

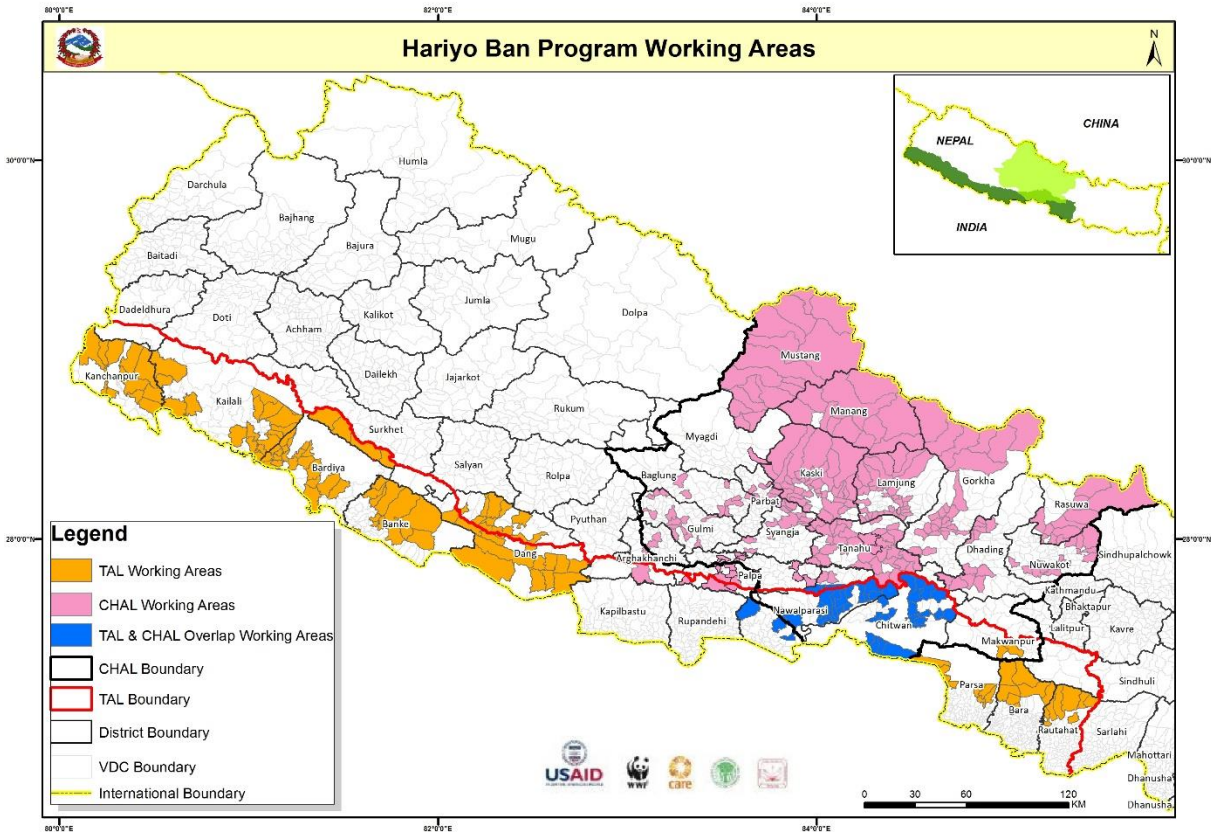
Hariyo Ban Program Phase I: Achievements and Learning

Introduction

This factsheet outlines the achievements and learning of the Hariyo Ban Program during its first five years. The Program is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and is implemented by four core partners: World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE), National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), and the Federation of Community Forestry Users, Nepal (FECOFUN). It works closely with a range of stakeholders and beneficiaries including Government; local communities and community-based organizations; non-government organizations (NGOs); academia; other projects; and private sector.

- Working areas of Hariyo Ban Phase I**
- 9 protected areas
 - 28 districts
 - 355 village development committees
 - 46 municipalities
 - 4 sub-metropolitan areas
 - 1,569 community forestry user groups
 - 64 conservation area management committees
 - 51 buffer zone user committees

The first phase aimed to reduce adverse impacts of climate change and threats to biodiversity. It worked on three core interwoven components – biodiversity conservation, sustainable landscapes and climate change adaptation – with livelihoods, governance, and gender and social inclusion (GESI) as crosscutting themes. It operated in two landscapes: Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) and Chitwan Annapurna Landscape (CHAL). The first phase was implemented from 2011 to 2016; a second phase will run for another five years.



