terre des hommes
Hilfe für Kinder in Not

EX-POST-EVALUATION OF FOUR PROJECTS CONCERNED WITH ENVIRONMENTAL CHILD RIGHTS (ECR), LOCATED IN INDIA, CAMBODIA, PERU, AND MOZAMBIQUE

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GLOBAL FINAL REPORT

Evaluation requested by Terre des hommes, Germany

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CF	Community Forestry
ECR	Environmental Child Rights
EEC	Environment Education Centre
ER	Ecological Rights
GC26	General Comment 26
MinEdu	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NRMC	Natural Resource Management Committees
NTFP	Non-timber forest product
OROL	Our Rivers, Our Life
PRA	Proyeto Regional Andino (Andean Regional Project)
PRATEC	Proyecto Andino de Tecnologías Campesinas (Andean Project of Peasant's Technologies,)
WASH	Water Sanitation Hygiene
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
tdh	Terre des Hommens, Germany
UN	United Nations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Tdh Germany commissioned a global ex-post-evaluation of four projects in the working area of climate change, biodiversity, and environmental child rights. The projects have been co-financed by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The four projects are:

1. Conservation and sustainable use of natural resources in 20 smallholder farmer villages of Almora and Dehradun in Uttarakhand, India (2014 to 2017)
2. Protecting natural resources and strengthening farmers' adaptive capacities to climate change, Cambodia (2016 to 2018)
3. and Promotion of innovative approaches to the protection of biological and cultural diversity in Peru (2019 to 2021
4. Protection of forest and mangrove ecosystems through the introduction of sustainable and climate-change-adapted use systems in Inhambane Province Mozambique (2018 to 2020)

Purpose, scope and methodology of the evaluation

The ex-post evaluation was designed to answer the key question on "*How successfully have the ECR projects established and strengthened the long-term involvement of children and youth in environmental decision-making structures and protection measures for the environment and biodiversity in the project regions?"* Based on the answer to this question tdh is aiming for a global ECR project which would use recommendations and lesson from the four evaluations.

The ex-post-evaluation was conducted to:

1. Learn from the strategic stakeholders which project components were effective and which require improvements and;
2. Gain a better understanding of this highly topical issue that will shape international cooperation in the coming decades.

Key Evaluation findings

Sustainability

1) Did the project– directly or indirectly – help to raise local, national, and global awareness of ECR and integrate it into government action?

The projects in India, Cambodia, Peru, and Mozambique have indeed helped to raise awareness of ECR at various levels and integrated it into government action. These projects employed a range of strategies, including community engagement, youth involvement, collaboration with government bodies, capacity building, education integration, and the formation of local networks and committees. These strategies collectively contributed to heightened awareness of ECR, and in some cases, influenced local policies related to environmental protection. The active involvement of youth and children played a central role, instilling a sense of responsibility for environmental conservation and advocacy. While not all projects had explicit policy advocacy components, their experiences and evidence contributed to national and global advocacy networks, extending the impact of these projects beyond local communities. Moreover, the unique perspective in Peru, emphasizing the distinct conceptual framework of ecological rights rooted in the Andean/Amazonian cosmovision, reinforced the importance of nature's inherent rights and its interconnectedness with the well-being of children and communities.

2) How can tdh and partner organizations implement a global ECR program instead of individual projects on this topic in the long term?

To transition from individual environmental and children's rights (ECR) projects to a comprehensive global ECR program, tdh and its partner organizations can adopt key strategies. These strategies include empowering youth, promoting intercultural education, emphasizing experiential learning,

introducing structured ECR curricula, respecting cultural diversity, engaging with institutions and community-based organizations, considering humanitarian aid, establishing monitoring systems, prioritizing networking and advocacy, and promoting knowledge sharing and capacity building. Implementing these strategies collectively enables a holistic and sustainable approach to ECR, fostering environmental awareness and action among children and youth on a global scale.

Impact

Has the project successfully contributed to children and youth claiming their environmental rights?

The projects in India, Cambodia, Peru, and Mozambique have indeed contributed significantly to children and youth claiming their environmental rights. They achieved this through active engagement, environmental education, advocacy, community ownership, social cohesion, improved environmental practices, resilience building, enhanced livelihoods (especially for women), and the integration of environmental rights into broader human rights discussions. These initiatives have not only empowered young individuals as advocates for environmental rights but have also instilled a sense of ownership and commitment within communities. While challenges like limited outreach and political recognition persist, they provide valuable insights for future projects to further expand their influence and contribute to policy discussions at higher levels.

Efficiency

How efficient was the use of resources (time, financial and human resources) in the ECR project and (how) could efficiency have been increased?

The efficiency of resource use in the ECR project varied across the countries and projects. In India, Cambodia, Peru, and Mozambique, the projects generally utilized their resources effectively, given their respective contexts.

However, some projects faced challenges related to political instability, which impacted resource efficiency by necessitating restarts in advocacy efforts due to changes in public servants. To increase efficiency, these projects could have benefited from more consistent political support and less turnover in government positions. Additionally, streamlining and sharing best practices among the projects and leveraging local partnerships more effectively could have further enhanced resource efficiency in promoting environmental child rights.

Effectiveness

Which project measures contributed significantly to strengthening children's and youth's rights and biodiversity protection?

Several project measures significantly contributed to strengthening children's and youth's rights and biodiversity protection across India, Cambodia, Peru, and Mozambique. Active engagement of children and youth in environmental protection through eco-clubs, youth clubs, and youth-led initiatives emerged as a powerful strategy, instilling a sense of ownership and responsibility. Environmental education played a crucial role in enhancing awareness and knowledge among young individuals. Advocacy efforts and civil society engagement prepared the ground for greater recognition of environmental rights. Moreover, fostering social cohesion, improving knowledge and practices related to environmental protection, and equipping communities with sustainable coping mechanisms during environmental shocks were instrumental. These multifaceted approaches collectively strengthened children's and youth's rights and significantly contributed to biodiversity protection.

Coherence

What were the advantages and disadvantages of the decentralized global tdh working structure regarding the implementation of the ECR project?

The decentralized global working structure of Terre des Hommes (tdh) had both advantages and disadvantages in implementing the Environmental and Children's Rights project. On the positive side, this structure allowed for local adaptation and tailoring of projects to specific regional and cultural contexts. It fostered strong community engagement and local ownership, vital for ECR success. However, decentralization also posed challenges in terms of coordination and consistency across projects. Differences in local capacity and resources sometimes resulted in

varying project outcomes. Nevertheless, the overall flexibility and community-centered approach outweighed these challenges, making the decentralized structure advantageous for the ECR project's implementation.

Relevance

How relevant was the BMZ co-financed ECR project for strengthening children's and youth rights and for biodiversity protection?

The projects were highly relevant as they actively engaged children and youth, empowering them as advocates for environmental rights and fostering a sense of responsibility for environmental conservation. Prioritizing environmental education, they raised awareness and knowledge about environmental rights among young generations. These initiatives encouraged advocacy and civil society engagement, laying the groundwork for greater recognition of environmental rights. They also promoted community cohesion, led to significant behavioral changes, improved livelihoods, and integrated environmental rights into broader discussions of human rights. Overall, the projects were relevant for strengthening children's and youth rights while contributing significantly to biodiversity protection through a multifaceted approach.

Main Lessons Learned

Youth Empowerment: Involving children and youth actively in ECR initiatives is essential as it empowers them to become primary defenders of environmental rights.

Early Education: Starting environmental rights education at a young age is crucial for instilling a lasting understanding of these rights and their importance in children's minds.

Continuous Engagement: To sustain project impact, it's important to continually engage children and youth, even as older participants move on.

