

## Darwin Initiative Main: Annual Report

### Darwin Initiative Project Information

Project reference	27-002
Project title	Healthy wetlands for the cranes and people of Rukiga, Uganda
Country/ies	Uganda
Lead Partner	Margaret Pyke Trust (“MPT”)
Project partner(s)	International Crane Foundation (“ICF”); Rugarama Hospital (“RH”); and London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (“LSHTM”).
Darwin Initiative grant value	£325,902
Start/end dates of project	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2021 – 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2023
Reporting period (e.g. Apr 2022 – Mar 2023) and number (e.g. Annual Report 1, 2, 3)	April 2022 – March 2023 Annual report 3
Project Leader name	David Johnson
Project website/blog/social media	<b>Website:</b> <a href="https://margaretpyke.org/environment/projects">https://margaretpyke.org/environment/projects</a> <b>Twitter:</b> @MargaretPyke @savingcranes @TheEWT @LSHTM <b>Facebook:</b> @MargaretPykeTrust @InternationalCraneFoundation @EndangeredWildlifeTrust @RugaramaHospital
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#### 1. Project summary

##### What the project is aiming to achieve

The Rushebeya-Kanyabaha wetland in Rukiga, South-West Uganda is under increasing pressures from a growing human population needing farmland. It is vital for humans (for food and water security, and preventing flooding) and Uganda’s national bird, the Endangered Grey Crowned Crane (*Balearica regulorum*) (for nesting habitat). Our project is achieving its aim to empower communities to conserve the wetland and cranes through sustainable livelihood and healthcare service provision (reducing unplanned pregnancy), coupled with habitat restoration, and soil and water conservation, enabling long-term wetland health for people and cranes.

##### The biodiversity challenges

The wetland reduced in size by 33% between 1986 and 2020, largely driven by expanding subsistence agriculture, due to enduring poverty and rapid human population growth. The remaining intact elements of the wetland and its catchment are rich in biodiversity, notably the Endangered

Grey Crowned Crane, for which the wetland is a critical nesting habitat and the sitatunga (*Tragelaphus spekii*), which is almost extinct locally. In the last three years, climate shocks have had an increasing impact on human communities and the wetland, and there is a significant need to build human and ecosystem climate-resilience, given the growing scale and frequency of such shocks. Restoring degraded ecosystems, including wetlands, and preventing the extinction of Threatened and Endangered species, are the first two priority areas in Uganda's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan ("NBSAP"). Pressures on Rukiga's wetlands are an example of how a lack of livelihoods, compounded by human population growth and larger family sizes than couples would choose, affect biodiversity and the natural resource base, negatively impacting ecosystem health, human health and poverty.

### **Where the project is located and who the project is relevant to**

The project is located in south-western Uganda, in the Rushebeya-Kanyabaha wetland of Rukiga District. There are eight project sites, located in the communities of Nyabirerema, Kyerero/Butare-Ahamurambi, Nyarurambi, Nyakarambi, Nyakagabagaba, Kitojo, Kihanga-Sindi, and Burime. There are also 10 outreach health centres, benefitting these communities (see Annex 4.1). The project is relevant for 13,500 people living within the project area, the majority of whom rely on the health of wetland for subsistence agricultural livelihoods and food, and everyone depends on the wetland for drinking water. As a consequence, these biodiversity challenges and the project are relevant to the entire human community within the project area.

### **Human development and wellbeing challenges (poverty alleviation)**

58% of Ugandan pregnancies are unplanned, a primary reason Uganda's population is projected to double between 2020 and 2060, and why Uganda has multiple national policies promoting greater access to reproductive health services. The lack of health services in the region, specifically family planning, leads to families having, on average, five children, one more than they would choose (due to unplanned pregnancies). This increases pressure on family income and as families grow, those who depend on farming have little choice but to convert additional wetland for farming to support their needs. Parents sub-divide land for their children, increasing pressure generation by generation. The resulting unsustainable agricultural practices, drainage, overgrazing, heavy use of pesticides, and declines in fallow practices, among others, all threaten the wetland and its ecosystem services, and make the available land less able to support future generations. This is further exacerbated by drought-related changes in land use and other climate shocks. In addition, when women are experiencing multiple unplanned pregnancies they are far less able to retain a livelihood during the pregnancy and afterwards, whereas improved health reduces the number of productive working days lost, reducing poverty. No country has successfully reduced poverty when they have had the human fertility rate the project site has.

### **How we identified these problems**

The problems have been identified by long-term knowledge of Ugandan partners working locally and engagement with communities and stakeholders (including during our 2018 scoping trip). The problems were confirmed by a comprehensive literature review. For instance, Uganda's NBSAP refers to human population increase, gender inequality and poverty as a driver of wetland biodiversity loss and that wetlands are rapidly being eroded for agricultural land and urban settlement. The NBSAP recognises the connections between these issues for wetland biodiversity and poverty alleviation. In 2021, project partners also conducted comprehensive qualitative ethnographic research (see Annex 4.9) to establish the environmental and human health issues being faced by project communities and ensuring their needs, wishes, and solutions are incorporated into project design. Across all eight communities, a consistent set of environmental challenges were articulated, which related to changing seasons and rainfall patterns (leading to crop failures), soil erosion and flooding (caused by tree cutting, unsustainable agricultural techniques, planting of invasive eucalyptus trees, and burning of uplands/wetlands vegetation), and encroachment of farming on wetlands (leading to degradation of natural wetland resources). In

addition, there were very consistent human health challenges identified, which related to inadequate health services (too far away, lacking supplies and trained staff, and poor staff attitudes), family planning issues (caused by irregular services, lack of knowledge on side effects, and poorly trained staff), malnutrition (caused by lack of available nutritious food), and links between alcoholism and domestic violence. In all communities, respondents articulated a clear understanding of the direct connections between livelihoods, their environment, and their health.

## **2. Project stakeholders/ partners**

### **Partnership formation and development**

The partnership brings together conservation, healthcare and academic organisations. As project lead, Margaret Pyke Trust (“**MPT**”) provides project partners with support on project management and design as well as reporting and financial and administrative management. MPT also leads on the implementation of its sexual and reproductive health training and service delivery improvement programme (referred to as “**USHAPE**”) and integrated conservation, livelihood and human health community training. Rugarama Hospital (“**RH**”) delivers all healthcare project actions at the 10 project outreach health centres. RH is working with MPT and the International Crane Foundation (“**ICF**”) to design and deliver community education integrating wetland and crane conservation, and family planning. ICF delivers all wetland and crane conservation actions including monitoring wetland health and cranes, supporting community members with livelihoods and sustainable farming techniques. The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (“**LSHTM**”) supports project monitoring and evaluation, in particular designing the data collection protocol, many of the M&E tools, securing research ethical clearance, and training project partners in qualitative research skills. The partnership is based on demand stemming from Uganda, which was identified through all project partners’ work there. The project design was established in 2018 during our Darwin ‘Scoping Award’ workshop, and has been regularly updated and enhanced to integrate findings from our ethnographic research, including recently ‘mid-line’ project data analysis by LSHTM, and recommendations provided by the Darwin Initiative mid-term review in March 2022.

### **Particular achievements, lessons, strengths or challenges with the partnership**

Our strength this year has come from our integrated partnership and project design, as all partners collaborate on many activities, especially those with community members, meaning that we have been able to share the costs of certain activities, such as the training of “Conservation and Health Mobilisers” (community members who provide community education on conservation and family planning, refer people for healthcare services, and monitor cranes and wetlands) and community talks. A challenge has been that prices in Uganda have almost doubled this year (particularly for food and fuel), so our budgets have become extremely tight. To combat this, partners have split costs and shared budgets when undertaking joint activities, where possible. Partners have made sure they are clearly communicating, planning site visits schedules together each quarter to ensure journeys are not doubled and money is not wasted.

### **British Embassy and technical specialists’ involvement**

This year we extensively briefed key British Embassy staff in Kampala on our project, including Matthew Little, the Deputy Development Director, and the Darwin Initiative leads in Uganda, Hugh King, the Climate and Environment Advisor, and Lydia Nandawula, the Climate Policy Officer, who will be speaking at our workshop in Kampala next year (Annex 4.23) and visiting our project site in Rukiga beforehand. This year we have also worked with Dr Damian Walters, a wetland specialist from South Africa, who trained our staff in wetland assessment techniques including how to identify a wetland boundary using soil characteristics.

## **3. Project progress**

### **3.1 Progress in carrying out project Activities**

#### **Output 1 Activities**

An audit of the eight Community Conservation Groups' ("CCGs") compliance with their Community Conservation Agreements (the "Agreements") was undertaken in September 2022. The audit analysis showed that crop yields achieved from phase two of livelihoods support (provided to CCGs in March 2022) far exceeded those achieved in phase one (provided in September 2021), despite the total kilograms of seeds provided to each CCG being less than in phase one. For example, in phase one 12,400kg of potato tubers were provided in total to the eight CCG from which 19,643kg of potatoes were harvested, however in phase two 9,920kg of tubers were provided in total and 29,676kg of potatoes were harvest. Reasons for this significant improvement are due to increased involvement of peer farmers, continued mentoring and education provision by project partners, and an increase of awareness campaigns around improved farming techniques and effective methods to reduce soil erosion and increase soil fertility (Activity 1.3, Annex 4.2). Following the audit, training was undertaken with CCG leaders to help groups to work effectively and undertake all conservation and livelihood actions. Training provided information on group dynamics and effective management and leadership techniques, including good governance, and was attended by 99 CCG members (61 women and 38 men) (Activity 1.4, Annex 4.3).

Agreements were renegotiated and revised with each of the eight CCGs, and signed by all parties at a ceremony in January 2023. The Agreements cover project partners' commitments to provide sustainable livelihood support, training, and healthcare services and information. They also cover CCGs' commitments to undertake (in exchange for alternative sustainable livelihood support) wetland restoration, wetland and crane monitoring, soil and water conservation, waste management, and community environmental education (Activity 1.2, Annex 4.4). 324 CCG members (217 women and 107 men) were provided with livelihood supplies as per the Agreements, amounting to 3,680 kg of climbing bean seed, 29,440 kg of potato tubers, and Napier grass stems (Activity 1.2, Annex 4.5). Each CCG has a monitoring committee, which is responsible for reporting on wetland conservation activities, they submit bi-monthly reports to monitor compliance with Agreements (Activity 1.5, Annex 4.6).

Crane monitoring was undertaken throughout the year using fixed route surveys along four routes every two months to count the number of cranes. Crane monitoring is undertaken using 'Survey 123', which is a mobile phone app, with specially designed forms to monitor crane sightings and incidents (i.e. deaths through road traffic accidents etc.) (see Annex 4.7). This year a total of 327.7km was driven, with an average of 2.22 cranes sighted per kilometre. In addition, crane breeding site surveys were conducted every two months throughout the breeding period (October to April each year). A total of 21 breeding pairs were identified, of which seven pairs were extensively monitored. Of the seven, one pair lost their nest to disturbance in the area, two pairs raised chicks (fate unknown), and four pairs successfully raised their chicks to fledgling stage, which suggests a nesting success of 0.71 fledglings per nesting female (Activity 1.6, Annex 4.7). Crane Custodians (community volunteers trained last year) submitted 176 ad-hoc reports using 'Survey 123' to report crane sightings, incidents and nest locations. We had initially planned on sharing a map of the crane fixed routes in Annex 4.7 but due to concerns as to the illegal trade in cranes, we have elected to redact evidence. In addition, a crane census was conducted in September 2022, which counted all of the crane sightings on one day across the whole Rukiga region. This was the first count of its kind in the region, which recorded 520 individual cranes (Activity 1.5, Annex 4.8).

The project team have published the ethnographic qualitative baseline report, which provides more detailed information on the conservation, livelihood and human health issues facing project communities. The findings have informed and enhanced project design to ensure conservation, livelihood and health issues are responded to (Activities 1.7, 2.5 and 3.8, Annex 4.9. See section 1 '*How we identified this problem*' for more information on the research finding).