During the first phase the CHAL (covering the Gandaki river basin) was formally recognized by Government as a new landscape in Nepal, and Hariyo Ban supported Government to prepare a Strategy and Action Plan for it, taking a river basin approach. It also supported the preparation of the next TAL ten-year Strategy and Action plan; both strategies mainstream climate adaptation. Hariyo Ban is now supporting their implementation.

Biodiversity Conservation

In order to reduce threats to biodiversity, Hariyo Ban has supported Government of Nepal in conserving rare and endangered species, important ecosystem services and critical watersheds. To re-establish populations of three important wildlife species in areas where they previously occurred, the Program worked with various departments of the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MoFSC) and supported to translocate rhinoceros, swamp deer and blackbuck in their former ranges. Conservation of several tree species was promoted including bijay sal and champ. Support was provided to create the National Level Relief Fund for Human-Wildlife Conflict, along with conflict reduction measures on the ground. Long-term research and monitoring of species like snow leopard, swamp deer, and gharial were supported, along with preparation of survey and monitoring protocols and national surveys for red panda and pangolin. The program also supported MoFSC to develop policy documents including strategies and action plans for Terai Arc and Chitwan-Annapurna landscapes; species conservation action plans for focal species including pangolin, black buck, bijaya sal and vulture. Support was also provided to MoFSC to declare Pokhara lake clusters as Ramsar site and prepare climate smart management plan. Fourteen Integrated Sub-watershed Management Plans were prepared and partially implemented.

Hariyo Ban has been working closely with local communities for biodiversity conservation and so far has created 201 new community based anti-poaching units, and strengthened and mobilized 351 existing ones. Community conservation activities were complemented by alternative livelihood promotion activities for forest dependent people. By late 2016, 13,993 households were supported in green enterprises and other alternative livelihoods and about 1,127 youths were provided with skill-based training.

Major Biodiversity Interventions	Five-year Target	Progress
Research, monitoring and/or conservation of focal species (number of plant and animal species)	19	18
Number of community based anti-poaching units established	205	201
Critical sub-watershed management plans implemented	12	14
Number of members of community natural resource management (NRM) groups with increased capacity in biodiversity conservation	27,595	33,509
Number of NRM groups with strengthened governance	300	328
Biodiversity policy support (strategy, protocol, plan)	7	10
Electric fence to reduce human wildlife conflict (km)	208	218.87
Community mobilization through Community Learning and Action Centers (CLAC)	485	485
Number of people benefiting from economic activities (skills training, green enterprises, on- and off-farm activities) (excluding earthquake recovery)	78,163	61,357

Hariyo Ban has been playing an important role in promoting NRM governance and GESI in biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation. The program has enhanced participation and leadership of women and marginalized people in community forest user groups, and promoted equitable sharing of conservation benefits. Forest groups are gradually leveraging resources for the benefit of forest dependent people. The program has also supported Government to develop country-specific indicators for social and environmental standards in reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+). Major GESI actions include: promoting improved internal governance of forest groups; increasing men and decision makers' engagement in promoting leadership of women and marginalized groups; reducing gender based violence (GBV) in natural resources management; and identification and mobilization of change agents for social transformation. GESI is mainstreamed in the climate adaptation component through addressing differential impacts of climate change on women, poor, marginalized, and other vulnerable groups.

Sustainable Landscapes

Under the sustainable landscape component, Hariyo Ban has been supporting Government for developing enabling policies for REDD+ Readiness in Nepal. Key policy development support to the Government of Nepal were Forest Policy 2071, Forestry Sector Strategy 2072, National policy on payment for ecosystem services (PES) and numbers of strategies and guidelines for sustainable forest management in Nepal., including a REDD+ emission reduction project document for a subnational REDD project in the Terai (the World Bank has already endorsed the project idea note for this). Much capacity at national to local levels has been built for REDD+. The Program has undertaken extensive work to reduce priority drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in the landscapes, especially overharvesting of forest resources (including firewood); uncontrolled forest fires; and overgrazing. It has also worked with communities and Government to restore degraded forest areas, and to improve management practices in community forests, with support to corresponding policy instruments.