Succession Planning: Ensuring the sustainability of community-led environmental efforts requires planning for leadership succession and knowledge transfer to the youth.

Cultural Integration: Integrating environmental protection with local cultural beliefs, such as indigenous worldviews, can act as a powerful deterrent to illegal resource exploitation.

Decentralized Structure: A decentralized organizational structure, allows experiences and issues from affected communities to flow through partners, from local to global levels, strengthening advocacy efforts.

Succession Planning: Sustainability of community-led environmental protection efforts depends on preparing youth to take up leadership roles. Projects should consider mechanisms for knowledge transfer and leadership succession.

Main conclusions

Youth Empowerment and Advocacy: Youth across India, Cambodia, Peru, and Mozambique actively engaged in environmental protection, becoming advocates for environmental rights and agents of change.

Crucial Role of Environmental Education: Environmental education played a crucial role in raising awareness and knowledge about environmental rights among children and youth, instilling a sense of responsibility for environmental conservation.

Success of Intercultural Education: Intercultural education proved successful in instilling an understanding of environmental rights through practical and experiential methodologies, promoting positive actions and attitudes towards nature.

Promote Rights of Nature: Consider advocating for legal frameworks that recognize the rights of nature itself. This legal approach, as seen in the jurisprudence of the land, can be a powerful tool for **protecting** ecosystems.

Recognition of Ecological Rights and Indigenous Worldviews: Projects recognized the intrinsic rights of nature and the interdependence between humans and the environment.

Indigenous worldviews, especially emphasized in the Peru project, highlighted a deep connection between children and the environment.

Empowerment of Youth and Women: Projects led to an increase in the involvement of youth and women in decision-making processes, challenging societal norms and fostering a greater commitment to environmental sustainability.

In Answering the Key Question

"*How successfully have the ECR projects established and strengthened the long-term involvement of children and youth in environmental decision-making structures and protection measures for the environment and biodiversity in the project regions?"*

The ECR projects have achieved remarkable success in establishing and reinforcing the enduring engagement of children and youth within environmental decision-making structures and protective measures for the environment and biodiversity within the project regions. Through education, advocacy, active participation, and community involvement, these initiatives have empowered the younger generation to become effective advocates and stewards of the environment, ensuring a sustainable and responsible approach to environmental protection in the years to come.

Main recommendations

In general

Based on the lessons learned from the four evaluations, several key recommendations for tdh when developing a global Environmental and Children's Rights project can be distilled. These recommendations encompass a youth-centric approach, interconnected education that integrates ECR into formal and informal educational systems, an intercultural perspective respecting indigenous cultures, community ownership, knowledge sharing, advocacy, robust monitoring and evaluation, succession planning, careful selection of local partners, alignment with sustainable development goals, policy advocacy, and political engagement at global and regional levels. By following these recommendations, tdh can create a comprehensive and impactful global ECR project that builds on past successes and effectively addresses challenges while ensuring the long-term sustainability of ECR efforts.

Specific to Environmental Education

To enhance environmental education efforts for tdh and its partner organizations, several strategies can be implemented. These include integrating ECR principles into formal and informal education curricula, providing comprehensive teacher training, promoting experiential learning, developing culturally relevant learning materials, ensuring multilingual resources for linguistic diversity, involving communities in educational initiatives, empowering youth to lead educational efforts, establishing effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, strengthening partnerships with schools and educational institutions, and fostering knowledge sharing among tdh and its partners. These strategies aim to deepen children and youth's understanding of ECR principles, instilling a culture of environmental responsibility.

Specific to the Problem of Succession and Sustainability

Addressing the challenge of children and youth leaving their communities is crucial for the long-term sustainability of ECR. To ensure continuity, future efforts should prioritize youth leadership development, engage local institutions for knowledge and skill-building, establish mentorship programs, foster networking and partnerships with youth organizations, implement effective monitoring and evaluation, and advocate for supportive policies and programs. These strategies aim to empower youth as the future custodians of ECR efforts and promote their active engagement in environmental conservation beyond project lifespans.

Specific to Cooperation with Other Institutions, Including Government Authorities

Collaboration with various institutions, including government authorities, is crucial for the success and sustainability of environmental child rights projects. To enhance cooperation with these institutions, tdh and its partners can implement several strategies. These include formalizing partnerships through memoranda of understanding (MOUs), engaging in policy advocacy to integrate ECR principles into national and local policies, providing capacity-building for government officials, strengthening engagement with local authorities, collaborating with indigenous communities while respecting their rights and knowledge, monitoring environmental impact with government agencies, and sharing best practices and resources with institutions responsible for natural resource management. These strategies aim to promote effective collaboration and advance ECR initiatives.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Tdh and the Joined Ex-post Evaluation

Terre des homme Germany (tdh) is an international child rights organization promoting equitable development without racial, religious, political, cultural, or gender-based discrimination since 1967. Given that climate change and biodiversity loss are accompanied by various human rights violations, since 2013, tdh and partner organizations worldwide implement ECR (environmental child rights) projects focusing on interdependencies between child rights, intergenerational justice, and environmental protection.

Tdh commissioned a global ex-post-evaluation of four projects in the working area of climate change, biodiversity, and environmental child rights. The projects have been co-financed by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The four projects are located in India, Cambodia, Peru and Mozambique; all have been finished in the recent years. In India a second phase started 2018 and finished in 2022, in Mozambique a follow up of the project is ongoing:

1. **AMAN** - Conservation and sustainable use of natural resources in 20 smallholder farmer villages of Almora and Dehradun in Uttarakhand, **India** (2014 to 2017).
2. **Santi Sena** - Protecting natural resources and strengthening farmers' adaptive capacities to climate change, **Cambodia** (2016 to 2018).
3. **Andean Regional Project** - Promotion of innovative approaches to the protection of biological and cultural diversity in **Peru** (2019 to 2021).
4. **Mahlahle** - Protection of forest and mangrove ecosystems through the introduction of sustainable and climate-change-adapted use systems in Inhambane Province **Mozambique** (2018 to 2020).

1.2 Purpose and Scope

Tdh has commissioned this ex-post evaluation for two main purposes:

1. Learn from the strategic stakeholders which project components were effective and which require improvements and;
2. Gain a better understanding of this highly topical issue that will shape international cooperation in the coming decades.

The scope of the evaluation covers main questions defined by OECD/DAC criteria areas of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability and was designed to answer the key question on:

“How successfully have the ECR projects established and strengthened the long-term involvement of children and youth in environmental decision-making structures and protection measures for the environment and biodiversity in the project regions?”

Based on the answer to this question tdh is aiming for a global ECR program which would use recommendations and lesson from the four evaluations.

The evaluations had a forward-looking approach and did not repeat a final evaluation, which of three of the projects has been done already. The usefulness of these evaluations was to build a prospective evaluation document that will allow tdh Germany to better develop and plan a future global program on ECR, combining knowledge, wisdom and lessons learned from the four different regions.

1.3 Description of the projects evaluated

Objectives and target groups

India

The India project AMAN aimed to address critical environmental issues in 20 smallholder farmer villages in the districts of Dehradun and Almora in Uttarakhand from 2014 to 2017. The region faced severe deforestation due to excessive firewood usage, leading to soil erosion and a significant decline in the groundwater table.

To tackle these challenges, the project focused on enhancing the protection and sustainable use of natural resources. It established "Green Clubs" for children and youth within these communities, engaging them in environmental conservation efforts. Additionally, the project organized campaigns to raise awareness about ECR.