## **Output 2 Activities**

1,950 households from eight parishes in two sub-counties of Rukiga District were provided with Napier grass stems and trained in their use, in May 2022. The stems were cut from Napier grass nurseries planted in year two of the project and, once planted in community members' farmland, will help to combat soil erosion from the hillslopes into the wetland below (Activity 2.2, Annex 4.10). 16 peer farmers (6 women and 10 men) have continued to use their model farms to demonstrate soil and water conservation, waste disposal, and sustainable farming techniques to the wider community (Activity 2.1, Annex 4.11). In particular they have supported project staff to organise 'community digs' on hillslopes adjacent to the wetland (Activities 2.1 and 2.2, Annex 4.12). 'Community digs' are days of community action, where project partners, local leaders, peer farmers and 'Conservation and Health Mobilisers' come together to encourage all neighbours on a set date at a certain location (i.e. on a hillslope) to undertake key conservation activities, such as the digging of trenches, planting of Napier grass and other activities that will help to combat soil erosion from the hillslopes, improve soil quality, and reduce water turbidity in the wetland. This approach has been particularly successful in raising awareness, garnering support and effecting conservation action on a larger scale. To support this, in March 2023, 50 people (5 women and 45 men) (community members, local council leaders, parish and sub-county chiefs, and sub-county chairpersons) attended a training aimed to help project partners to better promote sustainable farming techniques, such as the digging of trenches and planting of Napier grass on hillslopes across the District. At the training, local leaders agreed to coordinate "community digs" and discussed the adoption of certain conservation actions in their wider work (i.e. Napier grass nurseries) (Activity 2.2, Annex 4.13).

Approximately 900 people attended our two festivals, which brought community members from our project sites together to celebrate their wetlands and cranes and to learn how to conserve them. At the festivals, people were invited to enjoy performances on project themes by local school children, CCGs and Conservation and Health Mobilisers. A marching band-led parade called people to join the festivals, a project-led litter pick cleared rubbish from the villages and wetland edges, free healthcare services were provided, and project messages were shared. The event was attended by national and local government representatives, and received national media coverage (Activity 2.2, Annex 4.14). The project communications plan has been updated and enhanced this year, as more churches and community groups have been identified and engaged with community talks. This year, 3,670 community members (2,536 women, 725 men, and 409 young people) received project messages on soil and water conservation methods, agriculture practices, sustainable waste disposal methods, and human health including family planning (such as promoting time/dates of clinics) (Activities 2.2 and 2.4, Annex 4.15). In addition, an estimated 11 million people received information on soil and water conservation methods, agriculture practices, sustainable waste disposal methods, and family planning via radio broadcasts on five local and regional radio stations (Activities 2.2 and 2.4, Annex 4.15). Water turbidity tests have been undertaken each month to measure water quality, taken in 15 locations around the wetland, the average score from all sites in the last year was 50cm. Average results inform project partners as to the health of the wetland and the instance of factors affecting water turbidity such as soil erosion and pollution from homestead run-off. The results are lower than we anticipated at project commencement, as heavier and unseasonal rains have negatively impacted water clarity (Activity 2.6, Annex 4.16).

## **Output 3 Activities**

An additional 15 people (7 women and 8 men) were trained as 'Crane Custodians' to undertake wetland conservation and monitoring, receiving equipment to help them to undertake their duties, such as boots and smart phones to enable 'Survey 123' reporting (Activity 3.2, Annex 4.17). 12 project nurses (9 women and 3 men) were trained in USHAPE family planning training, and now have improved family planning healthcare knowledge and skills. The nurses passed the final exam with an average score of 87 percent (Activity 3.2, Annex 4.18). 13 project staff (12 women

and 1 man) received human and environmental health training, and training on how to deliver project messages in community talks (Activity 3.2, Annex 4.18). 28 people (18 women and 10 men) were trained as Village Health Team (“VHTs”) members (voluntary community peer educators) in USHAPE family planning training and on the health and poverty alleviation benefits of improved reproductive health. VHTs conduct family planning awareness activities, including group talks in villages and door-to-door talks to reach the most remote community members with information surrounding the wetland. VHTs also mobilise people for project supported outreach clinic days (advertising the clinic day and services available), educate and refer people for specific health complaints (Activity 3.3, Annex 4.20). In addition, 157 CCG members (88 women and 69 men) received family planning awareness training, and other healthcare messages linking environmental and human health, including techniques to reduce wetland water pollution to ensure safe drinking water is safe (i.e. managing latrine and chemical waste run-off) and how to avoid water-borne diseases (Activity 3.3, Annex 4.21). 5,114 people (3,839 women and 1,275 men) were mobilised by VHTs, project team community talks, and radio broadcasts to attend our outreach clinics for healthcare services (Activity 3.4, Annex 4.22). This year through our work supporting clinics to provide improved family planning services, 276 unplanned pregnancies were averted (Activity 3.7, Annex 4.22).

#### **Output 4 Activities**

We continue to regularly brief Ugandan journalists on our project and its activities. This year our project has featured in multiple national news broadcasts and newspaper articles in Uganda (Activity 4.3, Annex 4.23). Preparations are underway for the one-day regional capacity-building workshop focussed on conservation and reproductive health organisations, which will take place on 25th July 2023 in Kampala. We had initially planned for this workshop to be held in February 2023, however upon advisement from our partner (Professor Susannah Mayhew from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, a public health expert in Ebola), we decided to postpone the workshop, to reduce the risk to project partners and stakeholders, and project implementation, of the Ebola outbreak. We can confirm that remarks will be made by the Uganda Darwin Initiative lead. We have also confirmed attendance by senior Uganda Government representatives and the embassies of France, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, and senior policy makers and programme implementers from the conservation and reproductive health sectors (Activity 4.4, Annex 4.24). We have presented the project and its research at various high-level policy conferences. In November 2022, project partners presented an abstract and poster at the International Conference on Family Planning, with the poster winning ‘best in session’ (Activity 4.6, Annex 4.25). In December 2022, project partners presented the project and its themes at the 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP27), in an event titled *“Removing barriers to family planning within African climate policy processes”*, which was attended in person and online to approximately 500 people, and at an event titled *“The significance of integrating reproductive health and family planning in conservation”*, at the 2022 United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP15) (Activity 4.6, Annex 4.25). Both events were well-received and attended by senior policy makers, government officials from various countries and high-level decision-makers with excellent feedback. In addition, the COP27 event led to project partner MPT being invited to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) with the Ugandan Government. The MOU is still being drafted but will detail the means by which MPT will support the government to continue integrating reproductive health and family planning programmes into environment and climate policy and programming for improved impact in numerous development sectors in the country and wider East Africa region. Three Master’s theses were published by partner LSHTM on the interconnections between environmental degradation, demographical and livelihood pressures on food security; Environmental triggers for and pathways to gender-based violence; and Climate change and gender-based violence connections. The theses are informing forthcoming academic papers, which will be submitted to peer reviewed journals (Activity 4.6, Annex 4.26).

## 3.2 Progress towards project Outputs

### **Output 1: Community Conservation Agreements secured with Community Conservation Groups supporting: (a) sustainable livelihoods; and (b) conservation actions including habitat restoration, and management and monitoring of wetlands and cranes.**

Community Conservation Agreements that were negotiated with the eight CCGs this year and signed by 324 household representatives (see Annex 4.4) is an increase from the last Agreements signed in 2021 with 248 households. We have therefore exceeded Output indicator 1.4 and have achieved the aim to have at least 50% representation of women, with 217 members being women and 107 being men. The Agreements outline the livelihood support that community members have received in exchange for conservation actions benefitting wetland habitat and cranes and this latest livelihood support is the third and final phase for this project. The total measured upland and farmland subject to Community Conservation Agreements has increased from 0 hectares (2020) to 300.48 hectares (2022), which exceeds Output indicator 1.2, and this year we confirmed that no households have farmland in the wetland. Crane breeding pairs monitored have varied between project years, however an upward trend is noted, from 19 (2021) to 33 (2022) and 21 (2023). Monitoring continues, using 'Survey 123' along the four fixed routes and breeding sites identified off the routes by Crane Custodians (Annexes 4.7 and 4.8). In addition, a crane census has identified 520 individual cranes in the wetland, which is the first count of its kind in south-west Uganda. It is highly likely that we will achieve this Output as engagement with the eight CCGs and 45 Crane Custodians is frequent and positive, and their levels of interest is high. The increase in Crane Custodians this year will also increase opportunities for crane observations and monitoring. It is highly likely that we will achieve this output as engagement with the eight CCGs and Crane Custodians has increased this year and monitoring is showing good uptake of livelihoods and conservation actions.

### **Output 2: Community members participate in activities that benefit human and environmental health.**

This year community members continued their participation in activities that benefit human and environment health. 248 households are implementing soil and water conservation methods, sustainable agriculture practices, and environmentally sound waste disposal methods (Annex 4.6), and the additional 76 households that signed new Agreements this year have started implementation also. We have therefore exceeded Output indicator 2.1 increasing from 0 (2019), to 248 (2022), and we anticipate this will increase to 324 by project close. All groups are implementing conservation actions, 99% of members have planted Napier grass, 96% have dug trenches in their upland farms to combat soil erosion into the wetland below, and 98% have dug pit for waste disposal. The total length of trenches dug is over 13,000 metres, the average number of trenches per household is four, and the average number of compost pits is two. We will continue to support groups to ensure full compliance this year. In addition, the 16 peer farmers trained in 2021 have been demonstrating these methods on their 'model farms' with good results (see Annex 4.11). 1,130 community members (all women) have attended project outreach clinics for family planning services, which is an increase from 0 (2019), and 965 (2021), thanks to increased promotion of family planning services through community talks, mobilisation and referrals to clinics by project staff, Crane Custodians, Community and Health Mobilisers, and Village Health Teams (Annex 4.15 and 4.20). We anticipate that we will exceed Output indicator 2.2 in the coming months, as talks will continue and increase further following the implementation of refresher training for Crane Custodians, Village Health Teams and Conservation and Health Mobilisers in the last year. In addition, water clarity tests on wetland water, and have been recorded to show an upwards trend in average water clarity scores from 19 (2019) to 55.6 (2021), with a slight reduction this year at 50cm (2022) (Annex 4.16). The results of water clarity testing are used by CCG members, Crane Custodians, Conservation and Health Mobilisers, and peer farmers to raise awareness in their communities about how human actions can negatively impact wetland health. We have reviewed Output indicator 2.3 and found that our target of 90 is likely too high, as changing rainfall patterns (i.e. heavier and out-of-season rains due to climate

change) is negatively affecting water clarity results. We will seek to amend this indicator for the final year of project implementation. It is highly likely that we will achieve this Output as community talks and mobilisation has increased this year, with greater numbers of family planning users and implementation of activities that benefit human and environmental health being recorded in project communities. In addition, in our final year we are increasing our engagement of local leaders to ensure activities are embedded in local conservation and climate plans.

**Output 3: Healthcare providers deliver family planning services, which are taken up by community members.**

We are supporting 10 outreach clinics with improved family planning services, which is an increase from 0 (2019) and to 4 (2021), meaning we have exceeded Output indicator 3.1. We have again exceeded Output indicator 3.2 this year, with the increase in project healthcare providers trained (from 10 outreach clinics, scoring over 80% in final exams) from 0 (2019) to 47 (2021), to 101 (2022), which has enabled them to provide better healthcare services and increase engagement with community members, therefore increasing opportunities for people to take up family planning services (Annex 4.18). In addition, we have made good progress towards achieving Output indicator 3.3, as the number of unplanned pregnancies estimated this year from service delivery data totalled 276, and the total unplanned pregnancies estimated since project commencement is 767 (Annex 4.22). We believe it is highly likely that we will achieve this Output, as community members attendance at family planning services has increased significantly since project commencement and will continue on an upward trajectory to project close, in a large part due to the increased awareness raising activities by project teams and community members.