In addition, Hariyo Ban collaborated with stakeholders to pilot two payments for ecosystem services (PES) schemes involving improved land use and road construction practices to reduce sedimentation which is affecting economic activities of downstream users. To create an enabling environment for future PES it supported Government to develop a national Policy on PES, and built much capacity at local to national levels.

Major Interventions	Five-year Target	Progress
Number of people with increased capacity for REDD+ and/or PES	7,814	8,257
Number of people benefiting from alternative energy (including during earthquake recovery)	140,477	173,860
Number of biogas units		6,143
Number of non-metallic improved cook stoves units		20,974
Number of metallic improved cook stoves units		3,065
Number of community forest operational plans supported for revision	434	481
Number of hectares of new plantation supported (ha.)	NA	3,184
Number of hectares restored (through fencing, grassland and wetland management) (ha.)	No target	72,192
Number of PES schemes piloted (in Phewa and Marshyangdi water catchments)	2	2
Number of policy documents supported	10	10

Climate Change Adaptation

People and biodiversity in Nepal are facing increasing climate change impacts, which are affecting the way people use the environment and the services it provides. Ecological and human communities are vulnerable to various hazards like floods, landslides, droughts, irregular rainfall, and decreased water supplies. Impacts on people are already apparent; impacts on ecosystems are taking longer to manifest and may suddenly appear in the future as tipping points are reached. In order to reduce vulnerability Hariyo Ban has made significant achievements by implementing climate change adaptation (CCA) activities in TAL and CHAL.

At local level capacity was built in target communities to conduct vulnerability assessments and prepare adaptation plans; a large number of community adaptation plans of action (CAPAs) and local adaptation plans of action (LAPAs) were prepared and the majority were implemented, leveraging over 30% of the financial resources for this from communities, VDCs, and government line agencies. Successful approaches included: incorporation of ecosystem adaptation, governance and differential vulnerability assessment in the LAPA framework; piloting of integration of CCA and disaster risk reduction (DRR), and their mainstreaming in local planning processes; and promotion of upstream-downstream collaboration for adaptation and resilience building. Support to the Government to integrate and harmonize CCA and DRR policy and guidelines has been initiated. On the learning front, implementation of field level interventions in some places was done in a scattered way without providing an integrated package of support, or without looking at the broader geography, and did not bring desired results.

The program developed and implemented a large, cascading capacity-building approach for climate adaptation to prepare stakeholders and beneficiaries for all this adaptation work. Technical support was also provided to government in climate change adaptation and implementation of adaptation plans. On the biodiversity front, projections were made of the potential impacts of climate change on biodiversity, with recommendations for future conservation, forestry and development. These were applied, along with findings from the CAPAs and LAPAs, in mainstreaming CCA in the TAL and CHAL Strategies. In addition, the Program established two sets of permanent monitoring plots to examine the long-term ecological and socio-economic impacts of climate change in forest and freshwater systems in CHAL, the plots ranging from a few hundred meters above sea level in the Terai to 4,500 m in upper Mustang.

Major Interventions	Five-year Target	Progress
Number of people trained in climate change adaptation	18,664	18,831
Number of people with increased awareness and capacity, and/or participating in adaptation activities	352,098	395,331
Number of adaptation plans prepared	300	421
Support in implementation of climate adaptation plans (328 CAPAs and 70 LAPAs)	300	398
Number of drinking water supply systems installed and/or maintained	No target	359
Number of irrigation systems installed and/or maintained	No target	156
Number of km of access foot trails maintained	No target	137
Number of drinking water reservoirs maintained for wildlife	No target	81
Number of check dams, dykes and embankments constructed	No target	414
Resources leveraged for climate adaptation (NRs)	21.4 million	28,502,175

Green Recovery and Reconstruction

The main goal of the green recovery and reconstruction (GRR) component was to enhance the resilience of earthquake recovery and reconstruction efforts in Nepal by identifying and integrating sound environmental practices. The concept was to apply practical, solution-oriented techniques for integrating environmentally sound practices into disaster recovery and reconstruction and DRR, building back better, safer and greener for a more resilient Nepal.