By involving the younger generation and fostering a sense of responsibility for their environment, the project aimed to combat deforestation, soil erosion, and groundwater depletion, ultimately contributing to the long-term sustainable use of natural resources in these rural communities in Uttarakhand.

The primary goals of the project were twofold. Firstly, it sought to enhance the protection and sustainable utilization of natural resources – specifically, forests, agriculture, and water – in these 20 villages. Secondly, it aimed to benefit 1,300 households residing in the Districts by implementing sustainable resource management practices. Through these objectives, the project aimed to contribute to the overall well-being of these communities while safeguarding the environment.

The project's outcome was attributed to a multi-faceted approach, including:

- **Community Capacity Building**: Empowering local communities with knowledge and skills to actively participate in the protection and sustainable use of natural resources.
- **Water and Sanitation Improvements**: Implementing measures to enhance water and sanitation infrastructure, contributing to the overall well-being of the communities.
- **Sustainable Energy and Agriculture Practices**: Promoting the adoption of sustainable energy and agricultural practices to reduce environmental impact and enhance food security.

The project involved a broad range of beneficiaries:

Approximately 6,535 individuals residing in the 20 project villages benefited from the initiatives. The project actively engaged 657 women and 606 children and youth in activities related to Environmental and Cultural Rights and sustainable development, empowering them with knowledge and skills.

Cambodia

The Santi Sena project in Cambodia, spanning from 2016 to 2018, was designed to address pressing environmental challenges, particularly the adverse impacts of long-lasting droughts, extreme rainfall, and floods. The region also faced a reduction in rain and dry forest areas, posing significant ecological and agricultural risks.

To mitigate these issues, the project focused on two core strategies. First, it aimed to promote sustainable forest management practices and enhance agricultural resilience in the face of climate change. Second, the project engaged in awareness-raising activities and established working groups focused on ECR.

By combining efforts in sustainable resource management, climate resilience, and advocacy for ECR, the project sought to protect natural resources, strengthen farmers' adaptive capacities, and address the environmental challenges posed by changing climatic conditions in Cambodia.

The project aimed to achieve multiple goals, the foremost being the protection and conservation of natural resources. This encompassed safeguarding the invaluable forests and biodiversity within the region. Additionally, the project aimed to enhance the resilience of impoverished and vulnerable families residing in 73 villages. These efforts were directed towards mitigating the

adverse impacts of climate change on these communities. Through these objectives, the project aimed to create a more sustainable and resilient environment for both people and nature in Cambodia.

The project's strategies revolved around the following key areas:

- **Safeguarding Natural Resources**: The project's primary objective was to protect natural resources, ensuring their sustainable use and preservation.
- **Climate Change Adaptation:** Given the challenges posed by climate change, the project aimed to enhance the adaptive capacities of local communities, enabling them to cope with the adverse consequences of climate change.
- **Awareness on ECR and Biodiversity**: Extensive awareness-raising efforts were undertaken to educate communities about the importance of Environmental and Cultural Rights and biodiversity conservation.

A wide array of beneficiaries involved in the project was noted:

A total of 4,480 individuals were actively engaged as members of Community Forestry (CF) associations. These community members played a crucial role in safeguarding natural resources. Approximately 4,000 children and youth participated in school activities and ECR groups, increasing their awareness of ECR and biodiversity. As many as 22 primary schools developed action plans related to environmental protection and sustainability, promoting ECR awareness among the younger generation.

Peru

The Proyeto Regional Andino (Andean Regional Project), PRA in Peru, covering 2019 to 2021, aimed to address the pressing challenges of protecting both biological and cultural diversity in the region. These aspects of the country's heritage were under significant threat. Furthermore, there was a concern regarding the weak enforcement of existing laws meant to safeguard this diversity.

To combat these issues, the project adopted an innovative approach. It sought to enforce the rights of nature and promote the value of ancestral knowledge. Additionally, the project emphasized the importance of intercultural education as a means to bridge the gap between traditional wisdom and contemporary conservation efforts.

The primary objective was enhancing the capacity of children, adolescents, and adults across eight regions to adapt to climate change. Simultaneously, this initiative aimed to foster contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 6, 13, 15), promote ecological rights for children, and ensure the right to intercultural education.

Some of the PRA partners reject the concept of Environmental Rights generally used by tdh and most of its partners. The PRA uses the term Ecological Rights instead. Ecological rights refer to the inherent rights of nature and ecosystems to exist, function and maintain their balance. These rights recognize that nature has intrinsic value and deserves protection and consideration apart from its usefulness to human beings. Ecological rights transcend the anthropocentric approach and consider ecosystems as entities with their own rights.

Environmental rights refer to human rights that are linked to the protection and enjoyment of a healthy and sustainable environment. These rights include the ability of people to live in a clean and safe environment, as well as to participate in decisions related to the environment and to have access to information and environmental justice.

The project outlined several ambitious goals, with the target of achieving them by the end of 2021. It sought to bring about substantial improvements in the formal and legal protection of rivers, water sources, and natural areas. A significant focus was placed on the implementation of good practices aimed at safeguarding water sources and biodiversity, contributing to ecological conservation. And the project aimed to promote intercultural education across local, regional, and national levels in both Peru and Bolivia.

Through these multifaceted goals, the project aimed to make a lasting and positive impact on the environment, education, and the rights of children and adolescents in the region.

The project implemented various initiatives to achieve its objectives:

- **Land Jurisprudence**: A core element of the project was the development of land jurisprudence. This involved recognizing the customs and beliefs of indigenous peoples and their respect for nature as a sacred being, guided by the Andean cosmovision.
- **Intercultural Ecological Rights Education**: The project aimed to bridge traditional knowledge and modern education by promoting intercultural education. This approach incorporated indigenous perspectives and values into the curriculum, promoting a deeper understanding of ecological rights.
- **Agriculture with Andean Cosmovision**: The project emphasized agricultural practices aligned with the Andean cosmovision, recognizing the deep connection between indigenous populations and nature.

The project made a substantial difference for various groups of beneficiaries:

Approximately 13,490 adults were actively involved in actions directly related to Ecological Rights (ER). A total of 11,657 children and youth actively participated in initiatives focused on Ecological and Cultural Rights. The project established 13 teacher networks comprising 121 men and 275 women. These networks played a crucial role in promoting intercultural ER education and advocacy.

Mozambique

In Mozambique, the Mahlahle project spanning from 2018 to 2020 was designed to address the imminent threats to forest and mangrove ecosystems. These threats were largely driven by human-related activities, such as over-exploitation of wood, urban expansion, and developmental activities, endangering the delicate balance of these ecological systems.

The project adopted a multifaceted approach to tackle these issues. It placed a strong emphasis on conservation and reforestation efforts, aimed at restoring and protecting the forest and mangrove ecosystems. Simultaneously, the project engaged in widespread awareness-raising initiatives to educate communities about the importance of these ecosystems.

Additionally, the project aimed to generate alternative sources of income for local populations, thereby reducing the pressure on these critical environments. Through these concerted efforts, the project sought to ensure the protection of Mozambique's forests and mangroves while promoting climate-change-adapted systems for the future.

The project outlined a set of robust goals, aiming to achieve them by the conclusion of 2020. These objectives included: Across 12 municipalities spanning 6 districts, specifically 3 coastal and 3 inland, in the Inhambane province the project aimed to establish and sustain effective systems for the protection and restoration of forest and mangrove ecosystems, along with preserving their invaluable biodiversity. With these efforts, the project intended to bring direct benefits to a substantial population, targeting around 52,000 residents residing in the Inhambane province.

