

Nature4Health (N4H)

MPTF OFFICE ANNUAL PROGRAMME¹ NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2024

Programme Title & Project Number <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme Title: Nature4Health (N4H) Programme Number <i>(if applicable)</i> MPTF Office Project Reference Number:³ 	Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results² <i>(if applicable)</i> Country/Region: N4H Phase 1 Country Projects: Ecuador, Ghana, Mongolia, Rwanda, Vietnam, Zambia Priority area/ strategic results
Participating Organization(s) Organizations that have received direct funding from the MPTF Office under this programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eco Health Alliance (EHA) International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) World Health Organization (WHO) 	Implementing Partners National counterparts (government, private, NGOs & others) and other International Organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
Programme/Project Cost (US\$) Total approved budget as per project document: Scoping transfers (real-time) and expenditure available at MPTFO Gateway ⁴ for the period of Jan-Dec 2024 as of 9 April 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNEP/Secretariat: \$704.543 / \$797,741 (including/excluding Zambia?) UNEP/Zambia: \$249,310 / \$26,047 (from UNEP finance officer) UNDP/Ecuador: \$249,176 / \$15,183 (2024.01-12) WOAH/Mongolia: \$250,000 / \$0 (2023-2024) WHO/Rwanda: \$250,000 / \$0 (2024.01-12) EHA/Ghana: \$249,977 / \$249,977 (2023-2024) / \$221,171 (2024) + 28,806(2023) IUCN/Vietnam: \$250,000 / \$222,379 (2024.01-12) TOTAL:	Programme Duration Overall Duration <i>(months)</i> 9 years Start Date ⁵ <i>(dd.mm.yyyy)</i> 18 November 2021 Original End Date ⁶ <i>(dd.mm.yyyy)</i> 31 December 2030 Current End date ⁷ <i>(dd.mm.yyyy)</i>

¹ The term “programme” is used for programmes, joint programmes and projects.

² Strategic Results, as formulated in the Strategic UN Planning Framework (e.g. UNDAF) or project document;

³ The MPTF Office Project Reference Number is the same number as the one on the Notification message. It is also referred to as “Project ID” on the project’s factsheet page the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

⁴ See MPTFO Gateway N4H for scoping transfers and finance expenditure (<https://mptf.undp.org/fund/bhp00>) and all six project country annual reports here, (File location: N4H - General\Governance\MPTFO\Reports\2024 Report)

⁵ The start date is the date of the first transfer of the funds from the MPTF Office as Administrative Agent. Transfer date is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

⁶ As per approval of the original project document by the relevant decision-making body/Steering Committee.

⁷ If there has been an extension, then the revised, approved end date should be reflected here. If there has been no extension approved, then the current end date is the same as the original end date. The end date is the same as the operational closure date which is when all activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MPTF / JP have been completed. As per the MOU, agencies are to notify the MPTF Office when a programme completes its operational activities.

Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.

Assessment/Review - if applicable *please attach*

☐ Yes ☐ No Date: *dd.mm.yyyy*

Mid-Term Evaluation Report – *if applicable please attach*

☐ Yes ☐ No Date: *dd.mm.yyyy*

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NARRATIVE REPORT FORMAT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nature4Health (N4H) is a global initiative working in countries and regions where biodiversity is under threat and there are substantial risks of zoonotic disease spillover. N4H aims to address the environmental determinants of health and to strengthen the integration of the environment in the One Health approach, thereby helping secure the health of ecosystems, animals, plants and people.

Through an initial contribution of EUR 50 million from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV) via Germany's International Climate Initiative (IKI), N4H brings together leading environment and health organizations – EHA, IUCN, UNDP, UNEP, WHO, WOAAH, SCBD. Partners promote country-led, preventative policies, generate and disseminate evidence on links between biodiversity, climate and health, and support decision makers and other relevant actors to take preventative measures.

Over a span of three overlapping phases between 2021 and 2029, N4H promotes the adoption of systemic and participatory approaches to co-develop local solutions. In 2023, six partners were selected to convene respective Phase 1 country projects (Ecuador/UNDP, Ghana/EHA, Mongolia/WOAH, Rwanda/WHO, Vietnam/IUCN, Zambia/UNEP) approved by Steering Committee (SC). Based on respective approved country Scoping Project Documents (SPD), the six Convening Partners conducted a series of scoping workshops and consultations with Country Partners (ministries of environment, health and/or agriculture), civil society, academia, indigenous peoples and local communities in respective countries in 2024. In late 2024, three convening partners completed the scoping phase and developed and submitted the implementation project document to the Secretariat for review and approval (Ghana/EHA, Mongolia/WOAH, Ecuador/UNDP).