**Output 4: Increased awareness, among conservation policy makers and project implementers, of the relevance to biodiversity conservation of integrating family planning and conservation actions, by reference to the project.**

We achieved Output indicator 4.1 in the previous reporting period, however to contribute to this achievement we have undertaken significant engagement at high-level events with conservation, climate change and reproductive health policy makers and project implementers to promote our project this year, at:

- The International Conference on Family Planning (Annex 4.25);
- The 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP27) (Annex 4.25); and
- The 2022 United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP15) (Annex 4.25).

We exceeded Output indicator 4.2 in previous reporting period and have secured further media coverage of our project and the links between conservation of wetlands, Grey Crowned Cranes and family planning this year with multiple TV news packages being aired on our activities (Annex 4.23). Progress has been made against Output indicator 4.3 this year, as preparations have begun for our regional capacity-building workshop for conservation and reproductive health organisations and policy makers, on the positive human and environmental health outcomes, and importance to biodiversity, of family planning. The workshop will be held on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2023 in Kampala (Annex 4.24). Finally, progress has been made against Output indicator 4.4, with the publication of three Master's theses by partner LSHTM this year on our project data and ethnographic research. The theses are informing the forthcoming academic papers, which will be submitted to peer reviewed journals (Annex 4.26). It is highly likely that we will achieve this output as significant engagement of UK and Uganda Government officials, conservation policy makers and project implementers, of the relevance to biodiversity conservation of integrating family planning and conservation actions, by reference to the project, has been undertaken since project commencement. We aim to further increase awareness through the creation and launch of a training programme for conservationist through MPT's work as chair of the International



Union for Conservation of Nature's Biodiversity & Family Planning Task Force, which features lessons learned from this project (Annex 4.27).

### 3.3 Progress towards the project Outcome

**Outcome:** *Conditions established to enable improved long-term wetland health, benefitting the eight communities of Nyabirerema, Kyerero/Butare- Ahamurambi, Nyarurambi, Nyakarambi, Nyakagabagaba, Kitojo, Kihanga-Sindi, and Burime in Rukiga (being around 13,500 people) and Grey Crowned Cranes, through wetland restoration and management, healthcare service provision, community education and sustainable livelihood provision.*

Excellent progress has been made towards achieving the project Outcome this year. Of the four SMART Outcome indicators, we have exceeded three and are on target to complete the remaining in our final year, as refresher training for project staff continues. We have exceeded Outcome indicator 0.1, as the area of Rukiga's wetlands subject to Community Conservation Agreements (covering wetland restoration and management), increased from 0 hectares (2020) to 200 hectares (2021). In addition, this year new Community Conservation Agreements were signed with an additional 76 households, so we anticipate that by project end this figure will increase further (Annex 4.4). We have exceeded Outcome indicator 0.2 this year, as 324 households have benefitted from new sustainable livelihoods (217 women and 107 men) (Annex 4.5). In addition, an audit analysis of compliance with Community Conservation Agreements has shown that crop yields achieved from phase two of livelihoods support (provided to the groups in March 2022) far exceeded those achieved in phase one (provided in September 2021), despite the total kilograms of seeds provided to each group being less than in phase one (Annex 4.2). This success can be attributed to increased involvement of our trained peer farmers, the continued mentoring and education/training provision by project partners, and an increase of awareness campaigns around improved farming techniques and effective methods to reduce soil erosion and increase soil fertility (Annexes 4.3, 4.10, 4.11, 4.12, 4.14, and 4.15). We have exceeded Outcome indicator 0.3 this year, as visits to the 10 outreach clinics by community members in our eight project sites since project commencement has increased from 0 visits (2020) to 8,433 (6,555 women and 1,873 men). We anticipate that this figure will continue to increase, as the implementation of our communications plan continues in earnest and we will implement refresher training of Crane Custodians, VHTs, and Conservation and Health Mobilisers will take place in the last year. Work has continued towards achieving project Outcome indicator 0.4 this year, as 25 additional staff have received training and are showing high awareness of cross-sector benefits of integrated programmes. This has increased from 0 (2020), to 31 (2021), with the total being 56 (2022). We have planned additional activities in relation to this indicator for July 2023, as all project partners will be together, along with additional project partner staff who live outside of Uganda. Therefore, we anticipate that by project end we will have achieved this indicator also.

### 3.4 Monitoring of assumptions

**Assumption 1:** *No major shocks to the local economic situation, healthcare system or otherwise hampering the undertaking of livelihood or health activities (such as Ebola or other major health outbreak, civil unrest, or political instability).*

**Comments:** This year an Ebola outbreak in Uganda affected the delivery of one project activity (a workshop in Kampala, Output indicator 4.3), however this was declared officially over in January 2022 and we delayed implementation of this activity to minimise this risk. There is frequent civil unrest in districts that border Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, which are regularly monitored but no unrest has been reported in or near our project district and it is therefore not affecting our project.

**Assumption 2:** *No major weather-related events (such as landslides due to heavy rains) destroying land subject to livelihood activities or damaging roads (preventing training activities taking place).*

**Comments:** No change in assumption. There have been minor landslides in the project area, caused by heavier rains than usual, however it has not affected project implementation, except for causing longer journeys for project staff travelling to and from remote project communities due to poor roads. We continue to closely monitor weather events through our regular contact with CCGs, Crane Custodians, and Health Centre staff.

**Assumption 3:** *The Government continues to allow the registration of Community Conservation Groups and does not make any legislation impacting family planning provision.*

**Comments:** This assumption still holds. The CCGs are all registered and we are not aware of any potential changes to the law impacting their status. The Government has not announced any new legislation impacting family planning provision and we do not anticipate it to do so in the foreseeable future, as Uganda has committed to scale up the use of family planning methods to address its high total fertility, maternal mortality, and teenage pregnancy rates.

### **Output 1 assumptions**

**Assumptions 1, 2 and 3:** In our application, these are a direct repeat of Outcome assumptions 1, 2 and 3. Therefore, please refer above.

**Assumption 4:** *Regional Grey Crowned Crane population and other biodiversity do not experience significant declines caused by external factors outside of project control (new or emerging threats such as extreme weather events.)*

**Comments:** This assumption still holds, there have been no population declines, nor have any external factors outside the project's control occurred to impact this assumption. We recorded an increase in nesting success this year from 0.5 chicks per nest (2021) to 0.71 (2022), and a crane census conducted this year revealed more cranes than initially thought to be residing in the wetland (520 were counted). There are, in fact, positive signs of increases in relation to both Cranes and, as an unplanned consequence of the project, Sitatunga, an almost extinct animal in the Rukiga-Rushebeya wetland (only 10 are remaining), and there have been verbal accounts from community members that reduced hunting is a result of community sensitisation about the wildlife conservation.

### **Output 2 assumptions**

**Assumptions 1 and 2:** In our application, these are a direct repeat of Outcome assumptions 1 and 2. Therefore, please refer above.

**Assumption 3:** *No major pollution event within project watershed from new or unanticipated source.*

**Comments:** No change in assumption. There has been no major pollution events reported or monitored.

### **Output 3 assumptions**

**Assumption 1:** In our application, this is a direct repeat of Outcome assumption 1. Therefore, please refer above.

**Assumption 2:** *No major weather-related events (such as landslides due to heavy rains) damaging roads (preventing outreach clinics operating and/or training activities taking place).*

**Comments:** No change in assumption. There have been no major weather-related events and therefore the clinics have opened, healthcare services have been provided and training has taken place. There have been a few minor landslides, which have delayed healthcare staff on their journeys to/from outreach clinics but this is a minor inconvenience only.

**Assumption 3:** *Healthcare workers employed within the first year.*

**Comments:** This assumption holds true. Three project nurses were employed and trained in January 2021.

**Assumption 4:** *As at present, none of Rugarama Hospital's nurses or the area's Village Health Teams have had USHAPE family planning training. It is possible that in-migration from elsewhere in Uganda to Kabale of nurses or VHT volunteers we have trained elsewhere would increase baseline at project commencement to above 0.*

**Comments:** This assumption holds true. There have been no in-migration of staff to RH or VHTs into the project area.

**Assumption 5:** *The Crude Birth Rate and Unplanned Pregnancy Rate, taken from the latest Demographic and Health Survey, is accurate.*

**Comments:** This assumption holds true. This remains the most accurate national data source.

#### **Output 4 assumptions**

**Assumption 1:** *IUCN conference takes place as planned and is not cancelled/postponed due to political, environmental or other shocks.*

**Comments:** This assumption holds true. The conference was cancelled twice but it took place in the last reporting period.

**Assumption 2:** *Damian Carrington, the Guardian's environment editor, has already notified us that the Guardian wants to cover the project when funding is obtained, the assumption is that once funding is obtained the Guardian will still wish to publish this article.*

**Comments:** We hope that in the last year of the project we will gain a second article in the Guardian, although we have achieved our aim of having our project covered by the Guardian last year.

### **3.5 Impact: achievement of positive impact on biodiversity and poverty reduction**

#### **Project impact in our original application form**

Anthropogenic pressures on the wetlands of Rukiga, Uganda, are reduced resulting in decreased poverty and improved human health, increased biodiversity, and long-term conservation of Grey Crowned Cranes and their habitat.

#### **Our project's contribution to higher-level impact on biodiversity conservation**

Through crane monitoring and building the capacity of Crane Custodians to safeguard breeding cranes, the project is contributing to current data and conservation of the globally Endangered Grey Crown Cranes. Digging trenches and planting of Napier Grass on hillslopes to reduce soil erosion and subsequent deposition in the wetland will improve the health of the wetland and its ability to support biodiversity. Participation of local communities in restoring the wetland and wetland management will contribute to improved wetland and biodiversity conservation in the area. Moreover, wetland restoration is reducing the amount of peat exposed to the atmosphere, reducing carbon emissions and its subsequent effects on biodiversity. As stated in the Mid-Term Review Aide Memoire last year, and above, we are also pleased that an additional and unplanned outcome of the project is the increase in number Sitatunga, which is locally "almost extinct".

#### **Our project's contribution to a higher-level impact on human development and wellbeing (poverty alleviation)**

Our project is providing communities with sustainable livelihoods, which is directly responding to poverty alleviation. The training and support provided to the eight CCGs in group dynamics and bookkeeping further builds business skills and capacity. The aim of these enterprises is to increase household income and reduce poverty. Our project is providing family planning (and

other) healthcare services, which enable people to choose their desired family size and avoid unplanned pregnancy. Unplanned pregnancies place a financial burden on families, and women who are able to stop or delay childbearing when desired are better able to participate in livelihoods, enabling them to support their families with additional income and in the long-term, contribute to the economy.

#### **4. Project support to the Conventions, Treaties or Agreements**

##### **Kunming-Montreal 2030 Global Targets**

This project is directly contributing to numerous Kunming-Montreal 2030 Global Targets:

- Target 3: *“Ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of terrestrial, inland water, and of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas...”* – We respond to this through our implementation of the Community Conservation Agreements and support of the CCGs. Communities have committed to protect the wetland and sustainably use hillslopes through planting of Napier Grass to prevent erosion (Output 1);
- Target 7: *“Reduce pollution risks and the negative impact of pollution from all sources, by 2030, to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, considering cumulative effects...”* – We respond to this through our implementation of the Community Conservation Agreements, the support of the CCGs and peer farmers, and community talks on reducing wetland pollution and sedimentation due to soil erosion (Output 1 and Output 2);
- Target 10: *“Ensure that areas under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry are managed sustainably, in particular through the sustainable use of biodiversity, including through a substantial increase of the application of biodiversity friendly practices...”* – We respond to this through our implementation of the Community Conservation Agreements, the support and mentoring of the CCGs and local leaders, and livelihood provision and training (Output 1);
- Target 22: *“Ensure the full, equitable, inclusive, effective and gender-responsive representation and participation in decision-making, and access to justice and information related to biodiversity by indigenous peoples and local communities, respecting their cultures and their rights over lands, territories, resources, and traditional knowledge, as well as by women and girls, children and youth, and persons with disabilities and ensure the full protection of environmental human rights defenders”* – We respond to this through our ethnographic research, which ensures gender-responsive representation and participation to ensure the views of community members are integrated into project design (Output indicators 1.7, 2.6, 3.8, Annex 4.9). In addition to our work with CCGs and community peer educators (VHTs, conservation and health mobilisers etc.), reaching those most vulnerable, and the provision of family planning information and services. We also ensure at least 50% inclusion of women in all activities; and
- Target 23: *“Ensure gender equality in the implementation of the framework through a gender-responsive approach where all women and girls have equal opportunity and capacity to contribute...”* - We respond to this through our work improving family planning healthcare services, as without reproductive health women and girls cannot have equal opportunity and capacity to contribute in society, livelihoods or conservation action (Outcome 0.3, Output 3, Annexes 4.17, 4.19, and 4.21). In addition to our ethnographic research (to ensure women and girls voices are included), and our support of CCGs (ensuring substantial inclusion of women).

