


	UNMPTF
	GEF-SGP
	UNDP
	The Lion's Share Fund

FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

The Lion's Share COVID-19 Response Small Grants - Resilience in Wildlife Communities

Funded by: i)The Lion's Share
ii)GEF-Small Grants Programme



Construction of a model aquaponics system.

Bhutan



In-situ marine turtle nest protection program

Sri Lanka

Project ID and title	22952-001	The Lion's Share COVID-19 Response Small Grants - Resilience in Wildlife Communities
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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Start and end date	October 10, 2020 - October 9, 2021
Overall budget	MPTF USD 206,082 + SGP 206,082= Total USD 412,164
UNOPS Project Manager	Ada Safanova
Geographical area	Africa, Asia, Latin America

The Lion's Share COVID-19 Response Small Grants program provided critical support to wildlife-dependent communities impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. UN-MPTF utilized UNOPS's Global Grant-Making Architecture built to execute the GEF-funded Small Grants Programme (SGP) to channel grants directly to community-based and civil society organizations (CBOs and CSOs). Through this project, MPTF leveraged UNOPS' extensive local networks, human resources, ERP systems, and policies built over 30 years of SGP implementation, to effectively maximize the impact of the Lion's Share funds.

The initiative focused on enhancing community resilience, promoting alternative livelihoods, and ensuring biodiversity conservation. During the project duration, nine projects across nine countries were implemented successfully, addressing local needs and delivering tangible results.

2 BACKGROUND

Launched in 2018, The Lion's Share Fund is a multi-partner global platform hosted by UNDP, aimed at addressing biodiversity loss and promoting sustainable community development. The COVID-19 Response Small Grants initiative specifically targeted communities whose livelihoods were severely affected by the pandemic, particularly those reliant on wildlife-based tourism.

On April 16, 2020, The Lion's Share launched the call for proposals titled *COVID-19 Response - Resilience in Wildlife Community Grants*. The application period concluded on May 15, 2020, and generated 1,630 submissions from 106 projects.

In October 2020, UNMPTF partnered with UNOPS to implement the Lion's Share COVID-19 Response Small Grants program through UNOPS's Global Grant-Making Architecture. Together with SGP funds, the program mobilized USD 412,164 to support non-profit organizations in developing countries in carrying out innovative local-level action to increase the resilience and well-being of communities.

Four out of the nine selected projects were financed through the Lions' Share Fund and the remaining 5 selected projects were financed in parallel by the GEF SGP with the GEF resources. Grant Projects were implemented in South Africa, Zambia, Sri Lanka, Ecuador, Namibia, Mongolia, Uganda, Nepal, and Bhutan.

3 PROJECT RESULTS

3.1 Project Progress

The initiative achieved key milestones through small grants, supporting activities such as beekeeping,

permaculture farming, aquaculture, turtle nest protection, composting, and virtual tourism, among others. Communities benefitted from skill-building workshops, wildlife conflict mitigation strategies, and enhanced food security measures. Grants were provided to CBOs and CSOs for direct project implementation, while UNOPS local personnel provided project assurance, implementation support, and access to local networks when required. This approach fostered long-term resilience and aligned with conservation goals.

Benefitting from the co-financing partnership, the 9 CBO/CSO-implemented projects were part of the GEF-SGP. The projects received an SGP project code and were included in the SGP Global Database, which allowed the project to benefit from SGP management, branding, and outreach arrangements. The following UNDP's SGP publications about the Lions' Share Projects in Bhutan, Mongolia, and South Africa are examples of this good practice:

Bhutan-<https://undp.shorthandstories.com/gef-sgp-like-water-for-tigers/>
Mongolia- <https://undp.shorthandstories.com/gef-sgp-got-cheese/index.html>
South Africa-<https://undp.shorthandstories.com/gef-sgp-a-sweet-solution/>

While the overall program objective was to Improve the livelihoods of targeted communities that were severely affected by the pandemic, particularly those reliant on wildlife-based tourism, each individual grant project achieved different objectives listed below:

Zambia- ZMB/UNDP-LS/OP7/Y1/2020/1

- Establishment of a Fish Breeding Hub
- 153 Households from 12 different villages were trained in Sustainable aquaculture and horticulture

South Africa- SAF/SGP/OP7/Y1/LSP/CC/2021/01

- An organic waste system was established, including the construction of three composting bins and a wormery
- Successful installation of a solar-powered drip irrigation
- A food Garden for the Black Mambas Organization was established, which produced 233 KGS of food during the program duration
- An educational Garden Processing Hub was established for community gathering and business incubator
- Video Summary <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xSap-3S9BJU&t=60s>

Namibia- NAM/SGP/OP6/Y6/CORE/LSP/2020/01

- A pilot communal garden for capacity building on Human-Elephant conflict Established
- A Tourist Information Centre Established
- Film Crew Assistant and Action Camera Training, results here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XZEm8UkqvzY>