In addition, the Secretariat organized a series of SC's discussions to prepare the launch of Expression of Interest (EOI) for Phase 2, including criteria, process and timeline. The Secretariat co-organized the biodiversity and health day event with SCBD and WHO to promote the implementation of Global Action Plan on Biodiversity and Health, inviting N4H Partners, Phase 1 Country Partners representatives as well as CBD country delegates. The Secretariat also pre-announced at the Biodiversity & Health side event at CBD COP16 that the EOI is to be launched in Jan 2025 to attract interested countries and applicants.

I. Purpose

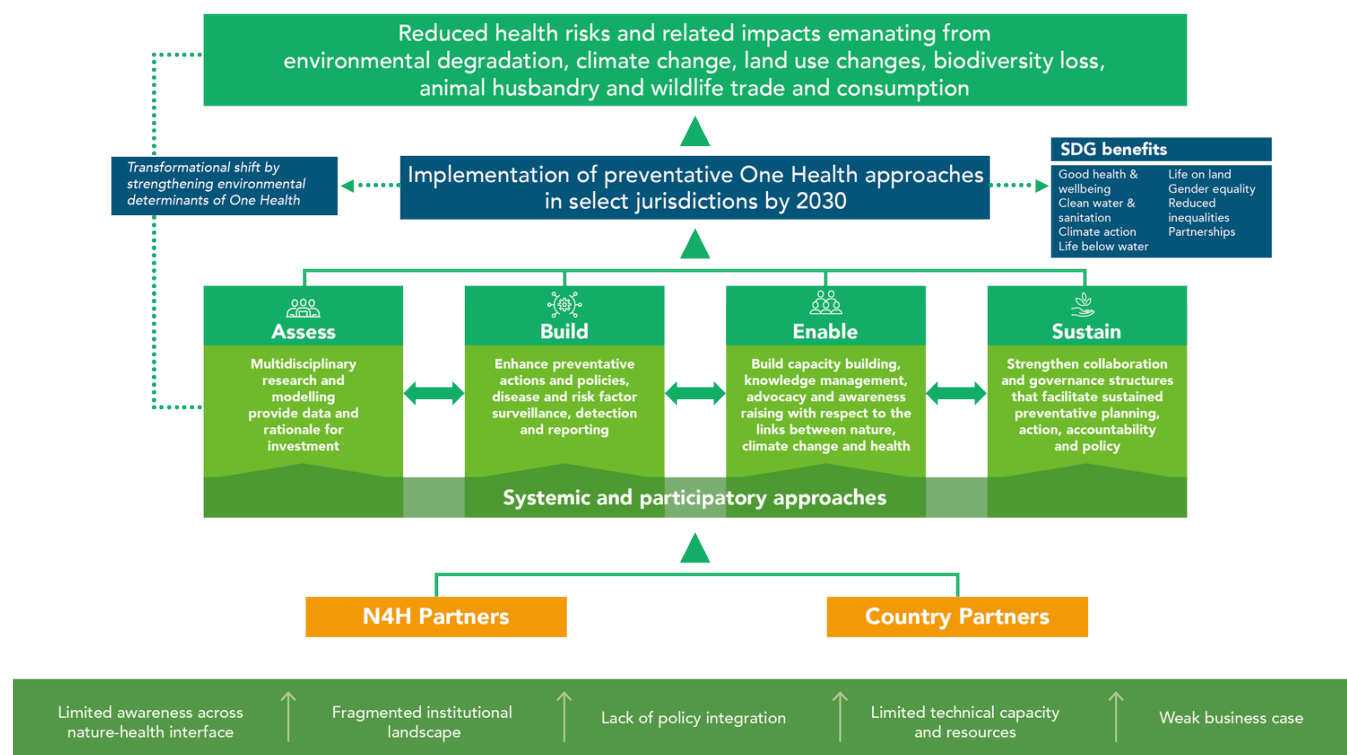
Nature4Health (N4H) aims to reduce health risks and related impacts emanating from environmental degradation, climate change, land use changes, biodiversity loss, animal husbandry and wildlife trade and consumption through the implementation of preventative One Health approaches in select jurisdictions by 2030 and the integration of environment and health in sector policies in line with Global Action Plan on Biodiversity and Health.

N4H adopts systemic and participatory approaches to address the root causes of zoonotic spillover and biodiversity loss, which help co-develop pathways to deliver transformational changes. N4H works in countries and regions to address the four outputs to identify locally designed solutions through a phased approach.