##### **Uganda’s National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan (NBSAP)**

Uganda’s NBSAP states biodiversity loss “mainly emanates from habitat conversion, high population growth rate, climate change, poverty, and poor farming practices” whilst recognising

that “biodiversity resources also support some of the poorest and most vulnerable”. In response, the NBSAP promotes agro-diversity, gender-responsive interventions, and the need to develop alternative rural livelihoods. 58% of Ugandan pregnancies are unplanned, a primary reason Uganda’s population is projected to double between 2020 and 2060, and why Uganda has multiple national policies promoting greater access to reproductive health services. By integrating sustainable agricultural practices, human health service provision improvement and wetland conservation actions, we respond to the drivers of biodiversity loss identified by the NBSAP.

### **The Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)**

This project is also responding to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals as the Grey Crowned Crane is a priority species under the African Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (“**AEWA**”). The International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Grey Crowned Crane was approved by the Meeting of the Parties to AEWA in 2015. Uganda, an AEWA signatory, uses the International Plan as a baseline, adapted the plan and finalised the Uganda Single Species Action Plan in 2018. Our project directly contributes to a number of activities in both plans, reducing the key threats of habitat loss, human and livestock disturbance, benefiting people through alternative livelihoods, and building resiliency.

Most specifically, this project addresses the following activities outlined in the International Species Action Plan:

- 2.1.3 Ensure organised and regulated use of sites by local communities;
- 2.1.4 Raise awareness about their impact on Grey Crowned Cranes;
- 2.2.3 Raise awareness on ecosystem services of wetlands;
- 3.2.1 Provide alternative livelihoods to reduce extent of agriculture and protect ecosystem services;
- 3.2.2 Provide best practice guidelines for environmentally friendly agriculture;
- 3.2.3 Support communities to implement these guidelines;
- 4.1.1 Develop standardised monitoring protocols and conduct population surveys;
- 4.2.2 Conduct monitoring; and
- 4.11.1 Develop protocols to measure the effectiveness of conservation and encourage uptake of the protocol.

### **AEWA milestones**

- Our project has trained Crane Custodians to sensitise communities to stop crane capture and poisoning and built the capacity of staff to deal with crane poisoning. Through Community Conservation Agreements, the CCGs that we support with sustainable livelihoods committed to start safeguarding cranes and to report any incidents to local authorities. This contributes to reducing direct threats to Grey Crowned Cranes;
- We hold regular awareness campaigns in project communities to educate people about the importance of conserving cranes and the wetlands and ecosystem goods and services that the people derive from these ecosystems. Through these campaigns, communities have agreed to undertake practices that promote sustainable use of wetlands. Our awareness campaigns contribute directly to promoting public education and awareness to secure Grey Crowned Cranes and their habitat;
- Our provision of sustainable livelihoods and improved farming practices especially Napier Grass planting has enabled income generation and improved food production, which contributes to securing habitats through environmentally friendly agriculture practices. The improved farming practices are expected to increase agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular, women, and the implementation of resilient agricultural practices, which increase productivity and production and help maintain ecosystems); and
- ICF has signed an MoU with the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities to lead the implementation of the National Single Species Action Plan for Grey Crowned Cranes.

## **UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**

This project also responds to the UNFCCC. The average annual rainfall in Uganda is not predicted to change significantly over the next 60 years, but the timing will shift and the occurrence of extreme events will increase. Already, Rukiga has experienced this, with an increase in landslides due to heavy downpours, in a landscape now devoid of indigenous vegetation. Our project aims to increase community resilience by:

- expansion of climate smart agriculture and diversifying livelihoods;
- wetland restoration reducing evaporation rates and improve ecosystem services of flood attenuation and water management; and
- reducing the amount of peat exposed to the atmosphere, reducing greenhouse gas emissions (Uganda is the African country emitting the most greenhouse gas emissions due to wetland loss).

The IPCC's 2014 Fifth Assessment Report notes the value of family planning for improving health, slowing population growth and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Our project therefore contributes in a small way to stabilising greenhouse gas emissions, whilst we focus on activities mitigating the adverse effects of climate change and promote sustainable development. The IPCC's 2022 Sixth Assessment Report makes various references to the importance of reproductive health and family planning in climate adaptation and resilience. Specific mentions are made in the below chapters, which are early contributions to the full report which will be released later this year:

- WG II Chapter 7 *Health, 'Well-being and the changing structure of communities'* calls for targeted investments in health and other systems, including multi-sectoral, integrated approaches to protect against key health risks that can effectively increase resilience. Under this, there is a specific call for investments to ensure 'Adaptation options to reduce the future risks of malnutrition, including access to healthy, affordable, diverse diets from sustainable food systems, and health services including maternal, child and reproductive health'; and
- WG II Chapter 18 *'Climate Resilient Development Pathways'* highlights the multi-sectoral benefits of reproductive health and family planning: "Increased access to reproductive health and family planning services, which contributes to climate change resilience and socio-economic development through improved health and well-being of women and their children, including increased access to education, gender equity and economic status".

## **Focal point interaction**

This year we have been working with Mr. Stephen Fred Okiror (the AEWA national focal person, replacing Dr. Akankwasa with whom we worked in previous years), to update Uganda's International Single Species Action Plan for Grey Crowned Cranes, under the Crane Specialist Group of AEWA. ICF's project lead coordinates the Crane Specialist Group for the East African region, so works closely with all the focal persons on a regular basis. In addition, we have been working with Uganda's National UNFCCC Focal point (the Climate Commissioner, Margaret Athieno Mwebesa) and with the UNFCCC Gender Focal Point (Winifred Masiko, who is also the lead negotiator on gender issues for Uganda within the UNFCCC processes). They attended our event at COP27 (Annex 4.25) and we are in regular contact with them regarding our MOU with the Uganda government (see section 3.1, Output 4 activities).

## **5. Project support to poverty reduction**

Our project is contributing to a reduction in poverty through the implementation, support and mentoring of communities in sustainable livelihoods and in the provision of family planning healthcare services and education. A direct poverty impact of our project's sustainable livelihood provision (Outcome 0.2) is the increased household financial security it provides and support in accessing new markets to sell produce. The direct beneficiaries of the alternative sustainable

livelihood provision are the 324 CCG members (representing 324 households containing an estimated 2,268 people, considering average household size in the area is seven people per household) living in the project sites adjacent to the wetland. In addition to the training on livelihoods, the CCG members have been trained on bookkeeping and group dynamics (see 2020-2021 annual report for evidence and Annex 4.3), to help them to manage their groups effectively now all livelihood support has been provided. Community Conservation Agreements signed with each CCG commits members to saving a certain amount of money each month. Groups negotiate between themselves as to the savings they can afford and every single member achieved their savings goal. Savings can be used however members wish, many choosing to use them as collateral for micro-finance to buy farming equipment or other livelihood materials (without further support from the project partners), or used to pay for vital expenses such as school fees or medical costs etc. Last year the eight CCGs saved a total 7,760,000 Ugandan Shillings (approx. £1,652) and have committed to saving more next year, an increase to 14,035,000 Ugandan Shillings (approx. £3,000). Savings have also had unexpected benefits for women (see section 6). Reproductive (and other) health services have been provided for 27 months in total. Avoiding unplanned pregnancy leads to direct impacts on poverty reduction, as families lacking the healthcare services needed to choose freely if and when to have children, are having larger families than desired. This increases pressure on family income and increases the need to convert further wetland into farmland. With 13,500 community members benefiting from greater healthcare services and healthcare providers with greater knowledge, skills and confidence in family planning service provision and community engagement on family planning education (outcome 0.3 and outputs 2.2 and 3.1) many families will benefit. Women are far less able to retain any livelihood during and after unplanned pregnancy, whereas improved health reduces the number of productive working days lost, reducing poverty. A reduction in unplanned pregnancy therefore, in the long-term, reduces human pressure on the wetlands and uplands, leading to improved ecosystems services. The project now supports 10 outreach health clinics, more than initially planned. The project has directly provided healthcare services to 8,413 people (6,538 women and 1,875 men), including 2,294 people (all women) for family planning services. An additional indirect poverty impact is increased awareness about the value of cranes and wetlands and increased awareness of the importance of family planning, through our community education on crane and wetlands and family planning.

**6. Gender equality and social inclusion**

Please quantify the proportion of women on the Project Board.	We do not have a formally appointed Project Board, but our strategic decisions are made by a group of five senior managers across partner organisations. Three of five people are women.
Please quantify the proportion of project partners that are led by women	Two of the three project partners are women led.

Patriarchal norms in the wetland catchment have a detrimental impact on men and women. Ethnographic research at the project site found that when circumstances prevented men’s abilities to provide for their families, alcohol abuse and domestic violence increases. Barriers to family planning, including contraceptive myths, impact women and girls’ ability to engage in conservation and livelihoods, as early or frequent pregnancies restrict life choices and risk health. Gender equality is impossible, in any context, without unrestricted access to reproductive health services. The project therefore has a particular focus on gender equality, given the provision of such services is a key project element. A significant amount of reproductive health training of clinicians from Rugarama Hospital and the 10 health clinics has been undertaken since project commencement. Disaggregated data highlights that of the 83 clinicians trained, 59 were women and 24 were men. In addition, this year we trained 28 (18 women and 10 men) VHTs to reach the most remote and rural community members (Annex 4.20). VHTs play an important role as

they take family planning information and services ‘door-to-door’. Evidence from our ethnographic research (Annex 4.9) indicates that gender-based violence is widespread in our project communities. Women spoke of their husbands/partners/male family members stopping them visiting health centres for family planning services (due to cost and family planning myths). By VHTs bringing services closer to where women live, it means that more women are reached with information and services for free. In terms of upskilling professional qualifications of healthcare staff there has been a disproportionate focus on training of women. Provision of healthcare services (including reproductive health services) commenced in February 2021. To date, the project has directly provided 6,538 women and 1,875 men with healthcare services. Evidence from health clinics confirms that men are less likely to use health clinics except for dental treatment and HIV testing. It is for this reason that we have ensured these services are included in our service delivery. 217 women and 107 men from the eight CCGs benefitted from alternative sustainable livelihoods provided by the project (outcome indicator 0.2), ensuring that women are disproportionately represented within decision-making structures. Given the patriarchal nature of the communities, we believe that relative over-representation in the number of women within these structures is necessary to ensure the collective voice of women is equal to the collective voice of men. In this way, our project is directly supporting women.

A notable achievement this year has been the wider social and economic benefits that savings made by CCG members through project provided livelihoods has made (see section 5, annex 4.28), in particular, to women. Women told us that savings enables them to secure micro-loans, using their savings as collateral, rather than needing to use their husband’s/male family member’s land as collateral. This is a significant achievement as woman in Rukiga cannot own land, yet are often most active in subsistence agriculture and household management. Therefore, previously if a woman wanted to buy farming equipment, she would need her husband/male partner/family member’s authorisation. As a result, the man often felt ‘entitled’ to a share of the loan, leaving the woman with insufficient funds. This is exacerbated by the high prevalence of men who experience alcoholism in the project communities (Annex 4.9).