Uganda- UGA/SGP/OP6/Y4/CORE/BD/2020/28

- 1000 labeled bee jars were procured for honey collection
- A bee apiary constructed with 100 bee queens and 150 beehives
- 2 pilot model plantations were established with a combination of trees and crops on 1 acre of land each
- A training manual in conservation, climate change, human-wildlife conflict and the Wildlife Act developed (under review)

Bhutan- BHU/SGP/OP6/Y6/CORE/LSP/2020/34

- An aquaponic system facility, capable of producing 100-200 leafy, green vegetables per week, and 50 kg of fish per year
- A virtual nature tourism experience created to enhance sustainable tourism

Mongolia- MON/SGP/OP6/Y6/CORE/LSP/2021/01

- Seven Community Responsible Areas (CRA) secured 119,487 hectares of wildlife habitat and ecosystem
- Approximately 70 snow leopards, 1800 ibex & Argali, and 3300 ungulates, are estimated to be protected under CRA management
- A total of 10,200 labeled packages of bottled cow ghee and curd were made and distributed during the project, representing \$104 - \$123 additional income to each household in seven participating communities

Ecuador- ECU/SGP/OP7/Y1/LSP/2020/01

- Supplies and Equipment procured for 89 fish farming families, including 89 pools and 40,000 fries (alevins)
- Supplies and Equipment procured for 49 family farmers of Achuar Chilly Peper
- Supplies and Equipment procured for 38 family farmers of Vainilla, including 800 Saplings

Nepal- NEP/SGP/OP6/Y6/CORE/LSP/2021/01

- 4 model permaculture plots established, including the procurement of tools for wild-life-affected communities
- Over 2,160 seedings of medicinal plants distributed

Sri Lanka- SRL/LSP/2020/01

- 15 Organic gardens established
- Construction of 2 beach huts for turtle nest protectors
- Establishment of a Sewing Community Initiative for manufacturing COVID-19 protection equipment
- 12 educational programs implemented on sea turtles mangroves and coral reefs
- 12 Beach cleaning initiatives implemented
- A Website generated for Rekawa Turtle watch
- A Visitor Center in Rekawa was established
- Procurement of nest Screens for turtle nests protection
- A 1 Beach monitoring patrol established for Turtle nest protection

All the project results above are further detailed in the narrative reports submitted by the grantees, all included in Annexes II-X.

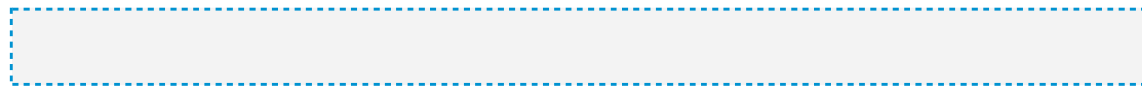
As can be seen above, the Program managed to execute a wide scope of community initiatives, all answering to the Lion's Share Fund's objectives. The diverse answers that different communities provided tailored to the geographical needs are an example of the flexibility and agility of the UNOPS' Grant Delivery mechanism.

3.2 Financial Overview

Category	Planned (USD)	Actual (USD)	Balance (USD)
Personnel	0.00	0.00	0.00
Supplies, commodities, materials	0.00	0.00	0.00
Equipment, vehicles, furniture, depreciation	0.00	463.15	-463.15
Contractual services	0.00	4,004.24	-4,004.24
Travel	0.00	1,496.68	-1,496.68
Transfers and grants	176,600.00	176,600.00	0.00
General operating expenses	16,000	-79.55	16,079.55
Indirect costs	13,482	12,818.20	663.8
Total	206,082.00	195,302.72	10,779.28

The financial overview for the entire project is as follows: Progress Achieved as Per the Program Objectives

The Certified Final Financial Report can be found in Annex I



3.3 Gender Diversity and Inclusion (GDI)

Following the standard SGP reporting formats, 8 out of the 9 grantees reported gender-disaggregated data of the number of beneficiaries, and 3 of them provided an estimated number of participating children/youth in their initiatives. With this aggregated data, we can have an estimated number of the Program's direct beneficiaries as follows:

A minimum of 1145 female, 628 male with a minimum of 1,773 total beneficiaries, out of which 350 were children or youth.

As part of a larger program such as SGP, this specific project has not collected qualitative GDI disaggregated data. Nevertheless, as mentioned in Chapter 3.1, the *Lions' Share COVID-19 Response Small Grants - Resilience in Wildlife Communities* followed SGP's Standard Of Procedures and Guidelines and contributed substantially to SGP's global achievements captured in the 2021-2022 SGP annual report, with the following results:

- 35% of Projects were led by Women
- 20% of Projects Involved Indigenous peoples
- 79% of projects included gender considerations
- 694 Indigenous Leaders with Strengthened Capacities
- 113 Persons With Disabilities (PWD) Organizations participated
- 265 Youth Organizations participated

As a GEF-funded and UN-Implemented Program, It is at its core for SGP to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by ensuring GDI and local stakeholders' involvement in initiatives that promote multisectoral and integrated solutions to environmental and livelihood challenges. Only with real inclusion can the tested solutions be sustainable.