- Assess: multidisciplinary research and modelling data and rationale for investment
- Build: preventative actions and policies through legal environments, disease and risk factor surveillance, detection and reporting
- Enable: capacity building, knowledge management, advocacy and awareness raising with respect to the links between nature, climate change and health

- Sustain: collaboration and governance structures that facilitate sustained and strengthened preventative planning, action, accountability and policy

Figure 1. Nature4Health Theory of Change



II. Results

i) Narrative reporting on results:

The overall fund results at the global, regional and country level include as follows:

Secretariat

- N4H Partners meetings held monthly, SC meetings quarterly, TAG meetings once every two months.
- Steering Committee Terms of Reference was developed and approved in Feb 2024.
- N4H side event took place on 17 May on the margins of CBD SBSTTA26 to share N4H country experiences in systemically approaching the complexity of interlinkages between biodiversity and health and reflect on the contributions that approaches like N4H make to the Biodiversity and Health Global Action Plan.
- Annual Partners-TAG Workshop: The Secretariat organized annual three-day workshop for Partners and TAG on 20-22 May 2024 in Nairobi, inviting Partners Focal Points, TAG and Steering Committee members to check in Phase 1 Scoping work and to assist in the development of a learning component for the initiative. The workshop prioritized “working together across sectors and institutions” and “managing power dynamics” as crucial elements to address in a learning component for the successful implementation of N4H projects. Two consultants were hired to facilitate the workshop and develop Learning components for the Secretariat.
- The Secretariat developed the 2-pager feedback document from SC on Phase I Scoping work, highlighting that 1) ensure technical focus is aligned with N4H objectives; 2) ensure government ownership and buy-in; 3) apply a systems approach; 4) leverage partnership and collaboration.

- The Secretariat participated in the 8th World One Health Congress in Cape Town, South Africa, in September 2024 and also organized a TAG meeting on the margins of the WOHC. A poster on Nature4Health was featured at the event.
- The Secretariat facilitated the development of Evaluation Criteria and for the review of IPD by the TAG.
- The Secretariat developed the aforementioned N4H policy on engagement of government entities in N4H interventions funded by BMUV/IKI as well as Process for country allocation to convening partners for Nature for Health Phase II scoping, which the SC approved by consensus in October 2024.
- CBD Biodiversity and Health Day: The Secretariat co-organize the Biodiversity and Health Day event with CBD Secretariat and WHO at CBD COP16 in Cali, which aims to raise awareness about the interlinkages between biodiversity and health, in line with the view that the health of the environment and the health of all species are interconnected and interdependent, and that a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach is required to mainstream that view into national policies and strategies. The event included around 10 sessions including High Level Breakfast discussion attended by Ministers and Vice Ministers of Environment and Health from Colombia and China, UNEP Executive Director, SCBD Executive Secretary, WHO Director, IPBES Executive Secretary and UNPFII Co-Chair. The Secretariat provided catering for breakfast, lunch and reception and interpretation for English, French and Spanish. The Secretariat also joined and promoted N4H Phase 1 scoping work at BMUV IKI pavilion at CBD COP16.
- Phase II EOI preparation: The Secretariat developed Phase II country selection process and allocation process to convening partners approved by SC. Based on these decisions, the Secretariat developed the application package and organized the Expression of Interest (EOI) information webinars in Nov 2024 to launch the EOI for Phase II in Jan 2025. The EOI application window was from Jan-April 2025. A consultant was hired to support EOI process and SC discussions.

Communication products

- N4H deep prevention video: three videos in English, French and Spanish produced to highlight the importance of upstream prevention through N4H initiative in collaboration with N4H TAG groups. The videos were published through N4H YouTube channel and available on the N4H website and LinkedIn.
- Regular update on Nature4Health website, including creating Phase II EOI page and Phase 1 project pages for four countries (Ecuador, Ghana, Mongolia, Vietnam). Phase 2 EOI webinar presentations and recordings were shared via the EOI webpage.
- Phase II EOI bookmark produced to raise awareness on the launch of the EOI at Biodiversity and Health Day event, CBD COP16 in Cali. N4H roll-up poster and N4H poster were developed to present at WOHC8.

Resource Mobilization

- In 2024, following regular engagement with the Secretariat, the UK department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs submitted a request for funding for N4H under the Government Spending Review for 2025. The outcome of this request will be communicated in 2025. Engagements were also made with Norway and Canada. These will continue to be pursued.

Phase I Country Scoping Projects

In 2024, N4H partners (Participating Organizations (PO)) initiated the scoping phase in six respective countries, namely, Ecuador/UNDP, Ghana/EHA, Mongolia/WOAH, Rwanda/WHO, Vietnam/IUCN, Zambia/UNEP (see the timeline below). Each PO received the scoping funding (up to 250,000 USD), after Scoping ProDoc was approved by Steering Committee and submitted to MPTFO. The Scoping Phase was

to explore objectives and boundaries – working closely with key country stakeholders – how N4H will reduce the risk of pandemics in respective country by conducting a systemic inquiry, as guided in the Scoping Guide.

As the first year of Phase 1, 2024 was dedicated to completing the scoping stage of the N4H process. The six country scoping activities are largely contributing to under the Output 1 Assess in the N4H Theory of Change. Country scoping projects carried out 3 or 4 workshops to engage country partners and key stakeholders in planning and discussing initial insights, constraints and expectations to further develop a Implementation Project Document (IPD). Each scoping aimed to explore the country's complex and uncertain situation to generate change that is feasible, desirable and sustainable during the life of their Implementation phase.