The project implemented several key initiatives to achieve its objectives:

- **Legalization of NRMCs**: One critical aspect of the project was the legalization of NRMCs, which empowered local communities to play an active role in managing and protecting their natural resources.
- **Collaboration with Government Structures**: The project emphasized collaboration with government structures, enhancing the sustainability and impact of conservation efforts.
- **Multi-Beneficiation**: Interventions were designed to provide multiple benefits, such as reducing pressure on forests, improving livelihoods, and enhancing climate resilience.

The project had a meaningful effect on a diverse set of beneficiaries:

Approximately 840 individuals were involved in Natural Resource Management Committees (NRMC), contributing to the protection and management of natural resources. Around 620 families benefited from firewood-saving stoves, reducing their reliance on forest resources for cooking fuel. The project supported approximately 2,100 families in adopting sustainable agricultural practices, potentially reducing pressure on forests and contributing to food security.

Project achievements and challenges to date

India

The project has brought substantial improvements to the lives of 638 families. It increased irrigated areas, provided quality seeds through seed banks, improved soil fertility, and boosted incomes. Families now have income from vegetable farming, benefiting approximately 5,000 households through water structures that raised groundwater levels. These structures also reduced incidents of landslides and floods. Furthermore, 734 families saved money using alternative energy sources. Children, youth, women, and farmers formed groups that understand and address climate change threats, participating in national environmental rights initiatives and advocating for environmental conservation. This led to reduced wild animal invasions, landslides, and cloud bursts.

Impact on environmental consciousness and behavior change remains a daunting task. Sustaining momentum requires sending more children to such meetings. Additionally, despite identifying some level of continuity in project areas, changes directly attributable to the project and children's involvement proved exceptionally challenging.

Cambodia

By the project's conclusion in 2018, five community forests covering 450 hectares were fully established. These forests serve as natural protection areas and provide resources for 4,480 registered families, supporting their livelihood. A total of 100,240 tree seedlings were planted during the project. This afforestation effort covered 90 hectares of land and contributed to environmental sustainability.

The project contributed to renewable energy adoption by constructing 20 biogas plants for 20 families. Additionally, the distribution of 973 Improved Cook Stoves resulted in significant fuelwood saving. Sustainable agriculture techniques reduced the reliance on chemical fertilizers in rice, cash crop, and vegetable cultivation.

Furthermore, the project emphasized Environmental Child Rights (ECR) by training 60 youth and forming five ECR working groups, each corresponding to a Community Forest area. These groups, along with 15 Buddhist monk trainers, conducted over 1,500 awareness-raising sessions for nearly 60,000 school children.

A challenge is that head of some poor families have migrated to find job and/or income outside their villages and have less time to stay in their home, thus the project has difficulties working with them.

Peru

Achievements of the PRA include the lawful recognition of Titicaca Lake in Peru and Bolivia as a legal entity. Four water agendas with protective measures were developed in Peru, endorsed by the National Congress. Best practices for water and biodiversity protection were systematized and shared. Over 3,864 children in Peru and 2,518 in Bolivia engaged in expanding water sources and cultivation. Proposals were presented to the Ministry of Education (MinEdu) aimed to enhance Intercultural Bilingual Education. Thirteen teacher networks were reinforced, and legal frameworks for nature's rights were introduced. 11 Ordinances protecting water sources passed District legislation. Community initiatives spanned water source enhancement, biodiversity preservation, and healing arts revival through ancestral knowledge. Youth networks promoted local water protection via education, organization, and law.

The main challenge of the PRA was how to maintain the complex organizational structure and the necessary coherence of the activities of each partner. There is a danger that the sometimes different objectives of individual organizations will take on a life of their own and that cohesion will become more difficult and the common impact will be diluted.

Mozambique:

Achievements in project implementation include the continued active participation of all 840 trained community members in natural resource management structures. Two communities obtained permanent land titles, benefiting 60 families. Additionally, 620 families adopted firewood-saving stoves, reducing firewood consumption. Another 2,100 families received training in sustainable agriculture techniques, and 434 community members in savings groups transitioned to eco-friendly livelihoods.

The project faced challenges in introducing climate-resilient income sources for year-round livelihoods, addressing market limitations, and enhancing agricultural practices. Government programs for climate-resilient farming were lacking. Environmental impact monitoring from resource extraction lacked attention, and alliances for effective municipal participation were absent, hindering engagement with the private sector.

Common Aims across the Four Projects:

1. **Environmental Protection and Conservation**: All four projects aimed to protect and conserve critical natural resources, such as forests, mangroves, and water sources. They promoted sustainable resource management practices to reduce environmental degradation.
2. **Awareness and Education:** Each project included awareness-raising activities and educational components aimed at different target groups, such as children, youth, women, and local communities. These initiatives helped increase understanding of Environmental and Ecological Rights and the importance of biodiversity conservation.
3. **Alternative Energy Sources**: Efforts to reduce reliance on traditional, environmentally harmful energy sources like firewood and charcoal were evident in the India and Cambodia projects. Families were introduced to alternative energy sources, such as improved cook stoves and biogas plants, reducing their impact on natural resources.
4. **Community Engagement**: All projects actively engaged local communities in various aspects of environmental conservation. This included forming community committees or groups focused on natural resource management, as well as youth and ECR groups.
5. **Climate Resilience**: Climate change adaptation was a common theme across the projects. Initiatives were implemented to enhance the resilience of communities facing climate-related challenges, such as droughts, floods, and extreme rainfall.

Challenges Faced Across the Four Projects:

1. **Behavioral Change**: Encouraging long-term behavioral change in communities regarding environmental practices proved to be a challenge. Sustaining momentum and maintaining the interest of community members in project activities were difficult tasks.
2. **Migration**: In the India and Cambodia projects, migration of community members in search of job opportunities or income outside their villages posed challenges. This limited their ability to actively participate in project-related activities.
3. **Complex Organizational Structure**: The Peru project faced difficulties in maintaining the complex organizational structure and coherence of activities among partner organizations. The project hosts 9 organization - the project holder plus five partners from Peru and three more partners from Bolivia and follows a concept, which allows partners to continue with their own implementation concept and to have an independent administrations. Differing objectives among organizations sometimes made it challenging to maintain cohesion and a common impact.
4. **Government Programs**: In the India and Cambodia projects, there was a lack of collaboration government programs or support for climate-resilient farming practices. This hindered efforts to promote sustainable agriculture and enhance climate resilience.

Differences among the Projects:

1. **Focus Areas**: While all projects had an environmental conservation focus, the specific areas of emphasis differed. Some projects placed a stronger focus on protecting forests, while others concentrated on water sources, biodiversity, or intercultural education.
2. **Beneficiary Numbers**: The number of beneficiaries varied across projects. For instance, the Peru project involved 13,490 in advocacy actions, the India project aimed to benefit 1,300 households, while the Mozambique project supported 2,100 families and Cambodia engaged 4,480 individuals in Community Forestry. These differences influenced the scale of impact.

3. **Key Strategies**: Although all projects aimed to address environmental challenges, their key strategies varied. Most projects prioritized legal recognition of environmental rights, while Peru emphasized land jurisprudence, intercultural education, or the development of teacher networks.

1.4 Background and Context

The overall situation in the context of the project

India

Uttarakhand, a mountainous region with limited arable land and low agricultural productivity, experiences male outmigration and a feminization of local agriculture. It is crucial for environmental stability, hosting the origins of major Gangetic Plains rivers. Despite forest exploitation for over a century, afforestation efforts often prioritize commercial plantations like pine over regeneration. This, coupled with limited livelihood options, leads to widespread poverty. Remittances from male outmigration sustain the "money-order economy." However, rural communities still heavily rely on agriculture and forests for sustenance. Climate change exacerbates problems, with water shortages, floods, glacial melting, and shifts in biodiversity. Local actions contribute significantly to these changes, demanding disaster coping strategies and sustainable planning.

