

Community Livelihood and Biodiversity Improvement (COLIBRI)

Quarterly Report (Q1 – December 15th – March 15th)



With the KCF and its environs literally out of bounds due to government restrictions, the GMSL was reduced to fine tuning and submitting its final inception report and working on the website during the period under review.

Presented
By



The Green Movement of Sri Lanka Inc.

to

ACTED

Colombo, Sri Lanka
25th July 2021

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Project title	Community Livelihood and Biodiversity Conservation Project (COLIBRI)
Project area, region and country of implementation	Knuckles Conservation Forest (KCF) and its environs, Matale and Kandy Provinces, Sri Lanka.
Project Start Date	15 th December 2020
Project End Date	15 th December 2022
Type of report (monthly, quarterly, bi-annual, interim, final)	Quarterly
Reporting Period (start and end dates)	16 th March 2020 – 15 th June 2021
Report due date to ACTED	15 th April 2021
Date of report submission to ACTED	5 th May 2021

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2. PROJECT OVERVIEW

[All types of reports] Project Summary.

Please provide a short overview of the project (objective and expected results), what has been realized by the end of the reporting period, and the main issues faced. This section should not be more than half a page long.

The implementation of 08 EIR D64/Contract ref.CSO-I-A/2020t420-267 I Community Livelihood and Biodiversity Recovery (COLIBRI) aims to contribute to the recovery of community livelihoods and biodiversity through CSOs management of the protection and preservation of natural resources in Sri Lanka. The Green Movement of Sri Lanka Inc. (GMSL) is tasked with implementing that component of the project earmarking the Kunckles Conservation Forest (KCF), its environs and selected communities living in those regions. The GMSL component aims to optimally harmonize the human-environment interface in the targeted region amount to approximately 502.4 square kilometers and shall:

1. Lobby for sustainable practices in KCF with local/district authorities
2. Capacity building and creating linkages between existing community groups and government institutions to optimise biodiversity conservation, regeneration and climate resilience
3. Form and advise a youth-oriented community monitoring group to uphold environmental protections within KCF
4. Promote and assist the adoption of natural agriculture practices to local farmers
5. Facilitate market connectivity, competitiveness and quality of produce
6. Improve the volunteer carbon offset program through strong local and international linkages between stakeholders and players

[All types of reports] Context.

Please provide a brief update of the context situation (including security) and the problems that the project aims to resolve.

Geophysical and environmental context:

The KCF geography and environs: or the Ududumbara Range straddles the northern end of the central highlands of Sri Lanka. It extends for 19 km from Laggala to Urugala, is situated at 7°21 – 7°24 to the North and 80°05 – 80°08.5 to the East, covering an area of 159 square kilometres, and shouldered on the west by the Matale plains and on the south and east by the Mahaweli river basin. It received 2500mm-5000mm of rainfall annually and has a humidity of 70%-90%. Several rivers are sourced from this range including the Heen ganga, Kalu Ganga and Hulu ganga providing critical water sources for many downstream communities. The range comprises of mid elevational wet evergreen forest, mid elevational dry evergreen forest, montane wet evergreen forest or Cloud forest. Despite covering just 0.5% of the land it contains nearly 1/3rd of the country's flowering species with 1033 species belonging to 131 families as well as a number of endangered fauna such as sāmbar, barking deer, mouse deer, giant squirrel and loris as well as the rare otter, endemic purple faced leaf monkey and toque monkey, 14 endemic bird species among other locals and migrants, 28 fish species of which 9 are endangered endemics, 28 amphibian species with 60% endemic, 54 reptile species with 43% endemic, and, 60 butterfly species with 8% endemic¹. Recognizing the importance of the biodiversity and bio density of the Knuckles range, UNESCO, designated it a World Heritage site 2010.

The KCF watershed provides 30% of the water running in the Mahaweli river and therefore, the water generated here is used and reused by human settlements all the way to Trincomalee along the main trace of the Mahaweli as well as areas of the North Central Province, Matale and Kandy Provinces either directly or through irrigation systems that include a combination of dams, bunds, anicuts etc. for storage and rechanneling. Therefore, managing, regenerating, and optimizing these shared commons across many communities with widely disparate needs, cultures, aspirations and life/livelihood targets is a critical albeit complex exercise.