Figure 2. Phase 1 Scoping Phase Timeline

Country/PO	Ecuador/UNDP	Ghana/EHA	Mongolia/WOAH	Rwanda/WHO	Vietnam/IUCN	Zambia/UNEP
Scoping ProDoc start date	2024-01-01	2023-11-29	2023-12-01	2024-07-01	2024-01-08	2023-11-01
Workshop 1	August 2024	Feb 2024	Dec 2023	August 2024	Jan 2024	April 2024
Workshop 2	Oct 2024	March 2024	Feb 2024	October 2024	April 2024	N/A
Workshop 3	Dec 2024	April 2024	March 2024	Feb 2025	May 2024	N/A
Workshop 4	N/A	May 2024	N/A	TBC	August 2024	N/A
Scoping report	Submitted	Submitted	Submitted	Not submitted	Submitted	N/A
Average number of participants	Approximately 130 participants	Over 100 participants across 20 disciplines	Average 50 participants across health, agriculture and environment sectors each WS	Around 60 participants	Approximate 40 participants each WS from 20 partners	Around 40 participants
Implementation ProDoc (IPD)	Submitted	Submitted	Submitted	Not submitted	Not submitted	N/A

Output 1. Assess – Multidisciplinary research and modelling data and rationale for investment.

Ecuador/UNDP: In 2024, the scoping team focused on defining a baseline on Ecuador’s health surveillance systems, covering the three dimensions of the “One Health” approach: human, animal, environment. The main finding of this first assessment was that, while Ecuador has had some advances in linking human and animal health approaches in policies and responses, the environmental component is very weak.

The team followed a systemic approach and methodology, focusing on introducing the context of “One Health” as a preventative measure for zoonotic diseases, including several stakeholders in the discussion, leading and engaging potential ways of introducing this approach in Ecuadorian systems, and proposing actions (pilot projects) that ensure that national authorities, as well as indigenous and rural communities and other private and civil society actors are involved and considered as key actors for the success of the project.

The information gathered during the baseline and workshop processes was key to understand the main needs and the strategies the country wants to follow regarding strengthening its capacity for prevention on zoonotic diseases. In the implementation phase, this will contribute towards developing and enhancing policies, strategic plans and preventative actions to enhance the health of people, animals and the environment. The baseline also identified a variety of stakeholders from different sectors (public, private, civil society, academia), that are key for the implementation of the project. In that sense, during this phase 5 participatory workshops were carried out in different strategic cities of Ecuador: Quito, Guayaquil, Cuenca, Puyo and Ambato, and 2 roundtables with indigenous communities: Shuar Shakaim and Kichwa Puyupungo. This exercise covered the three continental natural regions of the country, with the

participation of 131 people (30% women). The cities and indigenous communities were chosen in coordination with Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition (MAATE), Ministry of Public Health (MSP) and the Phyto and Zoosanitary Regulation and control agency (AGROCALIDAD), focusing on several factors such as: the presence of key stakeholders such as rural and indigenous communities, the number of wildlife interactions, illegal trade and the presence of animal farming, which is often in conflict with wildlife, exacerbating the risk of zoonotic diseases.

The scoping phase resulted in the identification of four strategic components namely; 1) Management, governance and legal framework model that enables the specialized epidemiological surveillance system of the MAATE and the complementary information visualization module anchored to the Biodiversity Information System (SIB-Ec); 2) Management model, governance and legal framework to enable the integrated surveillance system for zoonotic diseases with One Health approach, and the data transfer tool to facilitate inter-institutional communication between MAATE, MSP, and Agrocalidad; 3) Capacity building, knowledge management and communication of the integrated epidemiological surveillance system with One Health approach; 4) Monitoring and evaluation of the project.

Ghana/EHA: In 2024, EHA identified and established a core team of representatives from government agencies in line with a One Health scope to lead the N4H scoping stage in Ghana. The team also designed a scoping strategy to engage a diverse set of stakeholders across four distinct agroecological zones of Ghana with knowledge of human-animal-ecosystem interactions at the community level. The four scoping workshops were organised to utilize systemic practice methods to gain insights from a wide range of people representing more than 40 professions, including bushmeat hunters and traders, livestock and cocoa farmers, protected area rangers, veterinarians, local municipal and regional government, and many others. Workshop participants were also sensitized to the growing concern of zoonotic spillovers and their connections to the environment and biodiversity. Multiple knowledge-based products were developed and presented that underscore connections between the environment and health, including oral presentations at CBD SBSTTA 26, a poster at the 8th World One Health Congress, and two peer-review manuscripts (one in prep and one in review).