Cambodia

The Cambodian population, primarily reliant on agriculture, faces challenges due to climate-dependent monsoons. Around 80% live in rural areas as smallholder farmers, with nearly a third under 15 years old. Severe deforestation, often due to government concessions and lack of awareness among subsistence farmers, results in soil erosion, reduced fertility, and low agricultural productivity. Firewood burning, mainly for cooking purposes by women and girls, exacerbates deforestation. Svay Rieng province, the location of the project, experiences climate change effects, such as prolonged droughts and heavy floods, impacting forests and biodiversity, and the livelihood of impoverished forest dwellers. Sustainable forest management and children's environmental rights awareness are crucial for future generations' survival.

Peru

Both Peru and Bolivia are confronted with environmental challenges related to climate change, biodiversity conservation, and intercultural education. Traditional education systems often do not take into account the cultural context and knowledge of indigenous communities. Peru also faces challenges related to water pollution and contamination, particularly in its rivers and water bodies. Industrial activities, mining, and inadequate sewage treatment contribute to water pollution, impacting both aquatic ecosystems and human health. Ensuring access to clean and safe drinking water is a significant issue in certain regions.

Political turmoil in both nations had repercussions on the project's advocacy approach. Frequent turnovers in government officials meant that just as they began to raise awareness about ecological matters, new officials took over, necessitating a restart. Moreover, due to the prevailing uncertainty, authorities were reluctant to undertake novel initiatives like environmental ordinances, fearing potential legal non-compliance.

Mozambique

Mozambique boasts substantial mangrove forests, ranking 3rd in Africa and 1st in the Western Indian Ocean. These, along with extensive mainland forests, constitute abundant natural resources within its 780,000 km² land area, of which 87,000 km² are protected areas. These resources play a crucial role in the livelihoods of Mozambicans, especially those in rural areas.

Mangroves and mainland forests provide direct and indirect benefits to local communities, including food, income, medicine, and cultural and recreational services. Mozambique is a significant timber exporter and hosts the second-largest mangrove area in Africa and 13th globally. Historically, human activities, such as agriculture, salt production, wood exploitation, urban

expansion, and pollution, have posed significant threats to these ecosystems. Recent factors like population growth, urbanization, and internal migration have exacerbated these challenges.

Natural factors like floods, cyclones, and erosion also contribute to mangrove degradation. Remote sensing studies indicate a decline in mangrove cover from 1990 to 2016. Cyclones Idai, Kenneth, and Eloise further impacted mangrove forests in the central region of Mozambique.

The executing entity

India

The India project involves two partners. AMMAN, a community organization with a youth-centric approach, holds the project and also engaged in the 2013 tdh Delegate Conference. They oversee project implementation in Almora, resource allocation among partners, and coordination with tdh, including reporting. HESCO, the joint implementing agency, is responsible for the project in Dehradun and collaborates with AMAN and tdh. HESCO specializes in appropriate technology and technical interventions but initially had limited community-based social engagement skills when the project began.

Cambodia

The implementing agency Santi Sena is a charitable NGO founded in 1994 by Buddhist monks at the Prey Chhlak pagoda in Svay Rieng province. Registered with the Ministry of Interior since 2003, the organization's name, derived from the Pali language, reflects its goals: peace, livelihood improvement, social justice, and environmental protection. Santi Sena serves as Cambodia's national focal point for biodiversity and environmental protection and is a member of the Southeast Asian campaign network OROL (Our Rivers, Our Life). Santi Sena collaborates with grassroots groups and provincial authorities, employing peer education as a successful method for knowledge dissemination.

Peru

PRATEC, Proyecto Andino de Tecnologías Campesinas (Andean Project of Peasant's Technologies,) - holder of the PRA -, founded in 1983 and legally recognized in 1988, is a Peruvian NGO headquartered in Lima. It focuses on sustainable development and preserving traditional knowledge in rural Andean communities. PRATEC's work includes capacity building, sustainable rural development, agriculture, and promoting indigenous identity. It emphasizes cultural affirmation and encourages diversity for "Good Living" (Buen Vivir)[1] while training local organizations and communities in indigenous agriculture, biodiversity conservation, and water source protection for climate change adaptation. PRATEC also documents and systematizes indigenous knowledge for intercultural education, particularly highlighting Buen Vivir principles.

Mozambique

MAHLAHLE[2], (Association for the Promotion and Development of Women), a local NGO in Inhambane, has a 26-year history. Their programs often encompass both humanitarian and developmental aspects, focusing on income generation, health, agriculture, food security, environmental protection, and WASH from a humanitarian and community development perspective. They emphasize community participation and capitalize on existing community strengths. Their strategic pillars include active citizenship, gender and social inclusion, access to socio-economic alternatives, climate change adaptation, capacity building, organizational development, and advocacy. MAHLAHLE has maintained enduring partnerships with various funders, including Terre des Hommes, since 2003.

[1] El Buen Vivir or Vivir Bien is a claim and proposal of the indigenous peoples of South America that raises the possibility of living in harmony with nature, among people and leading a life in community. It is a claim because it deals with a way of life different from the "western" one. Buen Vivir – Filosofía del Buen Vivir (filosofiadelbuenvivir.com)

[2] The name "MAHLAHLE" has Xitsua origins, one of the languages of the province of Inhambane, and is synonymous with a star that is very visible at dawn. The Portuguese translation of the word MAHLAHLE is DAWN which is why it is used by women as an indicator of the start of domestic activities such as fetching water, going to the farm, cutting firewood, etc.

Type and scope of cooperation with terre des hommes

India

The project was executed by two local partner organizations with support from tdh. The partners were responsible for all field-level activities, tdh's role encompassed monitoring, ensuring compliance with donors, and designing reporting and monitoring frameworks. Besides project execution, partners engaged in knowledge exchange via platforms like the Project Partners Meet initiated by Tdh. Tdh facilitated partner interactions, including international exposure visits. A member of the project holder AMAN, participated in Tdh's 2013 Delegate Conference, enhancing alignment between Tdh policies and the ongoing project design.

Cambodia

Tdh has supported Santi Sena since 1998, mainly through funding development projects with the focus on raising children's awareness on the preservation of biodiversity and improvement of livelihoods. There is a trustful relationship in the cooperation with regards to political and administrative issues. Santi Sena works actively in the tdh's country partner platform and regional partner platforms and coordinates its activities in international thematic networks.

Peru

PRATEC and tdh have a history of cooperation for more than 20 years. There are a multitude of common goals in terms of sustainable development, children's rights, community empowerment and conservation of traditional knowledge. Cooperation to achieve those goals has been effective in the past. Both organizations work together in the planning and implementation of projects and collaborate in the education of children in rural communities, the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices or the protection of the rights of indigenous peoples.

Mozambique

Through the current project Mahlahle is consolidating a partnership with tdh that started in 2003 with various interventions reaching children, youths and vulnerable populations. In terms of partnerships over the last 26 years, MAHLAHLE has had long term partnerships with various funders including Terre des Hommens (Germany, Italy and Switzerland). This phase 1 (2018 to 2020) was co-funded by the German BMZ through Terre des hommes in Germany.

1.5 Evaluation Methodology

Inception Phase

For each of the four countries, a separate team of two persons was evaluating the project. The Global Lead consultant acted as the overall team leader. A Global Inception Report prepared by the Lead consultant combined the four individual reports, comparing the preliminary findings, the data collection methodologies and individual limitations to the evaluation. The inception document synthesizes the evaluation methodology and approach preparing a joined four fold evaluation under a common strategy.