Hariyo Ban obtained additional funding from USAID for green recovery and reconstruction work after the 2015 earthquake, which has been implemented both at central level and in four seriously affected program districts (Gorkha, Dhading, Nuwakot and Rasuwa). At central level the program worked initially with several disaster clusters, and later with several government ministries and departments and civil society to mainstream sound environmental practices into official assessments, guidelines and manuals (e.g. post-disaster needs assessment and recovery framework; rapid environmental assessment; school reconstruction guideline; and mason training manual). It has trained engineers; architects; water, sanitation and hygiene professionals; Members of Parliament; mason trainers; media professionals; community radio station staff; district disaster relief committee members; NGO staff; government line agency staff; district forest officers and others in environmentally sound practices. Since the largest impacts of reconstruction are likely to come from the building (especially housing) sector, there has been a major focus on that sector, attempting to reach from central policy making level to mason and household level. In addition to the formal training, Hariyo Ban has undertaken outreach on GRR at national and international level.

In the field the program collaborated with partners to support emergency relief, followed by recovery and reconstruction. Livelihood support included activities such as irrigation and livestock provision to restart agriculture, and cash for work schemes to restart household economies and take pressure off forests. Water supply systems were installed or repaired for communities and schools. Foot trail construction and repair reopened access to remote areas for recovery programs, and helped restore social connections and local economies the latter including the return of tourists. Renewable energy recovery was supported for cooking, heating and light for affected households and communities, some in very remote locations. The Program also established demonstration sites with good environmental practices, including bioengineering to stabilize landslides.

Major Interventions	Five-year Target	Progress
Number of person days of employment generated through cash for work	105,000	101,380
Length of foot trails improved/built (km)	20	186
Number of women-headed households benefitting from recovery work	1,200	5,767
Number of women (single women and adolescent girls) benefitting from recovery work	500	9,326
Number of participants trained in GRR at different levels (national, central, district and community level)	700	1,023
Number of people with increased economic benefits from recovery work (excludes cash for work)	14,750	18,473
Number of post-disaster policy documents and assessments supported	1	3
Number of GRR guidelines, briefing sheets and manuals prepared	No target	9

Windows of Opportunity

The Windows of Opportunity grant funds provided an opportunity for a wide range of stakeholders to undertake innovative projects that added value to the Hariyo Ban Program through applied research, piloting of promising approaches, policy development, or scaling up activities. The program provided

grants to government agencies and NGOs, CBOs, academia and research institutions for innovative projects on biodiversity conservation, sustainable landscapes, CCA, livelihoods, governance and GESI. By December 2016, 53 projects had been conducted by NGOs and 58 by government institutions. Student research grants supported 64 students in Bachelors, Masters and PhD degrees.

Learning

During the implementation of the first phase of Hariyo Ban in the two landscapes, much learning was done, and lessons were implemented wherever possible to enhance program effectiveness. Learning has also been incorporated in the design of Phase II. Some major lessons are listed below:

- Holistic river basin management is essential for landscape conservation, working at multiple levels
- Long-term climate impacts on biodiversity and forestry are still poorly understood and climate change is a major advancing threat for both people and nature
- There are excellent opportunities for PES for long-term financing of biodiversity conservation in Nepal, but it takes a long time and simple approaches are better
- The policy development and approval process took much longer than planned, limiting Hariyo Ban I's time to support implementation of new policies
- GESI and governance tools such as gender-responsive budgeting and community scoreboards (for evaluating quality of services) empower communities but need to be scaled up to higher levels
- NRM groups rich in resources tend to not adopt good governance practices, unlike resource-poor groups
- It is very challenging to ensure livelihood improvements are linked with improved forest condition, and more work is needed on this in phase II
- Integration and harmonization of CCA and DRR policy and practice shows much promise and should be supported
- Local level adaptation is often not enough to address broader ecosystem processes; more experience is needed in adaptation at higher levels
- There has been a very strong response to the green recovery work but it takes time to go from theory to practice; this work should be continued across sectors in order to maintain momentum

Hariyo Ban Program



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