The communities in and around the range:

About 80 villages exist in and around the Knuckles range in the Matale and Kandy districts ranging across approximately 502.4 square kilometers with the villagers living simply, subsisting on paddy cultivation supported by chena cultivation with their landscape comprising of Kandyan home gardens (multilayer vegetation), farm houses, terraced paddy fields, chena lands and irrigation canals. They have a strong relationship with the forest shoring up their socioeconomic strength through forest products. With its pivotal position as a watershed, knuckles' resource impact extends beyond these communities to downstream villages as well. External intrusion is in the form of tourism mostly through the Meemure village entryway, forest and wildlife officials, and, a limited albeit environmentally significant number individuals engaging in illegal activities.

Anthropogenic pressure:

Cardamom cultivation within the forest, unregulated tourism related negative residuals and collaterals including escalation of solid waste and lessened bio-privacy, cannibalization of forest resources due to downturns in agro-economics resulting from reductionist agrarian practices and exacerbated by climate change, illegal activities in and around the preserve including pyromania, illegal logging and mining have significantly upset the ecological balance which, if left unchecked, could result in with

¹ These figures are according to the Ecosystem Conservation and Management Project (ESCOMP) and accessed through <http://www.escamp.lk/the-knuckles-range/>

potential for large scale, wide impact environmental, social and economic negatives for the entire country².

Intervention possibilities and threats:

The GMSL has worked in these regions for over two decades and is a welcome and trusted civil partner that is seen to have been a sober, positive influence among communities living in these areas since it counts many local Community Based Organizations (CBOs) from those areas as part of its network and uses 10 of them in this intervention as well on a networked, voluntary basis. Additionally, the national and local state penetration of the GMSL through its work has also positioned it as a trusted supporter of state and local government initiatives. Therefore, from a goodness-of-fit perspective of the GMSL for this specific development exercise, it enjoys excellent interrelationships with three of the main stakeholders, namely, the communities, the local government and state.

However, illegal players as well as those that have political aspirations or plan politically motivated resistive action and interference, the GMSL understands that there are some risks involved although those risks are not clearly charted. Despite there negatives, unlike in delivery based civil sector interventions, the GMSL's work is not merely limited to providing inputs or managing local development at a micro level but rather, encompasses the country and in the context of this exercise, its project design takes into consideration integrated mechanisms to optimally leverage Sri Lankan environment, social, agricultural, rural development policy, change what requires to be changed, manage what cannot be and overall engineer a project that can be used as a blueprint for future work. Therefore, bringing all players and stakeholders together is a primary takeoff point for this exercise and that very approach itself is considered to be a risk reducing one.

[All types of reports] Security context (if relevant).

Please provide a brief update of the security situation and the measures taken to mitigate risks.

The COVID crisis escalated during the period under consideration and the GMSL flags up a significant issue with respect to delivery deadlines given the government restrictions on inter-provincial travel, meetings and gathering. Acceding to government directives, the GMSL confined its activities to the head office in Colombo and the field office in Hunnasgiriya.

[All types of reports] Beneficiaries.

Please report on beneficiaries' selection process, total number of beneficiaries reached by the end of the reporting period (households and individuals), providing gender and age desegregated data as much as possible.