As the ex-post evaluation of tdh projects was covering four countries, the inception phase started with online coordination meetings between the teams from each country, facilitated by the tdh Management Quality Unit coordinator. The first was an initial introductory meeting where the Global Team Leader presented an overview of all projects to develop a common ground for the methodology. Following that meeting the Global Team Leader circulated an Evaluation Matrix format for each country to complete as well as a draft format for the Country Inception Reports. Each country presented its Evaluation Matrix and Inception Report at the second online meeting, following which the Global Team Leader prepared the overall Inception Report.[3]

Desk Analysis

[3] Global Inception report and Evaluation Matrix available the Shared folder consultants

This involved studying all the documentation received from the project team; compile previous reports and other relevant documents from primary and secondary sources. After the desk review, the Evaluation Teams prepared different formats and materials on the planning and conduct of this study to collect the information related to each of the criteria, i.e. relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and coherence. These included: a) A detailed work plan, b) Tools and methodologies, c) A set of questionnaires corresponding to each target group: Focus Group Discussion, Key Informant Interviews, consultations, and d) Identification of stakeholders: civil society organizations; local government, etc.[4]

Field Phase and Data Collection

India

The evaluation process was comprehensive and included various components. It began on 14/07/23 and ended on 04/09/23 with a sharing meeting with tdh India/HESCO/AMAN. The field survey for quantitative data was conducted by the implementing partners and assed the current status of project measures in the target areas. Additionally, the evaluation examined the extent of youth participation in network activities both during and after the project. Community-level discussions were held with representatives of youth and women in these areas to gain insights into their understanding of the project's actions and its sustained impact. Specific villages, including Naugaon Beria and Prempuri in Almora, and Bhagda-Dhoran in Dehradun District, were visited for in-depth discussions. Interviews were conducted with a range of stakeholders, including youth, community representatives, teachers, village-level members, and leaders of NGOs that supported the state-level youth network. An Impact Assessment workshop involved tdh India and implementing partners, while consultations were held with tdh India's Country Director and Programme team based in the North India office. A total of 213 people (180 f, 33 m) participated in interviews, group discussions and participatory exercises. No data regarding age group of participants was solicited.

Cambodia

The field work took place during the second week of August, 13/08/23 to 19/08/23 (online meetings with some stakeholder took place the week before).The key locations for field work were five Community Forestries (CFs), and other components were selected from those in proximity to these CFs. The CFs were spread over five different districts of Svay Rieng province, with four of them located to the South of National Road 1 (which connects the capital, Phnom Penh, to the border town of Bavet which borders Moc Bai in Vietnam) and the other one to the North of this road. A total of 114 persons contributed information to this evaluation, 36 of whom were female (32%) and 45 were children or youth (40% of total). The total was slightly higher than that planned although it was not possible to interview any other NGO in the province as there were no other organizations there working on environment or ECR.

Peru

This field phase started on 03/08/23 and ended 23/08/23. Field work was initiated in Lima, launching the data collection process. Conversations occurred with program management and key PRATEC personnel. Initial report proposals outlined data collection methods. Collaborative consultations resulted in a unified approach, finalizing the assessment questionnaire, stakeholder list, and field visit site selection. Semi-structured interviews involved diverse stakeholders, including beneficiaries, exploring project history, current context, and individual roles. Interviewees' expertise and project experiences were considered, encouraging them to voice concerns and share best practices. Similar guiding questions were employed for beneficiary interviews.

Field visits covered five regions in Peru: Lima, Ayacucho, Cusco, Ayaviri, and Puno; Bolivia wasn't visited due to the evaluation's Peru-focused nature. Focus groups included 71 youth (34 girls, 37 boys), while 49 women and 52 men participated in direct or small group interviews. Virtual surveys engaged 21 young people (11 girls, 10 boys) and 19 graduates (9 women, 10 men), all program

[4] For details please see the individual Country Evaluation Reports

partners or beneficiaries. Group sessions' guiding questions mirrored those in interviews. Additionally, virtual surveys involved 21 children and 19 adults.

Mozambique

During the field phase from 06/08/23 to 21/08/23, a participatory mixed-methods approach combining qualitative and quantitative techniques was employed to collect and analyze primary and secondary data. A cross-sectional study design was used due to ongoing project implementation in five of the twelve communities, enabling the assessment of current factors and comparison with baseline findings and prior evaluation reports. Primary data collection involved surveys of 341 beneficiaries, focus group discussions with 85 Natural Resources Committee Members and 50 youth club members in four districts, individual interviews with 32 key informants, and observations during site visits and transect walks in mangrove and forest ecosystems. Secondary data encompassed literature reviews and reports provided by tdh and Mahlahle. Interviews involve: 26 male, 6 female, Focus group discussions: 50 male, 75 female.

Data Analysis and Aggregation

India

The qualitative data generated through participatory exercise validates the activities that took place in Almora and Dehradun. A congruent scoring pattern in Almora by two groups further strengthens this and is matched by the quantitative data collected by the implementing partners assessing the continuity of the project measures that are recorded in the previous section.

The evaluation process encompassed three key data collection components. First, a comprehensive survey of project measures was conducted at the village level, with implementing partners offering insights on their current status. Second, village-level meetings engaged women and youth group members, eliciting valuable data. Lastly, participatory community exercises involving Green Clubs and Women's groups assessed project measures. Triangulation of these sources ensured data consistency and validity. Network participation data was cross-verified through interviews with select Green Club members. Minimal software usage, primarily Excel, facilitated data management.

Cambodia

Information from respondents was collated according to the key evaluation questions in order to triangulate the information for verification. This collated information provided the basis for the responses to these questions, outlined in Section 2, the evaluation findings, of the Cambodia report[5].

Peru

Based on field findings and information collected from primary or secondary sources, qualitative and quantitative data were compiled. Progress, achievements and recommendations were then analyzed. Since the assessment is qualitative in nature, focusing predominantly on stakeholder perceptions, the Evaluation Team used the analyst triangulation method, i.e. using multiple observations and analyses derived from the identified categories of stakeholder responses. This provided a control of selective perception and illuminated blind spots in interpretive analysis. The aim was to understand the multiple forms of qualitative interpretation of data, while being aware of convergence and divergence in stakeholder perceptions.

Mozambique

The consultants systematically processed, transcribed, reviewed, and analyzed the collected field data to identify patterns and themes for addressing the research questions. Quantitative data analysis employed SPSS and Microsoft Excel. Data from the mobile data collection database was first cleaned in Ms Excel before analysis in SPSS, with results presented visually in charts, tables,

[5] The ex-post evaluation reports of India, Cambodia, Peru and Mozambique are available at the Shared folder consultants

and cross-tables for easy interpretation. Qualitative data underwent dual analysis: some data was quantified using Likert scales - to measure opinions and ratios - to measure quantities. Responses underwent thematic content analysis to identify key emerging themes, progressing from specific to general insights. The syntax file, draft report, and consent forms were delivered to Mahlahle and tdh as part of the project's deliverables.

Limitations and Constraints on the Evaluation

India

The monsoon season posed challenges to fieldwork, but the evaluation team managed to complete all engagements except one village discussion in Silkoti, which was inaccessible due to a landslide. Implementing partners were apprehensive about community-level engagement, and activities were designed to be concise, lasting about 3 hours. Fortunately, AMAN and HESCO, both ongoing tdh partners, covered their staff deployment costs during the evaluation. Additionally, the assessment relies on qualitative feedback from women, young boys, and girls, many of whom are now in their late teens and early twenties, complemented by quantitative data on the sustainability of project measures. Some youths who were active during the project have since left the target areas.