The completion of the N4H Ghana scoping stage resulted in a comprehensive three-year plan to implement preventative One Health actions and support policies and guidelines that integrate environment, biodiversity, animal and human health dimensions. Specifically, the Core Team identified guidelines pertaining to poultry and pig farming biosecurity, wildlife quarantine and travel, and protected area management as priority areas for policy review and strengthening.

Gathering information and hearing directly from local stakeholders in 2024 was critical and necessary in positioning N4H to successfully implement capacity and knowledge strengthening in subsequent programmatic years. These efforts legitimize and ensure future capacity strengthening is relevant and meets the needs of government entities and communities.

Established a Core Team of One Health stakeholders, including representatives from the Wildlife Division and Ministry of Environment, to coordinate and democratically steer N4H programmatic work in Ghana. The N4H Ghana Core Team includes the head of Ghana's National One Health Coordination Platform to ensure N4H activities are aligned with other governance structures and priorities to prevent programmatic redundancy and complement existing spillover prevention, biodiversity conservation, and climate resiliency activities.

Mongolia/WOAH: Organised three scoping workshops with a systemic thinking facilitator, in English and Mongolian, 1) to identify inter-relationships between stakeholders, 2) refine the situation of concern, 3) explore potential solutions for the situation of concern, 4) prioritize options for the project based on feasibility and desirability, and 5) develop the first draft of the Implementation Project Development (IPD). Engaging the multiple perspectives presented, stakeholders made boundary choices (through

clustering processes and discussions). Based on collective action, stakeholders focused on creative solutions using Soft Systems Methodology to focus on ‘desirable’ solutions. The workshop process identified areas of power that will influence the project, including social and cultural aspects of Mongolia. A Force Field Analyses was conducted to mitigate the impact of hindering forces and strengthen the supporting forces. The ‘write shop’ process included an extensive social and environmental risk and benefit assessment of the proposal. Planning for sustainability was stressed at several times in the workshop and write shop. Three kinds of sustainability were identified – for the project, the impact of the project, and the idea underpinning the project. Stakeholders developed activities for the project that would promote sustainability through these.

The process, spearheaded by a group of national stakeholders from different sectors across the country, identified six working packages namely; (1) Reinforcing policies and establishing coordination protocols to foster interdisciplinary collaboration, including creating conditions favourable to policy development on overgrazing, a major issue in the Mongolian system, (2) launching One Health communication campaigns to relevant targeted groups, especially herders and pupils (children) while taking gender differences into account in order to anchor behavioural changes at the root, (3) improving multisectoral data sharing to increase epidemic intelligence and early response, (4) building capacity and reinforcing education pertaining to One Health to increase knowledge, (5) engaging men and women into wildlife health monitoring to improve upstream disease prevention, and (6) increasing knowledge on diseases at the environment-human-livestock interface while exploring possible nature based solutions adapted to the local context. In the implementation phase, this will contribute towards reinforcing wildlife and ecosystem health knowledge, building capacity within the country, and strengthening inter-sectoral communication and coordination through the establishment of a sustainable One Health coordination system to reduce health risk and increase disease prevention at the interfaces.

Rwanda/WHO: Organized and facilitated two scoping workshops in August and October in 2024, which brought together over 60 stakeholders representing government agencies, district health institutions, academia (University of Rwanda, University of Global Health Equity), NGOs (e.g., Gorilla Doctors), civil society, and private sector including mining and agribusiness. In the workshops, WHO 1) implemented systems mapping and mental modelling exercises to identify zoonotic risks, institutional gaps, and policy entry points; 2) developed a preliminary stakeholder mapping and drafting scoping framework for N4H implementation; 3) identified concrete opportunities for upstream prevention, including regulatory strengthening, environmental surveillance, sustainable livelihoods, and enhanced community engagement. These activities contributed to building consensus around key priorities and created the enabling conditions for developing an integrated N4H implementation strategy in 2025. The outcomes of this process will serve as a foundation for the preparation of an implementation project document. Additionally, a fourth scoping workshop will be instrumental in ensuring that all the necessary (and often lacking) participants are around the table to share experiences, reflections and contribute to collective thinking. This will ensure a holistic, integrated approach to health and conservation, with a dedicated focus on prevention at source as provided by the One Health High-Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP).

Vietnam/IUCN: In 2024, IUCN led the scoping phase for Vietnam, initiating consultations with stakeholders, organizing four scoping workshops from Jan-August and commissioning two situation analyses on disease monitoring and wildlife management. The team also conducted in-depth interviews with ministries, authorities, zoo and rescue centres and wild animal farming and ranching facilities (birds, snakes, turtles, civets etc). Based on these initial interviews, the core team organised two technical meetings with N4H partners and three national workshops to share and review the findings and seek feedback and recommendations. Those who participated in the interviews and national workshops were from Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) – Department of Animal Health, Department of Livestock Production, CITES Office at Forest Protection Department, National Institute of Veterinary Research, and Veterinary Faculty, National University of Agriculture – National Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology, Ministry of Health (MOH), Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Agency,

Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment (MONRE), One Health Partnership Secretariat (MARD, MOH, MONRE). The team visited rescue centres and key animal breeding/ranching facilities, including Hanoi Wildlife Rescue Centre; Cuc Phuong Small Carnivore Rescue Program and Cuc Phuong Captive Wildlife Centre; Yok Don Wildlife Rescue/Care Unit, and elephant welfare program at Yok Don. The team met management, veterinary departments, animal keeping departments at the parks.