## **7. Monitoring and evaluation**

### **Contribution of the Outputs and Activities to the project Outcome**

Grey Crowned Cranes depend on ever diminishing wetlands to nest. Rukiga’s human communities depend on these same finite ecosystems for food security and livelihoods. Lack of family planning services leads to larger families. A cycle of poverty and poor healthcare provision increases pressures on families and wetlands, so wetlands become progressively less capable of supporting cranes and livelihoods. To break the cycle, we respond to these interrelated challenges through our Outputs and Activities. Combining conservation, livelihood and healthcare Outputs means each Output amplifies the impact of others. For instance, a woman who can access family planning AND take up a livelihood can choose their family size, avoid negative health outcomes, support family finances, retain the livelihood (by avoiding an unplanned pregnancy), and engage in conservation action. As pressures on families and ecosystems reduce, the ecosystems are better able to support human and non-human species. Greater conservation, health and gender outcomes result from such integrated projects. To establish the conditions necessary to enable long-term conservation of Grey Crowned Cranes and improve human health has required us to integrate actions responding to the interrelated livelihood, conservation and health issues that lead to increasing anthropogenic pressures. We are making good progress towards realising this, meaning we can secure the health of the wetlands needed for crane and human health.

### **Our indicators of achievements**

Project design and monitoring and evaluation (“**M&E**”) is rooted in extensive ethnographic research (qualitative), ensuring local people’s needs and solutions are built into the project. LSHTM supported the development of a robust project evaluation framework. The research has



informed multiple project design refinements, for example, it revealed that the project team needed to adapt the way in which healthcare services were delivered, leading to an increased frequency and distribution of healthcare services. Our quantitative indicators relate to increases in wetland and crane conservation action undertaken, sustainable livelihood action undertaken, and healthcare services taken up by community members.

### **M&E responsibilities of partners and information sharing**

All partners are responsible for M&E. To monitor and evaluate the project, project partners use the Conservation Agreements to track livelihood and environment activities and impacts, and data collected using the Survey 123 app reports periodically about the breeding and sightings of the cranes. ICF staff, CCG members and Crane Custodians are responsible for conservation monitoring and reporting. RH monitors health service delivery and community health education provision. Health reports are captured weekly. LSHTM leads on qualitative M&E and regularly shares information with partners, ensuring lessons learnt are incorporated into project design. MPT monitors USHAPE implementation using a monitoring and evaluation framework and undertakes monthly audits of project data. Information is shared in regular partner meetings and via email and WhatsApp.

### **Changes to the M&E plan this year**

As part of our ongoing M&E processes, we found that the London Measure of Unplanned Pregnancy (LMUP) was not providing an accurate analysis of our project impact. LMUP is a short survey, which healthcare providers use to ask women visiting the project health centres to consider whether their most recent pregnancy was planned for. We have found that culturally, women in Rukiga are unlikely to say their pregnancies were unplanned as children in Rukiga are considered to be 'gifts from God', and therefore always in their plans / 'God's plan'. Our change request to amend this means of verification was accepted and we now use "Impact 2" (a socio-economic mathematical model, created by MSI Reproductive Choices) to calculate unplanned pregnancy. No substantive change was needed in data collection as we already have the data needed for this measure, collected as part of our routine health centre data collection methods.

## **8. Lessons learnt**

### **What worked well this year**

Our work to involve national and local government structures across our project activities this year has worked well. At a local level (in Rukiga), local leaders have been instrumental in inspiring action in their communities via 'community digs' (see section 3.1, output 2). We have also found that local leaders are keen to adopt our conservation and livelihood activities, showing desire to integrate them into local policies. In addition, by encouraging CCGs to save money, we have directly helped women to build assets and save for economic security, which is particularly important in Uganda's patriarchal society (see Section 6), where often women are inhibited from exercising agency and self-determination.

### **What we would have done differently and recommendations**

With the restriction on project budget, there is nothing that we could have done differently this year. We would recommend working in cross-sector partnerships to enable greater impacts for project beneficiaries and ecosystems alike.

### **How we will build this learning into the project and future plans**

We continue to work closely with government and diocesan officials to support project implementation and engagement with project communities, and we are working to embed project activities in local structures and development plans. In addition, our project team's close links with its academic partner, LSHTM, has ensured that lessons learnt are regularly evaluated,

feeding into and enhancing project design to ensure the greatest benefit for community members, cranes and the ecosystem upon which they rely.

## 9. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)

### Comments and recommendations from our last annual report

- **Recommendation 1:** *Clarify whether the project has established a wellbeing/average income baseline that can be used to measure the projects contribution to household incomes from the livelihood activities supported by the project. This may be a good baseline to measure project's contribution to poverty reduction.*
  - **Our response:** We did not measure wellbeing by average income, as LSHTM advised us that this frequently gives inaccurate information. People in rural close-knot communities are less likely to respond honestly about income and money for fear of judgement. We decided instead to measure diversified sources of income and assets. In our baseline (Annex 4.29), 87.5% of the households interviewed relied on the sale of agricultural produce as a source of income, with only 12.5% having additional sources of income. All households (100%) owned farmland, 67.5% have livestock, 10.6% own motorcycles, 41.9% have bicycles, 100% have mobile phones, 94.6% had radios and none of the respondents own a vehicle. We will measure how many households will have diversified their income sources and assets as a result of our project.
- **Recommendation 2:** *Highlight marketing strategies and actions taken by the project to CCGs members engaged in potato and climbing beans production. Clarify whether there is a strategy towards enabling members to collectively sell their produce in order to get the best prices by avoiding exploitation by middlemen or brokers.*
  - **Our response:** We have encouraged CCG members to pool the produce and sell together. Three out of the eight groups are already doing this. We have provided trainings in group dynamics (Annex 4.3) to help groups respond to challenges that may arise from this kind of arrangement. We are optimistic that the other groups will follow suit after seeing the benefits the practicing groups are experiencing.
- **Recommendation 3:** *Ensure that all materials produced through the support of the Darwin Initiative acknowledge Darwin.*
  - **Our response:** This has been done. See Annexes for evidence.
- **Comment 1:** *It may not be possible to provide data on savings made monthly and annually by individual CCGs members, and if this is case, is it possible to have each of the members make their saving contributions through the CCGs – table banking? Is this something that can be pursued by the project?*
  - **Our response:** This is being done. See section 5 and annex 4.28.

## 10. Risk Management

The only new risk that has arisen this year relates to an Ebola outbreak in Uganda. This has impacted the implementation of a workshop planned for February 2023 (see section 3.1, Output 4). We contacted the Darwin Initiative about this risk in December 2022 and were permitted to delay implementation until the risk had subsided. This workshop is now planned for July 2023 and there have been no negative impacts of this adaptation. We are 27 months through our 34-month project, therefore we believe that any risks that might exist or arise in this final year of implementation are minimal and will not impact our overall success.

## 11. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

Project design has been continuously reviewed and revised based on findings of our ethnographic research and analysis of project data. In particular, we have identified that climate change is impacting our project communities more than initially thought. This has led to us seek

additional Darwin Initiative funding to support the enhancement and expansion of our project for an additional three years, which was awarded in March 2023. Starting August 2023, we will therefore be enhancing our current project design to include climate-smart agriculture and expanding our project activities to 'landscape approach' for maximum benefit to the wetland, its cranes and people.

## **12. Sustainability and legacy**

### **Evidence of increasing interest resulting from the project**

The project has been promoted extensively by Ugandan media outlets (Annex 4.23), this has increased the profile of the project in Uganda. In addition, we have been working closely with national and local government representatives in all areas of our work. Notably, senior representatives from the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities and the Uganda Wildlife Authority, presented at our festivals, alongside the Rukiga District Commissioner. They support our project and are committed to seeking ways to collaborate further. In addition, our work at the UNFCCC COP25 this year has significantly strengthened interest in our project at the national and international level, resulting in an MOU (see section 4) with the Ugandan Government.

### **Open access plan**

All of the crane and environmental data in our project is collected using Survey 123, which is linked directly to the Endangered Wildlife Trust's ("EWT") central database and holds all of the ICF/EWT Partnership's data. The EWT is an Associate Node for the Global Biodiversity Information Facility ("GBIF") and as such has undertaken to make empirical and scientific research data related to conservation work as widely available as possible, having due regard to copyright and ownership considerations. All data collected under this project will be made publicly available according to GBIF global standards in line with a commitment to scientific data sharing. A note though that no breeding site locations will be shared publicly due to the risk of illegal trade in eggs and crane chicks. USHAPE training materials are freely available to download online.

### **Exit strategy**

Our exit strategy is still valid as all project partners are committed to working in the project area long-term. However, this year project partners have secured additional Darwin Initiative funding to extend the project period for three additional years (starting August 2023), to enable our activities to be enhanced and expanded to a neighbouring region. We will gradually diminish support to existing communities supported under this grant, 27-002, so we can reach landscape level. MPT plans to step away from direct implementation within the wetland at the end of the new grant (July 2026), by which time we have ensured that project activities are integrated into local plans. Both RH and ICF, will continue to operate in Rukiga long-term and promote the integrated approach to human and environmental health, as it is a critical part of the health infrastructure and Rukiga has a significant crane population.

### **Sustained legacy**

Project legacy is to ensure close involvement with local government departments. We have purposefully involved local government leaders in our project actions and meetings to increase ownership and involvement, and to enable project actions to be taken over from project partners at project end and replicated elsewhere. The result, among others, has been local leaders committing to implement Napier Grass nurseries in more villages, to enable more community members to access natural materials needed to combat soil erosion.

## **13. Darwin Initiative identity**

Project partners have promoted the project widely this year (see section 3.2, output 4, and Annexes 4.15 and 4.23). The Darwin Initiative logo was used in all promotion and on project documents including training materials and community talk messages. In addition, project

partners have branded the project vehicle with the Darwin Initiative logo and UKAid logo (see year 2 annual report evidence). We have used social media platforms, events and articles to promote our project. We have been in frequent contact with the Darwin Initiative in Uganda, having briefed them on our project, securing their involvement in our upcoming workshop and site visit to the project site (see section 3.2, output 4, Annex 4.24).

#### 14. Safeguarding

Has your Safeguarding Policy been updated in the past 12 months?	Yes
Have any concerns been investigated in the past 12 months	No
Does your project have a Safeguarding focal point?	Yes <i>David Johnson <a href="mailto:david@margaretpyke.org">david@margaretpyke.org</a> Kathryn Lloyd <a href="mailto:Kathryn@margaretpyke.org">Kathryn@margaretpyke.org</a></i>
Has the focal point attended any formal training in the last 12 months?	No
What proportion (and number) of project staff have received formal training on Safeguarding?	Past: 100% 13 people Planned: 8% 1 person
<b>Has there been any lessons learnt or challenges on Safeguarding in the past 12 months? Please ensure no sensitive data is included within responses.</b> MPT undertakes clinical training in Ugandan hospitals, therefore safeguarding is central to its activities and has provided safeguarding training (and helped draft policies) for project partners. In the last 12 months a lesson learnt has included ensuring there are regular discussions around safeguarding in the context of differing cultures and job roles. Discussions have been welcomed and have helped all partners to understand their safeguarding roles and responsibilities.	
<b>Does the project have any developments or activities planned around Safeguarding in the coming 12 months? If so please specify.</b> We will undertake a further review of project partners' safeguarding policies in 2023, including the project lead undertaking safeguarding training to ensure policies align with global standards on sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment.	

#### 15. Project expenditure

**Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023)**

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2022/23 Grant (£)	2022/23 Total Darwin Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs (see below)				Inflation pay rise
Consultancy costs				
Overhead Costs				Currency exchange rate
Travel and subsistence				As above
Operating Costs				As above
Capital items (see below)				
M&E				
Others (see below)				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>106,751</b>	<b>114,274</b>		

**Table 2: Project mobilising of matched funding during the reporting period (1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023)**

	Matched funding secured to date	Total matched funding expected by end of project
Matched funding leveraged by the partners to deliver the project.		