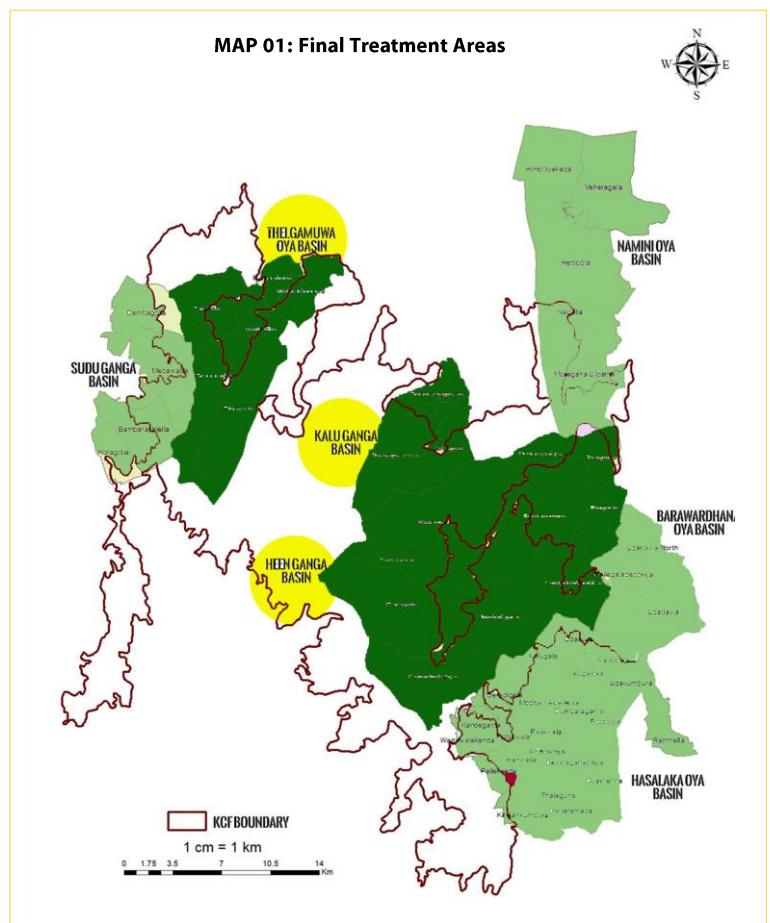
At the writing of this report, the primary of beneficiaries (i.e. those who would be treated with a substantive component of the available funds) was selected from three river basins and 19 GNs. This is in line with the strategy that was outlined during Q1 and ratified during the writing up of the Inception Report (IR) itself. The three key river basins were the ones that were set deep into the KCF itself and are the Kalu Ganga, the Thelgamu Oya and the Heen Ganga. Additionally, supportive activities in establishing green cover was deemed most suited to the areas of the Barawardhana Oya and Namini Oya. The Hasalaka oya was removed from the intervention due to its size and issues which would require a greater amount of funding to respond to successfully. The Sudu Ganga too was removed from COLIBRI | GMSL due to the serious damage the area has suffered over the last few decades and the difficulty in restoring those areas where logistical and financial constraints proved prohibitive. The shortlisted GN map and demographics are provided below in Table 01:

² Implied by the baseline survey of the UNDP-SGP (2018-2019)

TABLE 01: DEMOGRAPHICS OF FINAL RIVER BASINS SELECTED FOR PRIMARY TREATMENT							
	GNDs	GNDs Area (Km ²)	Population (Nos)	Families (Nos)	Admin. population Density Persons/ Km ²)	Actual populated GN Area (Km ²)	Actual population Density (Persons/ Km ²)
Heen Ganga	Meemure	25.9	341	115	13.16	3.4	101.2
	Karambaketiya	13.0	89	34	6.85	0.2	399.2
	Pussella	16.4	346	111	21.09	1.5	234.1
	Kumbukgolla	13.7	249	88	18.16	2.7	92.8
	Kaikawala	6.7	119	41	17.80	1.3	92.0
	Sulugune	4.8	228	85	47.83	3.5	64.3
	Dungolla	7.3	283	78	38.61	7.3	39.0
	Udagaladebokka	8.3	132	38	15.89	2.3	56.8
Galamuduna	9.9	112	36	11.36	6.7	16.8	
Total HG		106.0	1899	626	17.92	28.8	65.8
Kalu Ganga	Halminiya	11.5	478	170	41.50	3.8	126.5
	Ranamuregama	4.3	480	183	110.94	3.4	139.2
	Lakegala	6.7	270	71	40.32	2.4	110.7
	Narangamuwa	10.6	362	142	34.17	1.0	379.5
Total KG		33.1	1590.0	566.0	226.9	10.6	756.0
Thelgamu Oya	Pitawala	8.5	213	80	25.15	2.1	103.9
	Rathninda	8.9	156	64	17.45	1.3	119.7
	Etanwala	11.0	143	54	12.96	0.7	205.4
	Meda Ela	2.5	181	49	72.86	1.0	186.7
	Mahalakotuwa	7.1	178	64	25.23	1.8	100.4
	Ilukkumbura	2.5	204	58	80.16	2.4	84.6
Total TO		40.5	1075.0	369.0	233.8	9.2	800.7
TOTALS		179.6	4564	1561	478.62	48.6	93.9