A N4H Working Group was established to guide the scoping phase. Dozens of stakeholders from government, research institutions, and NGOs participated in the scoping phase. Three ministries (MARD, MOH, MONRE) agreed to support to N4H through the One Health Partnership that has over 40 multilateral and bilateral donors, UN agencies, international organizations, and research institutes. Initial consultations led to focus on the illegal wildlife trade, specifically on reducing the scale and impact of snaring on wildlife, and on rescue centres, specifically the institutionalization of protocols to reduce both animal-human and animal-animal disease spillover risk. In addition, UNDP agreed to take a lead on project activities that are relevant to improve policies, strategies and action plans and strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration and governance structures.

The IPD write up process concluded three outcomes, including 1) design and test equitable models to reduce snaring in protected areas (PAs) in cooperation with IPLC and local government, thereby reducing zoonosis risk and maintaining ecological balance; 2) design and test protocols in rescue centres (RCs) to reduce disease risks and accelerate reintroduction of healthy animals to the wild, thereby maintaining ecological balance; 3) support Viet Nam's OHP to strengthen N4H policy formulation and inter-agency coordination, thereby mainstreaming project results into policy and planning.

IUCN secured GIZ funding to support additional N4H scoping work in preparation for the N4H implementation phase. This funding will enable us to carry out the following activities in January-May 2025 to analyse practical ways to reduce snaring in one protected area through collaboration with a local NGO; and assess zoonotic disease risks along the illegal wildlife trade supply chain through collaboration with WOA.

Zambia/UNEP: In April 2024, UNEP, in collaboration with the Zambia National Public Health Institute (ZNPHI) held an inception workshop marking the formal commencement of the N4H Scoping project in the country. Shortly after the inception workshop however, all activities halted following a formal request from the Director General of ZNPHI to the N4H Secretariat to clarify options for funding modalities. Specifically, the Director requested if the ZNPHI as a parastatal, could be considered for direct funding from Nature4Health. On 7 May 2024, the N4H Secretariat submitted the request to IKI for consideration under the IKI funding rules. Following internal consultations, on 24 June 2024, IKI informally notified the N4H Secretariat that involvement of the ZNPHI could potentially be eligible if specified conditions were met. These conditions included: that the ZNPHI must be officially recognised as a parastatal institution; that official development assistance (ODA) principles would be adhered to; that evidence be provided that there is no equivalent and effective alternative to ZNPHI as an implementing organisation for N4H activities in Zambia; and that the ZNPHI would not forward the funding to any political partners or entities among others. Following requests from several other N4H implementing partners for the consideration of government entities as fund recipients, in August 2024, IKI requested the N4H Steering Committee to develop its own policy for engaging government or government-associated entities as N4H subcontractors. At a meeting held on 10 October 2024, the Steering Committee adopted a policy which was shared with the ZNPHI for consideration on 24 October 2024. On February 19, ZNPHI responded, stating that while the institute appreciated the objectives of the N4H initiative, the current funding modality did not align with its institutional needs or strategic approach. The Steering Committee is currently working to select an alternative country from those shortlisted but not initially selected for Phase I. UNEP is working to financially and operationally close the project.

ii) Describe any delays in implementation, challenges, lessons learned & best practices:

Ecuador/UNDP: The consolidation of a technical team with experience in the “One Health” approach, and in the public sector of Ecuador in the three areas was a major challenge at the beginning of the scoping process. The procurement process had to be relaunched two times, and the Terms of Reference had to be adjusted. After receiving the funds to start the scoping phase, the work was delayed 2 months in order to hire a good technical team that met all the requirements needed for this process. Another important challenge was that from September to December, Ecuador faced power blackouts of 4 up to 14 hours. This situation delayed some meetings and complicated the exchange of experiences programmed with other N4H partners. The team was able to adjust to these conditions and organize the planned workshops, nevertheless, an extension of 1 month was asked from the N4H Secretariat to finalize the PRODOC with all the inputs from the different actors and with a good quality.

Ghana/EHA: 2024 was the first year of N4H programme. As a part of Phase 1, there were many lessons learned. Ghana’s scoping phase was originally planned for 5 months, however, extended scoping phase was able to address critical elements, including sensitization, planning and prioritization of region/contexts, the systems thinking process, design of a full project. The concept of systemic practice and systems thinking methods were unfamiliar to most people. The nonprescriptive nature of the scoping guide and the flexibility in selecting and modifying activities was essential for successful systemic practice in the Ghanaian context.