4 CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

At a Global Program level, challenges included delays in procurement and initial resistance to new practices. However, early engagement with local stakeholders proved crucial in overcoming these barriers. The program highlighted the importance of diversified income sources for long-term resilience.

Additionally, COVID-19 caused major disruption in project implementation with lockdowns spread throughout all countries. Below, is a summary of the Grant-Project specific challenges/lessons learned and experienced by the grantees:

Zambia- ZMB/UNDP-LS/OP7/Y1/2020/1

- Community participation, especially women, can bridge the capacity gap in geographical areas where skilled labor is not available and procurement of equipment is not feasible.
- Although the project has supported +130 households, beneficiaries have passed on the knowledge and seedlings to an additional 191 households, increasing the project impact
- A better exit strategy is needed, as the local authorities demanded the project continuation. This is reflected in the letter from the acting Chief Chikuwe

South Africa- SAF/SGP/OP7/Y1/LSP/CC/2021/01

- The food garden and sunflower field experienced a heavy grasshopper infestation mid-term, with the loss of

many corps supported by the project

- Bees: Despite rigorous artificial feeding during the winter months and continued consultation with expert beekeepers, the grantee did not have a good honey harvest. At the start of the project, the apiary also experienced attacks by honey badgers, baboons, and wax moth

Namibia- NAM/SGP/OP6/Y6/CORE/LSP/2020/01

- Due to communities relying on livestock, and lack of water infrastructure for large agriculture innovations. This should be anticipated in the project proposal

- Different communities understand conservation differently, having different local authorities that use different approaches which makes it difficult to introduce innovations

Uganda- UGA/SGP/OP6/Y4/CORE/BD/2020/28

- The grantee realized late the need for a honey processing facility where all the material can be stored and where the community members can process the honey after the harvest in March

Ecuador- ECU/SGP/OP7/Y1/LSP/2020/01

- It is important to prioritize the promotion of community collaboration and avoid dispersing the focus of execution on individual families. The project observed and reinforced the community's stance of linking production opportunities and income generation with other aspects of well-being, cultural preservation, and local sustainability.

- Collaboration with existing bioeconomy initiatives was crucial. Linking the project's vanilla production with broader efforts led by governmental and non-governmental organizations will enhance its impact and contribute to sustainable economic development in the Amazon. This integration can create a more robust and valuable market for this high-value species.

Nepal- NEP/SGP/OP6/Y6/CORE/LSP/2021/01

- The Permaculture initiative could have been linked with the wildlife-based ecotourism creating group activities, homestays, and hotels in the buffer zone area of the Bardiya National Park..

Sri Lanka- SRL/LSP/2020/01

- Certain restrictions at the bank prevented the grantee from directly withdrawing cash at various locations. So, the staff had to carry bulk cash to these places.

- Although not originally planned, a kids' club was formed in Rekawa after an initial awareness program sparked great interest among local children.

Mongolia- MON/SGP/OP6/Y6/CORE/LSP/2021/01

- It is important to create ownership when you deliver some resources to communities for common use, and to be very transparent to all members in providing equal opportunities

- The grantee has a long-term relationship with local authorities and individuals which helped to manage the project on the ground. Online meetings helped enormously

More details on lessons learned and project issues faced by each grantee, as well as the mitigation measures can be found in the individual grant projects reports, in Annex II-X.

5 PROJECT PICTURES



Bhutan- Aquaponics facility construction in Panbang



Bhutan- The introduction of fish (common carp *Cyprinus carpio*), sourced from the National Research and Development Center for Aquaculture in Gelephu.



Ecuador- Vanilla Shed Construction in Tuna school, with Kapawi community members



Ecuador- Project Consultation with all 6 communities involved



Sri Lanka- Beach Cleaning and In-situ Marine Turtle Nest Protection programs



Nepal- Fencing for Permaculture Demonstration Project to protect the plot from wildlife in Bardia National Park



Nepal- Soil Sampling Training for Small-holding farmers and Wildlife-victim farmers



Nepal- Transplantation of vegetables community training



DISCOVERING WERELDSSEND - A documentary film student's perspective



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Namibia- Clip of 'Discovering Wereldsend' documentary, the result of the Film and Action Camera training



South Africa- Permaculture earth-pods and the Black Mambas



South Africa- Hive health and maintenance



Mongolia- Herder community members taking part in a targeted training



Mongolia- A Snow Leopard spotted by the grantee's fixed camera (SLCF)

6 ANNEXES AND ATTACHMENTS

- ANNEX I:** Detailed financial report
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Link here: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1vcnQAdlanvU5Gxs_n9B0iZYgA6fx0DTd?usp=sharing