro-enterprises for competitive forests and livelihoods in Ethiopia (£374,420.00)	ntfp	**3.78**	This project tackles a set of connected issues inhibiting community-based enterprise development in southwest Ethiopia. These challenges are linked to biodiversity and the need to provide local communities with livelihoods supported by under-utilised non-timber forest products. The project particularly focuses on developing value chains which enable economically excluded local women to create micro-enterprises targeting new national and international markets. The proposal is underpinned by a commitment to Participatory Forestry Management which promotes local involvement, sustainable economic development opportunities and biodiversity.
25-026	Securing healthy baobab populations through efficient fruit harvesting and use (£207,203.00)	ntfp	**1.89**	At three pilot sites we will establish a sustainable trade of Grandidier's baobab (Adansonia grandidieri) fruits in order to improve regeneration in the wild and reduce poverty and malnutrition in local communities. To do this, we will reinforce baobab populations and integrate sustainable harvesting agreements into existing co-management plans. In parallel, we will empower communities to collect, process and trade baobab products to existing markets. As a co-benefit, we will improve access to nutritious baobab powders through the hungry months.
26-024	Improving indigenous Bolivian Chiquitano people's livelihoods through sustainable forest management (£320,201.00)	ntfp	**3.78**	The globally unique Bolivian Chiquitano ecoregion is under increasing pressure from expanding soybeanagriculture, cattle ranging, logging, and subsistence farming. We will enable the government of Santa Cruz(an autonomous department) to implement an effective conservation strategy by: 1) providing diversificationoptions for livelihoods in sustainable forest management, 2) engaging key stakeholders (indigenous forestcommunities, soybean farmers, and cattle rangers), 3) building capacity for assessing IUCN extinct risk, and4) implementing Important Plant Area (IPA) criteria in Chiquitano forest conservation.
IWT031	Combatting IWT in Cameroon through improved law enforcement and community empowerment (£372,428.00)	ntfp	**1.67**	Strengthening Cameroon's capacity to fight poaching and wildlife trafficking in a key landscape implicated as a source and transit route for IWT through: reinforcing site based protection across state and privately managed lands; empowering forest communities to engage in efforts to combat IWT; reinforcing local livelihoods; strengthening open and equitable collaboration between stakeholders; monitoring and evaluating effectiveness of interventions; and supporting the legal process in proper application of wildlife laws.

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23-028	Connecting coastal communities for integrated seascape management in Atlántida, Honduras (£306,552.00)	tourism	**1.67**	Fauna & Flora and five Honduran partners will conserve biodiversity and alleviate poverty through integrated seascape management. We will strengthen the knowledge base and capacities for ecosystem management and sustainable fisheries, conserve critical habitat and species, and empower fishers and vulnerable groups through participatory governance structures and seascape-wide cooperation for sustainable livelihoods.
24-007	Ridge-to-reef conservation and sustainable livelihoods in Raj Ampat (£340,884.00)	tourism	**1.78**	The project will establish collaborative management of Raja Ampat's terrestrial protected areas, alongside a ridge-to-reef approach to reduce land-based impacts to surrounding marine protected areas (MPAs). Biodiversity values will be integrated into regional development plans and MPAs embedded into the island landscape/seascape. Indigenous communities will benefit from diversified, sustainable livelihoods.
24-012	Incentivising community-led marine biodiversity conservation on Atauro Island (£295,215.00)	tourism	**2.44**	By empowering communities for locally led marine resource assessment and management, and introducing homestay tourism to diversify incomes, the project will enable traditional fishers to rebuild fishing stocks and attain more sustainable livelihoods, helping arrest the loss of exceptional marine biodiversity and safeguard food security for over 9,000 people.
24-019	Developing a Community Based Ecotourism Model at Lake Natron, Tanzania (£311,351.00)	tourism	**4.00**	This demonstration project at Lake Natron Ramsar site1, will improve livelihoods and biodiversity conservation through community eco-tourism and supporting natural resource decision making and management. It will raise awareness and address threats posed through water catchment damage, creating a replicable model for ecotourism at wetlands across East Africa.
25-003	Conservation social networking, ecotourism and land-use planning in Maputaland (£294,449.00)	tourism	**3.78**	We will produce a transfrontier online social network and a stakeholder-led conservation planning system for Maputaland, a biodiversity hotspot in southern Africa. The social network will give an online voice to the region's state-, private- and community-led conservation areas and ecotourism enterprises, letting them share news and information, publicising their work and boosting jobs by increasing tourism. The planning system will identify priority areas for conservation and community-based ecotourism that maintain biodiversity and local livelihoods.
26-025	Eco-village approach to enhance socio-ecological resilience in Cabo Verde (£275,486.00)	tourism	**2.67**	Marginalization of rural communities leads to difficulties in exploring new income opportunities. This prevents the adoption of sustainable practices in response to threats to local ecosystems. This project will engage vulnerable community members to monitor the health of marine and coastal ecosystems, set up the first Marine Protected Area in Santiago island, introduce the first sustainable rural waste

Project Ref	Project title	Cluster	Score	Summary
				management system and establish an eco-network lead by local women in four coastal villages to support livelihoods through ecotourism in Cabo Verde.
IWT011	Protecting wildlife by linking communities and conservation in Mozambique (£355,280.00)	tourism	**1.78**	Increased participation in an expanded wildlife-driven economy contributing to sustainable livelihoods and multi-dimensional poverty reduction, with enhanced participation in and attitudes towards wildlife in the Mangalane community forms a social foundation to combat illegal wildlife trade. Increased household security and diversification of sources of income, including from wildlife, in association with improved community governance structures and awareness of new government wildlife legislation, reduces illegal activity relating to rhinos and therefore poaching impacts.
IWT035	Sustainability through ecotourism: improving livelihoods and disrupting wildlife trade, Cambodia (£270,310.00)	tourism	**2.22**	The Cardamom Rainforest Landscape, Cambodia forms part of a global biodiversity hotspot and is a major source of high-value wildlife products for the illegal wildlife trade. Poverty drives local engagement in illegal wildlife trade. By establishing Community Based Ecotourism (CBET) in key communities, this project will provide the infrastructure, skills, and management required to generate sustainable livelihoods. Through establishing CBET, and addressing drivers of wildlife trade and poverty within the landscape, this project will create a barrier to wildlife trade.
IWT078	Combatting IWT in the Gola Sierra Leone-Liberia Transboundary Landscape	tourism	**2.00**	The Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) is rapidly increasing in West Africa, with evidence of cross-border trading. The most frequently traded animals include Forest elephants, Western chimpanzees, Pangolins and Timneh Grey parrots. Building on robust cross-border partnerships we will promote an integrated approach for sustainable IWT prevention and reduction in the 400,000ha+ Gola Rainforest landscape of Liberia and Sierra Leone, through anti-trafficking activity (training project and eco-guards) alongside support to provide alternative economic benefits (honey, tourism) for vulnerable communities.