Mongolia/WOAH: Although key partners agreed to hold the Scoping Phase workshops during winter, it became clear that this would limit in-person participation of stakeholders from the further reaches of the country due to difficulties of travelling at that time of year. All workshops were conducted in hybrid modality, with the provision of online support during group work sessions, although uptake of this option was mostly limited to partners outside of Mongolia. For this reason, the Implementation Phase is scheduled to start in spring, when travel is possible, and activities can be safely conducted to involve participants from different areas.

As Mongolia was the first country to begin the Scoping Phase, the methodology was based on early draft iterations of N4H materials. In fact, the secretariat was developing IPD template at the MPTFO Gateway with MPTFO’s guidance during the workshops, resulting in the need to make updates during the workshop implementation and afterwards. Further, the eligible funding recipients from the project donor was announced after the workshops, outlining that government entities were unable to directly receive funding. Since the Ministries were heavily involved in the Scoping Phase process (as per their support of the project during the Expression of Interest), their removal from the list of implementing bodies for activities meant recruitment of new implementers from the stakeholders in country and a reshuffling of responsibilities. These changes necessitated a request for extension of the Scoping Phase to enable thorough review of the draft IPD and preparation for submission.

A concern among key stakeholders is the protracted period of project development before implementation. This has led to frustration among in-country stakeholders, which has had to be managed by WOAH as the Implementing Partner. Other projects have been able to use outputs from the stakeholder analysis and assessments undertaken for N4H to develop and start implementation of overlapping activities. It is likely that the final project activities will require adaptation to avoid duplication.

Rwanda/WHO: The programme faced several challenges during the scoping phase: 1) Political turnover following recent elections created uncertainty and delayed the identification of sectoral focal points; 2) A national state of emergency, declared during the Marburg virus outbreak, significantly limited the availability of health sector representatives at the second workshop; 3) Environmental sector participation was weak in both workshops due to scheduling conflicts, fragmented mandates, and limited resources; 4) Engagement of local and Indigenous knowledge holders remained minimal, revealing a gap in inclusive planning and decision-making. Despite these challenges, the workshops provided important lessons: the

need to improve institutional coordination, to secure high-level political leadership, and to expand consultation mechanisms between workshops to better engage communities and non-traditional actors.

Vietnam/IUCN: The scoping started with a challenge on engaging key ministries of environment, health and agriculture. Although MARD and MOH officials participated in all three consultation workshops, MONRE was not properly engaged in this consultation process. MONRE's Pollution Control Department is the OHP focal agency but did not wish to serve as the N4H focal agency. In August 2024, the Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Agency was designed as MONRE's focal agency for N4H. Inter and intra-ministerial coordination should improve significantly with the merger of MARD and MONRE to form the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MAE). Another challenge related to the OHP Secretariat, which is housed by MARD's International Cooperation Department. The OHP Secretariat submitted the N4H EOI in October 2022 was under the impression that the funds for the scoping phase would flow through them. This was resolved and the IPD was designed explicitly to strengthen OHP's role in addressing zoonosis risk in a cross-sectoral and multi-disciplinary manner. In January 2025, IUCN requested N4H Secretariat to extend the scoping phase in Vietnam to 31 May 2025 to give more time for government consultation, revision and approval of the draft IPD. This also enables IUCN to participate in other N4H scoping workshops. We have not been able to participate in any so far because of time conflicts and visa application difficulties. Furthermore, IUCN secured funding from GIZ to start work on some of the activities identified during the N4H scoping phase such as a study of snaring inside Vietnam's protected areas, livestock grazing in protected areas, and illegal wildlife trade risk assessment based on WOA's Guidelines for Addressing Disease Risks in Wildlife Trade. These will be done by 31 May 2025, and the results will support the N4H implementation once the IPD is approved.

Zambia/UNEP: See history of challenges in narrative above. Among the lessons learnt however, is the need to clarify funding modalities with N4H funding applicants prior to any commitments and the need to clarify the N4H scope of work including the requirement for a systemic, participatory scoping process to identify priorities. Specifically, although country driven, N4H funding is not designed to fund pre-identified priority activities in existing national strategic plans particularly activities focusing on the traditional One Health approach such as disease surveillance at the expense of activities focusing on incorporating environmental and ecosystem health considerations into the One Health approach.

iii) Qualitative assessment:

Ecuador/UNDP: The main achievement for 2024 was the completion of the Implementation Project Document (IPD) and its validation from different actors. It is noteworthy that this document has a high quality due to the technical consultant team's professionalism. In addition, as mentioned before, the engagement of the three national authorities on animal, human and environmental health, is key for the success of the project. These stakeholders participated actively during the scoping phase contributing with their knowledge and prioritizing specific actions that will facilitate the project's implementation later on. The scoping phase also identified new key actors from other sectors such as academia and civil society, as well as the opportunities to collaborate with indigenous communities towards the project goals. Another achievement is the experience with the consultant team, which managed to engage different key actors and partners, resulting in their commitment to begin the project implementation in 2025. Support from the UNDP Team and inputs from scoping guide in involving and including actors by following a participatory approach was also helpful. Finally, UNDP Ecuador worked closely with PAHO Ecuador during the design of the project, being an example of coordination between UN Agencies with positive outcomes.