Total additional finance mobilised		
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**Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against logframe for Financial Year 2022-2023**

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2022 - March 2023	Actions required/planned for next period
<p><b>Impact</b></p> <p>Anthropogenic pressures on the wetlands of Rukiga, Uganda, are reduced resulting in decreased poverty and improved human health, increased biodiversity, and long-term conservation of Grey Crowned Cranes and their habitat.</p>		<p>Significant progress have been made towards the impact in the reporting period, including the expansion of livelihood provision and group saving schemes (contributing to poverty reduction), strengthening 10 health centres and family planning education in communities (contributing to improved human health), and the implementation of wetland and crane conservation actions by trained community members and the involvement of local leaders to embed project actions into local plans (contributing to long-term environmental and crane conservation).</p>	
<p><i>(Project duration is 34 months all references below to 'month' refer to 'project month')</i></p>			
<p><b>Outcome</b></p> <p>Conditions established to enable improved long-term wetland health, benefitting the eight communities of Nyabirerema, Kyerero/Butare-Ahamurambi, Nyarurambi, Nyakarambi, Nyakagabagaba, Kitojo, Kihanga-Sindi, and Burime in Rukiga (being around 13,500 people) and Grey Crowned Cranes, through wetland restoration and management, healthcare service provision, community education and sustainable livelihood provision.</p>	<p>0.1 By end of month 12, area of Rukiga's wetlands subject to Community Conservation Agreements (covering wetland restoration and management), increased from 0 hectares (2020 baseline) to 100 hectares.</p>	<p>Target exceeded.</p> <p>This was achieved in the 2021-2022 period, as Community Conservation Agreements were negotiated and signed by all 8 groups, covering 200 hectares of Rukiga's wetlands. Appropriate indicator. Annexes 4.2, 4.4, and 4.6.</p>	<p>Continue to monitor compliance with Conservation Agreements and provide support.</p>
	<p>0.2 By end of month 34, households benefitting from new sustainable livelihoods (taken up due to the integrated approach to livelihood training, conservation action and/or family planning provision) increased from 0 households (2019 baseline) to 250</p>	<p>Target exceeded.</p> <p>In the 2021-2022 period, 324 households benefitted from new sustainable livelihoods (217 were women and 107 were men). Appropriate indicator. Annexes 4.3, and 4.5.</p>	<p>Continued support and monitoring of groups to ensure implementation of sustainable agricultural techniques, money saving and other aspects of the Community Conservation Agreements.</p>

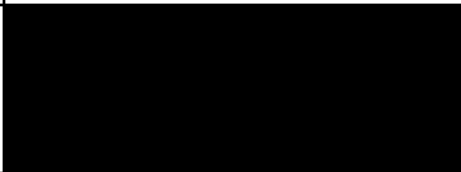
	households (disaggregated by sex of livelihood holder, with at least 50% women).		
	0.3 By end of month 34, visits (first time and follow-up visits) made by community members in the eight communities to the outreach clinics (existing but currently under-used and unused), increased from 0 visits to 7,000 visits (disaggregated by sex).	<p>Target exceeded.</p> <p>In the 2022-2023 period, 5,114 visits were made to the outreach clinics (3,839 women and 1,275 men). Appropriate indicator.</p> <p>We have now exceeded this target as the total visits since project commencement (at 27 months), is 8,433 (6,555 women and 1,873 men).</p> <p>Annex 2.22.</p>	Continued community engagement activities and advertisements of outreach clinic days on radio, in church announcements, men's and women's groups and in local council meetings. Refresher training for "Health and Conservation Mobilisers", engaging men's and women's groups, and making monthly announcements in churches.
	0.4 By end of month 34, number of project organisation staff (both conservation and health) showing high awareness of cross-sector benefits of integrated programmes, and trained to deliver these, increased from 5 to 90.	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>In the 2022-2023, 25 organisation staff received training (21 women and 4 men). Appropriate indicator.</p> <p>The total project organisation staff trained since project commencement (at month 27) is 56.</p> <p>Annex 4.19.</p>	More training is planned to take place next year. This was due to happen this year following the whole project team coming together for the workshop in Kampala (see Activity 4.4) but this was postponed to our last project year due to an Ebola outbreak.
<p><b>Output 1.</b></p> <p>Community Conservation Agreements secured with Community Conservation Groups supporting: (a) sustainable livelihoods; and (b) conservation actions including habitat restoration, and management and monitoring of wetlands and cranes.</p>	1.1 By end of month 12, Community Conservation Groups registered with local government as 'Sustainable enterprises' have increased from 0 Groups (2020 baseline) to 8 Groups.	<p>Target reached.</p> <p>This was achieved in month 3 of the project. Appropriate indicator. 8 Community Conservation Groups are registered with local government as 'Sustainable enterprises' (also known as 'Community-based organisations'). Evidence provided in 2020-2021 annual report.</p>	
	1.2 By end of month 12, wetland, upland and farmland subject to Community	<p>Target exceeded.</p> <p>This was achieved and exceeded in the 2021-2022 period, as total measured</p>	Continue to monitor compliance with Conservation Agreements and provide support to

	Conservation Agreements, increased from 0 hectares (2020 baseline) to 200 hectares.	upland farmland subject to Community Conservation Agreements is 300.48 hectares. An analysis of wetland farmland was measured this period but no Conservation Group members were found to own land in the wetland. Appropriate indicator.	Community Conservation Groups.
	1.3 By end of month 24, Grey Crowned Crane breeding pairs (monitored using the 'Survey 123') have increased from 15 breeding pairs (2019 baseline) to 25 breeding pairs.	Target exceeded. This was achieved and exceeded in the 2021-2022 period as 33 breeding pairs were monitored. Appropriate indicator. In the 2022-2023 breeding season 21 breeding pairs were monitored. Annexes 4.7 and 4.8.	Breeding monitoring will continue until the end of this breeding season (i.e. around April 2022). This is the last breeding season in this project as the next breeding season commenced October 2023.
	1.4 By end of month 34, households benefiting from new sustainable livelihoods (taken up due to direct training received and which were chosen by the Community Conservation Groups) increased from 0 households (2019 baseline) to 250 households (disaggregated by sex of livelihood holder, with at least 50% women).	Target exceeded. In the 2021-2022 period, 324 households benefitted from new sustainable livelihoods (217 were women and 107 were men). Appropriate indicator. Annex 4.4.	Continued support and monitoring of groups to ensure implementation of sustainable agricultural techniques, money saving and other aspects of the Community Conservation Agreements.
<b>Activity 1.1</b> Train Community Conservation Groups on their set up, management and governance, and support them register as "sustainable enterprises" with local government.		Completed. See evidence in 2020-2021 annual report.	
<b>Activity 1.2.</b>		Completed. Agreements were revised in 2022-2023, with all 8 groups signing new agreements,	Continue to provide support and monitor compliance with agreements.



Negotiate Community Conservation Agreements with Community Conservation Groups, and revise Agreements after 2 years, to allow for supplementary livelihood and conservation actions.	reaching 76 more households with livelihood and conservation support and actions than in previous years (248 in 2021 and 324 in 2022). Annex 4.5.	
<b>Activity 1.3.</b> Undertake annual audits, monitoring and evaluating actions undertaken pursuant to Community Conservation Agreements (and planning variations if required).	Ongoing. In 2022-2023 an audit of livelihood outputs for all 8 groups was conducted. Annex 4.2.	Continue to monitor and evaluate actions pursuant to Agreements monthly.
<b>Activity 1.4.</b> Train/mentor Community Conservation Groups on selected livelihoods (goat keeping, 'zero grazing' cows, bee keeping, potatoes, climbing beans and function/event support), finances and market access.	Complete. The third and final phase of livelihood support with training was provided to Groups in 2022-2023, informed by an audit, implemented this year. Annex 4.3.	Continue working with groups to help them to implement actions related to the post-harvest assessment. Mentoring and monitoring of compliance will continue.
<b>Activity 1.5.</b> Support and mentor community members to undertake wetland conservation and monitoring.	Ongoing. Crane Custodians and Community Conservation Group members have been trained in wetland conservation and monitoring, and are undertaking the work with support, reporting regularly. Annexes 4.6 and 4.8.	Mentoring of community members will continue, as will the wetland conservation activities and monitoring.
<b>Activity 1.6.</b> Collect and analyse breeding, trend, and other mapping data on cranes.	Ongoing. Fixed point monitoring takes place every two months, and nest monitoring of cranes monthly. Annexes 4.7 and 4.16.	This will continue for the duration of the project and will be reviewed regularly.
<b>Activity 1.7.</b> Undertake baseline, endline, focus group discussions, and RDS interviews.	Ongoing. Baseline was completed in 2021-2022 period. Endline research will commence next year. Annex 4.9.	Data collection for all project activities will continue throughout the project and endline will take place.

<p><b>Output 2.</b></p> <p>Community members participate in activities that benefit human and environmental health.</p>	<p>2.1 By end of month 34, households implementing soil and water conservation methods, sustainable agriculture practices, and environmentally sound waste disposal methods increased from 0 households (2019 baseline) to 200 households.</p>	<p>Target exceeded.</p> <p>This was achieved and exceeded in the 2021-2022 period, as 248 households are implementing soil and water conservation methods, sustainable agriculture practices, and environmentally sound waste disposal methods. Appropriate indicator.</p>	<p>Of the 324 households that have just received livelihood support, peer farmers will continue to engage them in implementing soil and water conservation methods, sustainable agriculture practices, and environmentally sound waste disposal methods. Therefore, we anticipate that more households will implement these methods by project close. Monitoring and mentoring will continue.</p>
	<p>2.2 By end of month 34, community member attendance (first time and follow-up visits for family planning services) to the project outreach clinics (existing but currently unused or under-used) increased from 0 (2019 baseline) visits to 2,400 (disaggregated by sex).</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>In the 2022-2023 period, 1,130 (all women) community members attended for family planning services. Appropriate indicator.</p> <p>The total number of community members attending family planning services since project commencement (at month 27) is 2,294. Annex 4.22.</p>	<p>Continuation of our communications plan implementation, including our programme of highly effective community talks to raise awareness of family planning and the services available. Village Health Teams and Crane Custodians will receive refresher training in family planning mobilisation.</p>
	<p>2.3 By end of month 34, water clarity scores (which indicate a reduction in wetland pollution from homestead run-off and erosion of soil from uplands into the wetlands) increased from 19 (2019 baseline) to 90.</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>In the 2022-2023 period, water clarity scores increased from 19 (2019 baseline) to 50 (2023).</p> <p>We have reviewed this indicator and found that our target of 90 is likely too high, as changing rainfall patterns (i.e. heavier and out-of-season rains due to climate change) is negatively affecting water clarity results.</p> <p>Annex 4.16.</p>	<p>Continue with monthly water clarity testing.</p>
<p><b>Activity 2.1.</b></p>	<p>Completed.</p>	<p>Monitor the soil and water conservation activities and</p>	


<p>Establish model farms to demonstrate soil and water conservation methods, agriculture practices, and sustainable waste disposal methods.</p>	<p>Peer farmers continued to promote sustainable farming techniques etc. to neighbours on their 'model farms', and promoted 'community digs'.</p> <p>Annex 4.11 and 4.12.</p>	<p>support the peer farmers in their work.</p>
<p><b>Activity 2.2.</b></p> <p>Train and mentor 3,000 community members on soil and water conservation methods, agriculture practices, sustainable waste disposal methods, and family planning.</p>	<p>Target exceeded and activities ongoing.</p> <p>Trained 3,670 community members (2,536 women, 725 men and 409 young people) this year, in line with our communications plan. Annex 4.15.</p> <p>In addition, 900 people attended our two festivals (Annex 4.14), 1,950 people were provided with Napier grass and trained in its use (Annex 4.10), and 50 local leaders attended a training on project actions such as the digging of trenches and planting of Napier grass on hillslopes across the District (Annexes 4.12 and 4.13).</p> <p>Total number of community members reached since project commencement is 7,335.</p>	<p>Continuing rollout of this programme.</p>
<p><b>Activity 2.3.</b></p> <p>Develop and implement programme to reopen the 4 existing un-used/under used clinics (and timetable of how the nurses will rotate between them).</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>We exceeded this target last year by working in 10 rather than 4 clinics.</p>	
<p><b>Activity 2.4.</b></p> <p>Develop and implement a communications plan (radio, church announcements, and posters) promoting time/dates of clinics and other environment and health messages.</p>	<p>Completed, with ongoing implementation of the communications plan (see activity 2.2).</p>	<p>Continue with implementation for the remainder of the project.</p>
<p><b>Activity 2.5.</b></p> <p>Undertake baseline, endline, focus group discussions, and RDS interviews.</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Baseline was completed in 2021-2022 period. Endline research will commence next year.</p>	<p>Data collection for all project activities will continue throughout the project and endline will take place.</p>