In addition, the IR indicated that the best areas for improving green cover were those in the Hasalaka Oya, Barawardhana Oya and Namini Oya. Of these, the latter two were selected for treatment. It is envisaged that the fallow/grass/barren lands in these areas could be treated and for the purpose, approximately 50 families would be picked during that phase of the intervention earmarked for Q3 and beyond. Additionally, in line with the plan in the original design to create a upstream-downstream water lobby, the Q3 phase of the intervention plans to short list these dozen individuals.

Note: The changes then would be a shift from the original three GN clusters to three river basins and the treatment of the entire communities living within those basins. The green cover component would be in the two additional river basins of the Barawardhana Oya and the Namini Oya. Map 1 outlines the final geographic areas earmarked for treatment in the post IR phases of the project.



3. REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

[All types of reports] Description of progress made in activities implementation.

Please list all activities of the contract implemented during the reporting period (as per Annex A – Project Description to the Grant agreement), using 1 paragraph per activity.

Information for each activity should address each of the basic questions: who, what, when (specific dates), where, why, how, and how much / how many?

Example: CEPA VTC team trained 25 people in bakery techniques during the month of April in Gendrasa Refugee camp to enhance refugees' income generating opportunities. CEPA VTC team delivered 5 sessions of one hour during a month followed by 4 daily hours of practice.

Please provide details to support statements (quantified data, pictures, graphs, tables).

In case an activity has been modified/ cancelled/ postponed, please elaborate on the problems faced and way forward.

Planned activities for the First Quarter (Q2):

OUTPUT 2 Q2 ACTIVITIES				
<i>The ecological health of the Knuckles Conservation Forest (KCF) is improved by restoring ecosystem services and promoting sustainable use of natural resources for livelihood development</i>				
Description of task	Planned	Actual	% Output	Remarks
Inception Study				
Depth analysis of socioeconomic, environment and anthropology (Phase 1)				
SCORECARD engagement	5	5	100%	Originally 10 KPI/PRA but SCORE replaced this
Conduct KPIs	30	36	120%	More were done due to quality issues or insufficient information
Finalizing of soil and water testing locations	1	1	100%	
Depth analysis of agricultural practices	5	5	100%	
Depth analysis of environmental practices	5	5	100%	
Depth analysis of socioeconomic, needs and aspirations, social dynamics	5	5	100%	
Depth analysis of socioeconomic, environment and anthropology (Phase 2)				
Analysis of testing data and submission of report	1	1	100%	
Establishing crop mix for treatment terrains	1	1	100%	
Final identification of environment and CC related issues of terrain	1	1	100%	
Identification of macro socioeconomic and social dynamics of treatment area	1	1	100%	
Formulation of final report				Delayed 4 weeks but submitted in Q2
Formulate draft final report	1	1	100%	The delays were due to illness on the part of the research team leader. However, the time was used to good stead to wipe out some data gaps that persisted through April/May.
Clear with GMSL team	1	1	100%	
Submit	1	1	100%	
Start-off of carbon offset initiative				
Meet with key state officials	1	0	0%	Set up twice and cancelled by the minister both times. Much push-pull at a political level so care is being exercised in this matter.
Webinar with overseas consultant	1	0	0%	
Establish volunteer offset program	1	0	0%	
Website development				
Shortlisting of developer	1	1	100%	Delayed due to illness of the Chief Advisor but between 60%-70% completed during the period under review
Creating the website framework	1	1	100%	
Establishing the engines and populating the website	1	0	60%	
Press articles				
Shortlist journalists (Sinhala and Tamil)	2	0	0%	Pushed forward to Q3 with the delays in the IR, country situation preventing field visits and the COVID scenario indicating these would not have much traction with more urgent news in the forefront
Field visit for journalists	1	0	0%	
Press article	3	0	0%	
Social Media activity				
Create twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn accounts for COLIBRI	4	0	0%	Pushed to Q3 for same reason as above
SM posts	14	0	0%	