Cambodia

The evaluation faced some challenges during data collection. Many of the child/youth/monk multipliers who had participated in the project had relocated, making it difficult to reach them. Of the 60 multipliers, only 12 could be interviewed. Some beneficiaries also refused interviews due to a lack of recollection or busy schedules, while others were not accessible. Economic factors, like villagers working in nearby industries, hindered interviews with community members. Additionally, plans to interview students at two lower secondary schools were partially realized due to scheduling conflicts with exams. Despite these limitations, the consultants believe they obtained a sufficient sample to form an opinion on the current environmental and ECR status, with consistent information from various stakeholders enhancing response reliability.

Peru

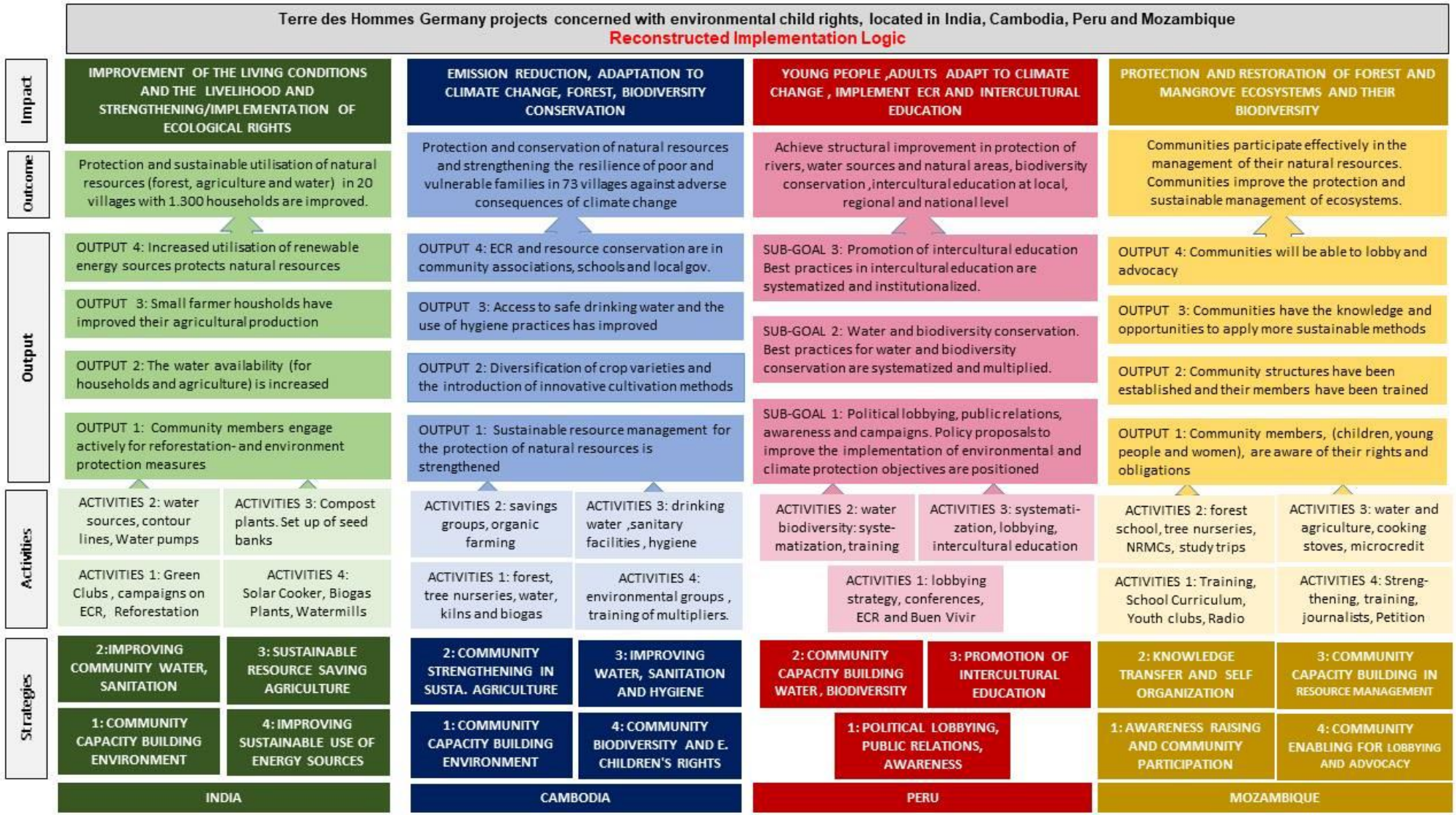
The thematic and geographical scope, although this is a value of the PRA, meant a limit to the evaluation. A face-to-face work with all the implementing teams was not possible. This could not be done due to time and cost constraints. There were also places where it was not possible to visit, especially in Bolivia. The Evaluation Team visited four of the five partners in Peru; with one partner in Bolivia and one in Peru virtual interviews were conducted. The current winter period in Peru limited access to valuable experiences of agricultural activities.

Mozambique

Several limitations must be considered when interpreting and disseminating this report, despite the consultants' well-planned research methods: A similar phase 2 project with comparable objectives and outcomes is currently underway in five of the 12 communities. This complicates isolating the phase 1 project's impact and effectiveness in these communities. Surveys were not conducted on children aged 8-14 years, who were significant beneficiaries, to avoid disrupting their education during the data collection period. Their perspectives were gathered through interviews with eco-club facilitators. Due to low youth survey participation, the results lack the statistical rigor necessary for comparing means and conducting significance tests between youth and adult responses.

2 EVALUATION FINDINGS

2.1 Intervention Logic



The intervention logic in all four countries' projects shares a common focus on contributing to environmental sustainability, engaging local communities, and addressing specific environmental challenges. However, they differ in their specific goals and strategies. India's project centers on local environmental issues and behavior change, while Cambodia aims for community resilience and improved water access. Peru's project initially centered on advocacy, public relations, and awareness campaigns, later evolving with new strategies, and Mozambique championed the Community-Based Natural Resource Management approach. Despite these differences, all projects prioritize community engagement, environmental education, and involving children and youth in environmental initiatives.

2.2 Sustainability

1) Did the project– directly or indirectly – help to raise local, national, and global awareness of ECR and integrate it into government action?

The projects in India, Cambodia, Peru, and Mozambique employed several common strategies that significantly impacted the sustainability of efforts to raise awareness about ECR and their integration into government actions.

Firstly, they focused on building local awareness and community engagement. In **India** the project's engagement with youth and children through **Green Clubs** and **Environment Education Centres** (EECs) has been particularly successful. Through various activities, these projects effectively heightened understanding of ECR at the grassroots level. They actively involved communities, including children and youth, in educational programs and awareness campaigns. These efforts resulted in improved environmental practices within local communities, and residents began to participate actively in community-led initiatives.

Youth and children played a central role in all projects. They were not just beneficiaries but active participants, instilling a sense of responsibility for environmental conservation. In **Cambodia** youth actively participated with Community Forest Committee **engagement in tree planting** activities aimed at restoring degraded forest areas. Young individuals empowered themselves to become environmental leaders and advocates. Impressively, many remained engaged in environmental activities and advocacy long after the projects had officially concluded.

In all the ECR projects across India, Cambodia, Peru, and Mozambique, various activities were instrumental in enabling youth and children to play central roles. Some of the most important activities included:

Youth Networks: Creating networks of young community extension workers in areas like rainwater harvesting or river bank cleaning encouraged youth to actively participate in sustainable practices and advocate for environmental protection.