Ghana/EHA: Coordinating across seven N4H international agencies is challenging and requires immense coordination. The monthly partner meetings and annual in-person meeting were important in facilitating cross-cutting partnerships. For example, after learning about the N4H Mongolia scoping process methods, the N4H Ghana team conducted an implementation plan 'writeshop' building on the Mongolia model which was instrumental in developing and finalizing the N4H Ghana implementation plan.

Mongolia/WOAH: The system thinking approach was new to most stakeholders in the Scoping Phase in Mongolia and the methodology was not always clear for participants in workshops. At times, it was a challenge to convince stakeholders of the need to reiterate the assessment part of this Phase as many assessments have previously been conducted in the country. This scoping phase has thus far enabled partners to strengthen ties between sectors in Mongolia, through regular involvement of representatives from the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industry (MoFALI), Ministry of Health (MoH) and Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MECC) in the process. All three ministries supported the initial application for the N4H project and have been present throughout the Scoping Phase. This high-level commitment will be key to successful implementation of activities in the project. Participation by other stakeholders such as academia and NGOs has added a broader range of perspectives and brought in additional expertise available for project implementation. WOAH is a non-UN organization but has been working closely with the rest of the Quadripartite partners on this project, including FAO and WHO country offices, and the UNEP regional office in Bangkok. These relationships have been developed over several years of working together, particularly by WOAH Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific with country office staff for FAO and WHO on events such as IHR-PVS National Bridging Workshops and related activities, and other regional Quadripartite activities involving representatives from Mongolia. These activities also helped to frame the One Health approach necessary for the project – utilizing different ideas and skillsets towards the common goals.

Rwanda/WHO: The scoping phase was instrumental in establishing a shared vision and language around One Health and prevention at source in Rwanda. The workshops succeeded in connecting the dots between zoonotic risks and ecological, social, and governance drivers. They also revealed foundational weaknesses—such as limited inter-agency data sharing and underdeveloped surveillance systems—that future implementation efforts must address. Strong partnerships between WHO, UNEP, and several key Rwandan agencies and stakeholders helped engagement and alignment with international guidance. The coordination by Rwanda’s National/multi-stakeholder One Health Platform was a major enabler, even as challenges around environmental sector inclusion and community participation remain. The programme has demonstrated encouraging progress in establishing Rwanda as a model country for prevention at source. Continued momentum will depend on converting workshop insights into policy reforms, institutional mechanisms, and community-based actions that embody One Health principles across scales and sectors.

Vietnam/IUCN: Despite the institutional coordination challenges, the scoping phase proceeded smoothly. One note was the close relationship established between IUCN and UNDP on the design of the IPD. As a result, we agreed that UNDP would manage the IPD component on OHP strengthening. Another highlight was understanding the extent to which rescue centers are struggling to cope with such quantities of trafficked wildlife. The number of rescue centers has increased but only a few receive any international assistance and there is no national system. Rescue centers are developing in an ad hoc and uncoordinated manner and there is a huge opportunity to improve their performance in terms of handling wildlife safely and returning healthy wildlife to the wild promptly.

III. A Specific Story (Optional)

N4H Story from Ecuador/UNDP: During the scoping phase, it was identified that tourism in Amazonian rain forest areas leads to an increase in wild animal trafficking, which again increases the exposure of interactions between humans and wild animals. The Yanacocha Wild Animal Rescue Center in the city of Puyo was identified as a project partner during the scoping phase. The Center specializes in rescuing species from illegal traffickers and develops educational campaigns to indigenous and rural communities to prevent the use of wild animals in economic activities. In addition, they have a voluntary network in charge of taking proper care of the animals, in coordination with national authorities, and were identified as a key actor to enhance education among the surrounding community while being a strategic actor to track diseases in rescued wild animals. During the upcoming implementation of the project in Ecuador, the Yanacocha Center will be a key stakeholder in the pilot focused on the city of Puyo. It will work with the project team to develop education and research campaigns with and for the local communities, while improving Yanacocha's tasks as a key animal rescue center in the region. It is important to look up for strategic local partners that are familiar with the dynamics of a special site, in this case the Amazon region. Yanacocha already is close to some of the indigenous leaders and work together with them. This benefits the project since the Project Management Unit does not have to start from zero when the project implementation begins. Besides, the partnership gives ownership to local institutions and engages people in the project activities and implementation. See photos [here](#)

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