1. With the IR completed and submitted, the original design was slightly modified to include the changes as well as the directional changes in some of the original interventions. The summary presentation of the IR is given in Annex 01.
2. Additionally, there was a requirement noted by the GMSL to respond to changes in the state policy scenario, most notably in the shift to organics policy and the banning of agrochemicals

and the position paper regarding a green economic paradigm. The GMSL believes that COLIBRI can support these initiatives and achieve recognition at the state level for the format of its intervention as well as its innovations.

Activity 1.3.1. Stakeholder mapping policy gap analysis and conservation baseline assessments:

1.3.1.1. Stakeholder Mapping and Identification:

While the GMSL did its own stakeholder map, a hierarchical mapping was performed by the team at ACTED. The GMSL indicated that a gap / duplication / relationship type analysis would significantly improve the usability of the mapping. This may eventually be done in Q3.

Activity 1.3.1.2. Policy Gap Analysis:

The GMSL's chief findings here was the serious lack of state level accumulation of data related to agriculture and environment with each of the state stakeholders tasked with collecting components of the overall data picture unable to provide any such data or if they provided it, to give sufficient quality data. Therefore, before anything else is done, this major lapse needs to be rectified because without data, lawmakers and policy formulators are doing so blind and this is a disastrous situation for the country.

The GMSL's team, working through its Chief Technical Advisor, brought all of their decades of experience to support the state in creating the agricultural roadmap for converting Sri Lanka to organics. While policy push-pull is still ongoing, this document and its summary have been recognized as one of the most important for charting the future of the country's food production paradigm shifts.

Activity 1.3.1.3. Baseline assessment of conservation indicators and resource mapping:

The IR indicated that on some fronts (climate, agrochemicals), the baselines were impossible to obtain due to the data gap issue mentioned above as well as conflicting information from the various stakeholders (farmers, agrarian officers, forest officers etc.). Therefore, some modification of these indicators needs to be done. Specifically, with respect to the COLIBIR | GMSL climate indicators, the present situation in the target regions indicate drought and high winds as the chief climate events. Neither is treatable through COLIBRI due to the sheer scope of the impact – especially drought.

Activity 1.4 Establish an online database for marine and forestry protected areas and leverage existing resources and platforms to enhance collective, open information sharing and evidence-based decision making

Website Development: Approximately 60% - 70% of the website has already been developed. It will be completed in the early part of Q3.

Leveraging social media: The GMSL is now ready to commence formal (expanded/targeted) promotion of COLIBRI since the IR is done.

Press articles: The GMSL is ready now as with social media. However, taking journalists to the target zones may become a problem. In that event, the GMSL's technical advisor shall write the required articles in English and have them published. Initial subjects will be the new river basin approach and the conflict between protectionists and social-environmentalists and the negative outcomes of such skirmishes.

Activity 1.5: Lead national-level advocacy and develop organisational strategy plans to scale up and replicate best practices under the action Carbon offset program:

- The key meeting with the staff of the Ministry of Environment (which is the mandated agency) never took place during the period under review due to the meet that was set up by the GMSL being cancelled twice. Additionally, it was seen that there were other agencies that were erroneously attempting to move towards a blue carbon program. Since it was not factoring in the key players, the GMSL recognized that the political situation was dangerous and attempting to force the issue may result in the entire project as well as the partners and the EU being seen in a negative light. Therefore, the GMSL indicated to ACTED that a more careful and considered approach would be more appropriate even if it takes a bit more time.

[All types of reports] Progress towards indicators' targets.

Please report on the indicators of Annex A as attached to the Grant Agreement. Add as many rows as necessary.

The GMSL IR is complete. However, intervention is not yet in place although significant work is planned in Q3.

4. PROJECT IMPACT

[All types of reports] Specific impact of the project.

Please give an overview of the achievements of the project from a short and long term point of view, indicating the source of information used. How the activities and the way they were executed contribute to the achievement of expected results and the overall objective of the project?