		Annex 4.9.	
<b>Activity 2.6.</b> Undertake water clarity tests in the wetlands, using a “water turbidity test” and use results to raise community awareness about the impact of human activities on water quality and wetland functionality.		Complete and monitoring is ongoing. Annex 4.16.	Water clarity scores will continue to be recorded regularly from the wetland.
<b>Output 3.</b> Healthcare providers deliver family planning services, which are taken up by community members.	3.1 By end of month 12, number of family planning outreach clinics providing services (in existing buildings which are currently unused or under-used) increased from 0 (2019 baseline) clinics to 4 clinics.	Target exceeded. This was complete in the 2020-2021 period, and exceeded in the 2021-2022 period as we currently support 10 clinics. Appropriate indicator.	
	3.2 By end of month 24, the number of nurses and Village Health Team volunteers scoring at (or above) 80% in USHAPE family planning skills provision increases from 0 nurses / VHT volunteers (2019 baseline) to 31 nurses /volunteers.	Target exceeded. In the 2022-2023 period, 40 people (27 women and 13 men) comprising 28 “Village Health Team” members and 12 project staff) scored over 80% in USHAPE Family Planning skills. Appropriate indicator. Annex 4.18. The total number of nurses scoring over 80% in USHAPE family planning skills since project commencement is 127 (84 women and 38 men).	A planned refresher training for Village Health Teams in planned for the last year.
	3.3 By end of month 34, 1,000 unplanned pregnancies averted from baseline of 0 in 2020 and 612 in 2022.	In the 2022-2023 period, 276 unplanned pregnancies were averted. Annex 4.2. The total number of unplanned pregnancies averted since project commencement (as of month 27) is 767.	Healthcare service delivery records will continue to be collected and analysed each month to determine number of unplanned pregnancies averted.
<b>Activity 3.1.</b>		Complete. Evidence provided in 2020-2021 annual report.	

Select and train 4 nurses on the USHAPE family planning training methodology (designed for rural Kabale) to run outreach clinics (including refresher training).		
<b>Activity 3.2.</b> Train 90 health / conservation staff and 6 Village Health Team volunteers (community members who live in the project site and mobilise communities) on human and environmental health including refresher training.	Target exceeded, as 68 people (15 crane custodians, 12 project nurses, 28 VHTs, and 13 project staff) were trained this year. Annexes 4.17 and 4.18.  The total number of health / conservation staff and 6 Village Health Team volunteers trained on human and environmental health including refresher training since project commencement is 99.	Training will continue next year.
<b>Activity 3.3.</b> Train community members on health and poverty alleviation benefits of improved reproductive health.	Progress has been made as 157 Community Conservation Group members (88 women and 69 men), 15 (7 women and 8 men) and 28 (18 women and 10 men) Village Health Team members were trained in the 2022-2023 period. Annexes 4.20 and 4.21.	Training will continue next year.
<b>Activity 3.4.</b> Mobilise the community with Village Health Teams, announcements in churches, radio broadcasts, and other means on when outreach clinics will take place.	Progress has been made and attendance to the outreach clinics has increased this year due to this activity (see outcome indicator 0.3 and activity 2.2).	Mobilisation will continue.
<b>Activity 3.5.</b> Reopen and deliver services from 4 existing (but not currently in use) outreach clinics.	Completed. Evidence provided in 2020-2021 annual report, however additional clinics now reopened (see output 3.1).	
<b>Activity 3.6.</b> Undertake the "train the trainers" training of healthcare staff.	Completed. In the 2021-2022 period, 11 healthcare workers were trained as trainers.	Mentoring will be ongoing.
<b>Activity 3.7.</b> Undertake and analyse surveys of pregnant women who visit the outreach clinics.	Progress has been made. See output 3.3 and Annex 4.22.	Actions will continue.

<b>Activity 3.8.</b> Undertake baseline, endline, focus group discussions, and RDS interviews.		Ongoing. Baseline was completed in 2021-2022 period. Endline research will commence next year. Annex 4.9.	Data collection for all project activities will continue throughout the project and endline will take place.
<b>Output 4.</b> Increased awareness, among conservation policy makers and project implementers, of the relevance to biodiversity conservation of integrating family planning and conservation actions, by reference to the project.	4.1 By end of month 12, at IUCN World Conservation Congress, an event focussed on the project is held, to increase awareness of the Darwin project itself, and the project is used as a means within IUCN to further IUCN activity on projects, such as the Darwin project, which integrate actions improving reproductive and environmental health.	Target achieved and completed in the 2021-2022 period.	
	4.2 By end of month 21, have at least one national newspaper article published on the project and the links between conservation of wetlands, Grey Crowned Cranes and family planning.	We frequently brief Ugandan journalists on project activities. Progress has been made in the 2022-2023 period, as the project featured in three news packages broadcast on Kigezi Media Services, a newspaper article on Sebamala.com, in addition to multiple radio shows on local radio 'Voice of Kigezi', 'Rukiga FM' and 'Voice for Victory FM'.	We will continue to promote the project to local and national media for the duration of the project.
	4.3 By end of month 34, hold a regional capacity building workshop focussed on conservation and reproductive health organisations, on the positive human and environmental health outcomes, and importance to biodiversity, of family planning.	This activity was planned for this year but was postponed via approved change request due to Ebola risk.	The workshop will take place on 25 <sup>th</sup> July 2023 in Kampala. High-level decision-makers have confirmed their attendance from various Government of Uganda departments and the UK's Defra/Darwin Initiative representative in Kampala will be providing opening remarks. In addition, representatives from the Embassies of Denmark, France and Sweden and

			numerous donors and programme implementation organisations will be in attendance.
	4.4 By end of 2023, one project analysis report published with project partners including the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, and presented at a relevant policy conference.	An activity for a later period.	Will not be undertaken in the next period, but closer towards the end of the project.
<b>Activity 4.1.</b> Present our project at our IUCN World Conservation Congress 2021 (WCC) event.		Completed.	
<b>Activity 4.2.</b> Refer to our project in our WCC virtual poster, "Removing barriers to family planning, empowering sustainable conservation in the SDG era".		Completed.	
<b>Activity 4.3.</b> Brief international, UK and Ugandan journalists on the project and the links between wetland conservation, Grey Crowned Cranes, poverty alleviation, and family planning.		Target reached but will be ongoing until project end. See output 4.2 and Annex 4.23.	Briefings with media will continue throughout the project period.
<b>Activity 4.4.</b> Organise and hold a regional capacity-building workshop focussed on conservation and reproductive health organisations.		Progress has been made. See output 4.3 and Annex 4.24.	Workshop will be held on 25 <sup>th</sup> July 2023 in Kampala.
<b>Activity 4.5.</b> Undertake analysis of project data, compile and publish a project report.		An activity for a later period.	Will not be undertaken in the next period, but closer towards the end of the project.
<b>Activity 4.6.</b>		Completed. In 2022-2023, we presented the project and its research at the:	

<p>Present project impact, outcome, pathway to change, and lessons learnt at both a primarily health and a primarily conservation relevant policy conference.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP27) at an event titled <i>“Removing barriers to family planning within African climate policy processes”</i> which was attended in-person and online to approximately 500 people;</li> <li>2. 2022 United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP15) at an event titled <i>“The significance of integrating reproductive health and family planning in conservation”</i>, which was attended in-person and online by approximately 35 people; and</li> <li>3. International Conference on Family Planning in Thailand, where our abstract and poster won ‘best in session’.</li> </ol> <p>Annex 4.25.</p>	
<p><b>Activity 4.7.</b> Draft journal article(s) and submit for publication to peer reviewed journal(s).</p>	<p>In 2022-2023, three LSHTM Master’s theses were published on the interconnections between environmental degradation, demographical and livelihood pressures on food security; Environmental triggers for and pathways to gender-based violence; and Climate change and gender-based violence connections. The theses are informing the forthcoming academic papers.</p> <p>Annex 4.26.</p>	<p>Journal articles will be published and a submission made to a peer reviewed journal.</p>



**Annex 2: Project's full current logframe as presented in the application form (unless changes have been agreed)**

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<p><b>Impact:</b> Anthropogenic pressures on the wetlands of Rukiga, Uganda, are reduced resulting in decreased poverty and improved human health, increased biodiversity, and long-term conservation of Grey Crowned Cranes and their habitat.</p>			
<p><b>Outcome:</b> (Project duration is 34 months all references below to 'month' refer to 'project month').</p>			
<p>Conditions established to enable improved long-term wetland health, benefitting the eight communities of Nyabirerema, Kyerero/Butare-Ahamurambi, Nyarurambi, Nyakarambi, Nyakagabagaba, Kitojo, Kihanga-Sindi, and Burime in Rukiga (being around 13,500 people) and Grey Crowned Cranes, through wetland restoration and management, healthcare service provision, community education and sustainable livelihood provision.</p>	<p>0.1 By end of month 12, area of Rukiga's wetlands subject to Community Conservation Agreements (covering wetland restoration and management), increased from 0 hectares (2020 baseline) to 100 hectares.</p>	<p>0.1 (a) Signed Community Conservation Agreements.  0.1 (b) Land maps.</p>	<p>No major shocks to the local economic situation, healthcare system or otherwise hampering the undertaking of livelihood or health activities (such as Ebola or other major health outbreak, civil unrest, or political instability).</p>
	<p>0.2 By end of month 34, households benefiting from new sustainable livelihoods (taken up due to the integrated approach to livelihood training, conservation action and/or family planning provision) increased from 0 households (2019 baseline) to 250 households (disaggregated by sex of livelihood holder, with at least 50% women).</p>	<p>0.2 (a) Community Conservation Group Reports.  0.2 (b) Focus Group Discussion Report on impact of integrated approach to alternative sustainable livelihoods and environmental /human health at household level.  0.2 (c) Photographs (of activities and fixed-point locations).</p>	<p>No major weather related events (such as landslides due to heavy rains) destroying land subject to livelihood activities or damaging roads (preventing outreach clinics operating and/or training activities taking place).</p>
	<p>0.3 By end of month 34, visits (first time and follow-up visits) made by community members in the eight communities to the outreach clinics (existing but currently under-used and un-used), increased from 0 visits to 7,000 visits (disaggregated by sex).</p>	<p>0.3 Clinic records.</p>	<p>The Government continues to allow the registration of Community Conservation Groups and does not make any legislative changes impacting family planning provision.</p>
	<p>0.4 By end of month 34, number of project organisation staff (both conservation and health) showing high awareness of cross-sector</p>	<p>0.4 (a) Project Staff pre and post-intervention study report.</p>	

	benefits of integrated programmes, and trained to deliver these, increased from 5 to 90.	0.4 (b) Project Impact and M & E Report. 0.4 (c) Training attendance records.	
<b>Output 1</b> Community Conservation Agreements secured with Community Conservation Groups supporting: (a) sustainable livelihoods; and (b) conservation actions including habitat restoration, and management and monitoring of wetlands and cranes.	1.1 By end of month 12, Community Conservation Groups registered with local government as 'Sustainable enterprises' have increased from 0 Groups (2020 baseline) to 8 Groups.	1.1 (a) Registration certificates. 1.1 (b) Signed original Community Conservation Agreements and revised Agreements. 1.1 (c) Annual audit on Community Conservation Agreements.	No major shocks to the local economic situation or otherwise hampering the undertaking of livelihood activities (such as Ebola or other major health outbreak, civil unrest, or political instability).
	1.2 By end of month 12, wetland, upland and farmland subject to Community Conservation Agreements, increased from 0 hectares (2020 baseline) to 200 hectares.	1.2 (a) Community Conservation Group Reports. 1.2(b) Land maps. 1.2 (c) Photographs of conservation activities (including fixed point monitoring).	No major weather related events (such as landslides due to heavy rains) destroying land subject to livelihood activities or damaging roads (preventing training activities taking place).
	1.3 By end of month 24, Grey Crowned Crane breeding pairs (monitored using the 'Survey 123') have increased from 15 breeding pairs (2019 baseline) to 25 breeding pairs.	1.3 Annual Reports on crane numbers and breeding success.	The Government continues to allow the registration of Community Conservation Groups.
	1.4 By end of month 34, households benefiting from new sustainable livelihoods (taken up due to direct training received and which were chosen by the Community Conservation Groups) increased from 0 households (2019 baseline) to 250 households (disaggregated by sex of livelihood holder, with at least 50% women).	1.4 (a) Focus Group Discussion Report on impact of alternative sustainable livelihoods at household level. 1.4 (b) Photographs of livelihood activities (including fixed point monitoring). 1.4 (c) Training attendance records. 1.4 (d) Project Reports.	Regional Grey Crowned Crane population and other biodiversity do not experience significant declines caused by external factors outside of project control (new or emerging threats such as extreme weather events.)
<b>Output 2</b>	2.1 By end of month 34, households implementing soil and water conservation methods, sustainable	2.1 (a) Project reports.	No major shocks to the local healthcare system or otherwise hampering the provision of training