The IR indicated that instead of looking at all of the river basins, three should be treated fully and two others partially to optimize the overall impact of the project. The full exposition of the considerations are provided in the IR, which has been shared with ACTED already. It is noted that with the telescoping of the timeline, long term impacts would necessarily be lesser than anticipated but that the changes in the treatment approach gives CLOBIRI | GMSL the best chance of not merely a budget-line/indicator type impact but one that has more durability, expandability and replicability.

5. NEXT STEPS / SUSTAINABILITY / EXIT STRATEGY

[Monthly, quarterly and other interim reports] Next steps in project implementation.

In light of the progress achieved within the reporting period covered by the report, please highlight the activities to be completely in the next reporting period.

- Modify the indicators based on further evidence of actualities from the three target zones.
- Shortlist the TOTs and the youth for training.
- Commence/complete the TOT and Watchdog group training.
- Identify the optimized set of inputs to be provided to the beneficiaries across the three main river basins.
- Identify the areas in which to implement the green cover component.
- Identify individuals for the water-advocacy component.
- (Hopefully) be in a position to push the volunteer carbon offset program once the political situation stabilizes and policy clarity is achieved.
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[Final report] Sustainability.

How will the structures created under the project continue to function after the end of the project?
 What is the long-term impact of the action?

Not applicable.

[Final report] Exit strategy and/or future perspectives.

How did your organization ensure a sustainable way out? Is further support required?

Not applicable.

6. SUCCESS STORY, CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNT

[All types of reports] Success story.

Please insert a human interest story illustrating the project’s success.

Not applicable at the present time.

[Monthly, quarterly and other interim reports] Challenges.

Please use the table below to report on challenges faced and on how you overcame them. You may add as many rows as necessary.

Challenges faced: <i>Describe below each challenge faced and its impact on the project</i>	Mitigation measures: <i>Describe how your organisation responded to the challenge faced</i>	Prevention measures: <i>Please indicate measures that will be taken in the future to prevent this challenge from occurring again</i>
<i>The IR determined that the baselines for some indicators could not be obtained while in others, the treatment area itself was a bridge too far given time and fund constraints.</i>	<i>A modification of the indicators based on doable/workable outcomes.</i>	<i>The GMSL observes that in any exercise some doubt will not only exist but persist. The IR however, contains a wealth of information that will significantly improve the design and quality of any future interventions/projects/ programs.</i>
<i>COVID19</i>	<i>At present, adhering to government regulations. The situation has escalated over Q2 resulting in reduced field activity.</i>	<i>As the GMSL Technical Advisor observed in an informal discussion about a year ago, COVID could merely be a dry-run or precursor of even bigger problems noting the both macrolevel SoEs and QoEs cannot be ruled out. The recent global flooding is beginning to prove the validity of that assertion.</i>

[Final report] Lessons learnt.

What were the challenges faced during project implementation, how were they addressed, and what could have been done differently? What has your organization learned, and how has this learning been utilized and disseminated?

Not applicable.

7. EXTERNAL COORDINATION

[All types of reports] With Local Authorities.

How would you assess the relationship between your organization and State authorities? How has this relationship affected project implementation?

During Q2, the GMSL responded to urgent requests from local authorities to support their COVID response utilizing its own funds. This created massive goodwill and immediate response to various GMSL requests for data and operations clearance proving again, the fact those relationships must be engineered with knowledge of Sri Lankan realities, which at times may run contrary to those of a project funder or lead.

[All types of reports] With other organizations.

Please describe your relationship with other organizations involved in implementation, including other implementing partners, CBOs, etc.

With increased knowledge of what our partners are doing through our engagement in Q2, and with reference to this component from Q1, the GMSL dropped one of the 10 earmarked support organizations of its network that was working in the KCF (Dumbara Mithuro) after it found irregularities in its work with the communities through other exercises that the GMSL supported outside of COLIBRI.

8. LIST OF ANNEXES

[All types of reports] Annexes.

Please list all relevant annexes here.

1. The summary presentation of the IR that was made to ACTED (Annex 1 ANNEX 01 Summary Presentation with deviations highlighted.pptx)