Community members participate in activities that benefit human and environmental health.	agriculture practices, and environmentally sound waste disposal methods increased from 0 households (2019 baseline) to 200 households.	2.1 (b) Community Conservation Group reports. 2.1 (c) Photographs of conservation and livelihood activities (including fixed point monitoring).	and healthcare (such as Ebola or other major health outbreak, civil unrest, or political instability).
	2.2 By end of month 34, community member attendance (first time and follow-up visits for family planning services) to the project outreach clinics (existing but currently unused or under-used) increased from 0 (2019 baseline) visits to 2,400 (disaggregated by sex).	2.2 (a) Photographs of family planning promotion activities and outreach clinics. 2.2 (b) Clinic records. 2.2 (c) Focus Group Discussion Report.	No major weather related events (such as landslides due to heavy rains) destroying project land or damaging roads (preventing outreach clinics operating and/or training activities taking place).
	2.3 By end of month 34, water clarity scores (which indicate a reduction in wetland pollution from homestead run-off and erosion of soil from uplands into the wetlands) increased from 19 (2019 baseline) to 90.	2.3 Water Clarity Report containing 'water turbidity test' scores.	No major pollution event within project watershed from new or unanticipated source.
<b>Output 3</b> Healthcare providers deliver family planning services, which are taken up by community members.	3.1 By end of month 12, number of family planning outreach clinics providing services (in existing buildings which are currently unused or under-used) increased from 0 (2019 baseline) clinics to 4 clinics.	3.1 (a) Clinic records. 3.1 (b) Posters advertising outreach services at each site. 3.1 (c) Photographs of outreach clinics.	No major shocks to the healthcare system, such as an Ebola or other major health outbreak, civil unrest, or political instability, which will divert focus from general healthcare provision to emergency healthcare provision.
	3.2 By end of month 24, the number of nurses and Village Health Team volunteers scoring at (or above) 80% in USHAPE family planning skills provision increases from 0 nurses / VHT volunteers (2019 baseline) to 31 nurses /volunteers.	3.2 USHAPE Report, including pre- and post-training exam scorecards and Focus Group Discussion analysis.	No major weather related events (such as landslides due to heavy rains) damaging roads (preventing outreach clinics operating and/or training activities taking place).

	3.3 By end of month 34, 1,000 unplanned pregnancies averted from baseline of 0 in 2020 and 612 in 2022.	3.3 Impact 2 measure report showing unplanned pregnancies averted.	Healthcare workers employed within the first year.  As at present, none of Rugarama Hospital's nurses or the area's Village Health Teams have had USHAPE family planning training. It is possible that in-migration from elsewhere in Uganda to Rukiga of nurses or VHT volunteers we have trained elsewhere would increase baseline at project commencement to above 0.
<b>Output 4</b> Increased awareness, among conservation policy makers and project implementers, of the relevance to biodiversity conservation of integrating family planning and conservation actions, by reference to the project.	4.1 By end of month 12, at IUCN World Conservation Congress, an event focussed on the project is held, to increase awareness of the Darwin project itself, and the project is used as a means within IUCN to further IUCN activity on projects, such as the Darwin project, which integrate actions improving reproductive and environmental health.	4.1 IUCN Congress Report.	IUCN conference takes place as planned and is not cancelled/postponed due to political, environmental or other shocks.
	4.2 By end of month 21, have at least one national newspaper article published on the project and the links between conservation of wetlands, Grey Crowned Cranes and family planning.	4.2 Link to newspaper article.	Damian Carrington, the Guardian's environment editor, has already notified us that the Guardian wants to cover the project when funding is obtained, the assumption is that once funding is obtained the Guardian will still wish to publish this article.
	4.3 By end of month 34, hold a regional capacity building workshop focussed on conservation and reproductive health organisations, on the positive human and environmental health outcomes, and	4.3 (a) Workshop programme.  4.3 (b) Workshop delegate register.	

	importance to biodiversity, of family planning.		
	4.4 By end of 2023, one project analysis report published with project partners including the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, and presented at a relevant policy conference.	4.4 (a) Project analysis report.	

**Activities** (each activity is numbered according to the output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1)

### OUTPUT 1

- 1.1 Train Community Conservation Groups on their set up, management and governance, and support them register as “sustainable enterprises” with local government.
- 1.2 Negotiate Community Conservation Agreements with Community Conservation Groups, and revise Agreements after 2 years, to allow for supplementary livelihood and conservation actions.
- 1.3 Undertake annual audits, monitoring and evaluating actions undertaken pursuant to Community Conservation Agreements (and planning variations if required).
- 1.4 Train/mentor Community Conservation Groups on selected livelihoods (goat keeping, ‘zero grazing’ cows, bee keeping, potatoes, climbing beans and function/event support), finances and market access.
- 1.5 Support and mentor community members to undertake wetland conservation and monitoring.
- 1.6 Collect and analyse breeding, trend, and other mapping data on cranes.
- 1.7 Undertake baseline, endline, focus group discussions, and RDS interviews

### OUTPUT 2

- 2.1 Establish model farms to demonstrate soil and water conservation methods, agriculture practices, and sustainable waste disposal methods.
- 2.2 Train and mentor 3,000 community members on soil and water conservation methods, agriculture practices, sustainable waste disposal methods, and family planning.
- 2.3 Develop and implement programme to reopen the 4 existing un-used/under used clinics (and timetable of how the nurses will rotate between them).
- 2.4 Develop and implement a communications plan (radio, church announcements, and posters) promoting time/dates of clinics and other environment and health messages.

2.5 Undertake baseline, endline, focus group discussions, and RDS interviews. 2.6 Undertake water clarity tests in the wetlands, using a “water turbidity test” and use results to raise community awareness about the impact of human activities on water quality and wetland functionality.

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### **OUTPUT 3**

3.1 Select and train 4 nurses on the USHAPE family planning training methodology (designed for rural Kabale) to run outreach clinics (including refresher training).

3.2 Train 90 health / conservation staff and 6 Village Health Team volunteers (community members who live in the project site and mobilise communities) on human and environmental health including refresher training.

3.3 Train community members on health and poverty alleviation benefits of improved reproductive health.

3.4 Mobilise the community with Village Health Teams, announcements in churches, radio broadcasts, and other means on when outreach clinics will take place.

3.5 Reopen and deliver services from 4 existing (but not currently in use) outreach clinics.

3.6 Undertake the "train the trainers" training of healthcare staff.

3.7 Undertake and analyse surveys of pregnant women who visit the outreach clinics, using the London Measure of Unplanned Pregnancy.

3.8 Undertake baseline, endline, focus group discussions, and RDS interviews

### **OUTPUT 4**

4.1 Present project at not fewer than two events in our “Biodiversity & Family Planning” pavilion at IUCN World Conservation Congress 2020 (WCC).

4.2 Refer to our project in our WCC plenary session, “Removing barriers to family planning, empowering sustainable conservation in the SDG era”.

4.3 Brief international, UK and Ugandan journalists on the project and the links between wetland conservation, Grey Crowned Cranes, poverty alleviation, and family planning.

4.4 Organise and hold a regional capacity-building workshop focussed on conservation and reproductive health organisations.

4.5 Undertake analysis of project data, compile and publish a project report.

4.6 Present project impact, outcome, pathway to change, and lessons learnt at both a primarily health and a primarily conservation relevant policy conference.

4.7 Draft journal article(s) and submit for publication to peer reviewed journal(s).



### Annex 3: Standard Indicators

**Table 1 Project Standard Indicators**

DI Indicator number	Name of indicator using original wording	Name of Indicator after adjusting wording to align with DI Standard Indicators	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
DI-D01	Hectares of wetland land under Conservation Agreements	Hectares of habitat under sustainable management practices	Hectares	None	0	200	200	200	200
DI-D01	Hectares of wetland, upland and farmland land under Conservation Agreements	Hectares of habitat under sustainable management practices	Hectares	None	0	300.48	300.48	300.48	300.48
DI-D11	Community Conservation Group members benefitting from improved sustainable agricultural practices/livelihoods	Number of people benefitting from improved sustainable agriculture practices and are more resilient to weather shocks and climate trends.	People	Women and Men	0	248 (136 women & 112 men)	324 (217 women and 107 men)	324	324
DI-A06	Number of people who have benefitted from improved healthcare services in project area.	Number of people with improved access to services or infrastructure for improved well-being.	People	Women and Men	109 (109 women & 0 men)	3,210 (2,607 women & 603 men)	5,114 (3,839 women and 1,275 men)	8,433 (6,555 women & 1,875 men)	9,800
DI-A03	Number of Community Conservation Groups supported to register with local government as	Number of local/national organisations with improved	Groups	None	8	8	8	8	8



DI Indicator number	Name of indicator using original wording	Name of Indicator after adjusting wording to align with DI Standard Indicators	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
	'community-based organisations' and supported and trained in sustainable livelihoods in exchange for conservation action.	capability and capacity as a result of project.							
DI-A04	USHAPE family planning training for healthcare workers	Number of people reporting that they are applying new capabilities (skills and knowledge) 6 (or more) months after training.	People	Women and Men	28	59	40	127	127

**Table 2 Publications**

Title	Type (e.g. journals, manual, CDs)	Detail (authors, year)	Gender of Lead Author	Nationality of Lead Author	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. weblink or publisher if not available online)
USHAPE training materials	Training materials (PowerPoints, handouts etc.)	Margaret Pyke Trust, 2023	Female	British	Margaret Pyke Trust	<a href="https://margaretpyke.org/ushape/">https://margaretpyke.org/ushape/</a>

## Checklist for submission

	Check
Different reporting templates have different questions, and it is important you use the correct one. Have you checked you have used the <b>correct template</b> (checking fund, type of report (i.e. Annual or Final), and year) and <b>deleted the blue guidance text</b> before submission?	Yes
<b>Is the report less than 10MB?</b> If so, please email to <a href="mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com">BCF-Reports@niras.com</a> putting the project number in the Subject line.	No
<b>Is your report more than 10MB?</b> If so, please discuss with <a href="mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com">BCF-Reports@niras.com</a> about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line.	Yes
<b>Have you included means of verification?</b> You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	Yes
<b>Do you have hard copies of material you need to submit with the report?</b> If so, please make this clear in the covering email and ensure all material is marked with the project number. However, we would expect that most material will now be electronic.	No
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, do these meet the outlined requirements (see section 16)?	No
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	Yes
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	Yes
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	