Eco-clubs To establish eco-clubs in schools, provide children with a platform to learn about their environment and engage in environmental protection activities. This empowered them to take the lead in advocating for a safe and sustainable environment.

Experiential Learning: In Peru, the use of experiential methodologies, such as creative play, community arts, and hands-on environmental practices, helped children and youth internalize the importance of ecological rights and take concrete actions to protect the environment.

Tree Planting Campaigns: Engaging children and youth in Cambodia in tree planting campaigns to promote reforestation and biodiversity conservation enabled youth and children to actively contribute to the protection of their environment and ecological rights.

Youth leadership training: Peru emphasized education and capacity building to prepare youth for leadership roles. Providing them with the necessary knowledge and skills enabled them to become effective advocates and leaders in their communities.

Legal Advocacy: In Mozambique, legalizing Natural Resource Management Committees of youth and linking them with government allocations of fine collections enhanced community recognition and compliance with environmental protection activities.

Collaboration with government bodies was another key strategy. Although the success of these collaborations varied, these projects aimed to integrate ECR principles into government policies and programs. Some even influenced local policies related to environmental protection, further reinforcing the importance of such initiatives. In **Peru** the project has made initial strides in integrating ecological (child's) rights into local policies, particularly in **communal public policies** at the regional level

Capacity building was a consistent focus across all projects. They sought to equip local communities and organizations with the knowledge and skills required to sustain environmental initiatives. This approach laid a strong foundation for continued engagement and knowledge transfer, ensuring the long-term sustainability of ECR efforts.

Despite not all projects having explicit policy advocacy components, their experiences and evidence contributed to national and global advocacy networks. This collective effort emphasized the crucial role of children in ECR, thereby extending the impact of these projects beyond local communities.

Community decision-making and responsibility were strongly emphasized, highlighting the importance of active environmental citizenship and community ownership in asserting rights and ensuring compliance with environmental regulations.

Education integration was a key strategy. These projects incorporated ECR principles into educational curricula, training programs, and educational materials. In **Peru** the project has successfully integrated **Ecological Rights** into **intercultural education**. This approach allows children and youth to connect ecological rights with their daily practices, making these concepts tangible and meaningful.

The projects have had a positive impact on the livelihoods of individuals and families, particularly women. Activities such as **savings and loan** programs in **India**, sustainable agriculture, and alternative **income sources** in **Mozambique** have elevated living standards and ensured access to fundamental rights like shelter, education, and health.

Local networks and committees, such as **Natural Resource Management Committees** in **Mozambique**, proved to be instrumental in project success. They provided structured approaches to environmental protection, facilitating organized and efficient efforts within communities.

Finally, in **Peru**, the position of the Andean Regional Project in Peru regarding **environmental and ecological rights** emphasizes a distinct conceptual framework from that of tdh. In Peru, partners, particularly those from the Andean-Amazonian region, have been shaping their perspective based on the Andean/Amazonian cosmovision. They view ecological rights as paramount and distinct from conventional environmental rights. Peruvian partners argue that ecological rights encompass a set of norms governing the filial relationship between nature and children. This perspective emphasizes a profound connection between children and the environment, particularly the **concept of Pacha Mama or Mother Earth.** It goes beyond the notion of merely creating a safe environment for children; instead, it acknowledges nature as having inherent rights of its own. In this view, children are seen as an integral part of the community, and by focusing on the well-being of the community and nature; children's rights are inherently protected. The perspective asserts that when children thrive, nature flourishes, and vice versa, creating an interdependent and mutually beneficial relationship.

In summary:

The projects in India, Cambodia, Peru, and Mozambique have indeed helped to raise awareness of ECR at various levels and integrated it into government action. These projects employed a range of strategies, including community engagement, youth involvement, collaboration with government bodies, capacity building, education integration, and the formation of local networks and committees. These strategies collectively contributed to heightened awareness of ECR, and in some cases, influenced local policies related to environmental protection. The active involvement of youth and children played a central role, instilling a sense of responsibility for environmental conservation and advocacy. While not all projects had explicit policy advocacy components, their experiences and evidence contributed to national and global advocacy networks, extending the

impact of these projects beyond local communities. Moreover, the unique perspective in Peru, emphasizing the distinct conceptual framework of ecological rights rooted in the Andean/Amazonian cosmovision, reinforced the importance of nature's inherent rights and its interconnectedness with the well-being of children and communities.

2) How can tdh and partner organizations implement a global ECR program instead of individual projects on this topic in the long term?

In envisioning a transition from individual projects to a holistic global ECR program, there are key strategies and approaches that tdh and its partner organizations can adopt. These strategies draw from the collective experiences in India, Cambodia, Peru, and Mozambique, creating a comprehensive and effective framework for long-term ECR impact.

Youth empowerment takes center stage in the transition to a global ECR program. The **India** team recommends supporting **youth-led initiatives** that address local and global environmental challenges. Strengthening existing youth networks and interest groups related to the environment, arts, sports, and community actions should be integrated into youth engagement in environmental activities. Empowering youth has to become an integral part in a future of ECR programme.

Intercultural education emerges as a crucial component in **Peru**, aiming to instill an intercultural perspective within formal educational institutions. Achieving this involves teacher training programs, curriculum adjustments, and collaboration with government authorities to embed intercultural education into official policies.

Experiential learning forms in **Peru** another vital pillar. It entails developing educational strategies that immerse children and adolescents in daily actions related to ECR. From creative play to communal gardening and traditional arts and crafts, hands-on experiences foster a deeper understanding of environmental principles. Organizations should actively engage in experiential learning approaches to solidify ECR values among young generations.

Both the **India** and the **Mozambique** team favor a **structured ECR curriculum** or learning module that can be integrated into both formal and informal education systems. The **Mozambique** team recommends establish partnerships with local and national governments to **integrate ECR into educational curricula** and policy frameworks, leveraging collective resources and influence

Cultural connection is also an important element. Recognizing the significance of indigenous cultures and local traditions in promoting environmental care is paramount. It entails actively involving communities, especially indigenous groups, in the decision-making processes related to ECR initiatives. This approach ensures in **Peru** that cultural values and **indigenous worldviews** are not only respected but also integrated into environmental protection efforts.

Institutional engagement involves identifying and collaborating with community-based organizations involved in environmental conservation. Supporting their capacity building and active participation in ECR initiatives strengthens the grassroots efforts crucial for environmental protection.

The **Cambodia** team considers including humanitarian aid to **support children impacted** by environmental issues and climate change, they also mention choosing partners that prioritize children's rights and demonstrate a culture of learning and adaptability.

According to the **India** team effective **monitoring and documentation** systems should be established to track progress and document best practices and lessons learned. This data-driven approach ensures continuous improvement in ECR initiatives.

Networking and advocacy efforts should be facilitated to connect partner organizations, enabling collective action in raising awareness of ECR at both national and international levels. The **Cambodia** team recommends prioritizing **advocacy at the regional level** (e.g., ASEAN) to develop and adopt ECR policies that can guide national-level actions. Collaborating with government agencies and local authorities is instrumental in embedding ECR principles into official policies and programs.

Finally, knowledge sharing and capacity building among tdh and partner organizations should be actively promoted. Workshops, conferences, and information exchange platforms facilitate peer learning and expertise dissemination, fostering a culture of continuous growth and development.

Create regional hubs or centers of excellence where expertise in ECR is concentrated is a suggestion from the **Mozambique** team. These hubs can serve as training and resource centers for local partner organizations, ensuring a consistent approach to ECR education and advocacy.

In summary:

To transition from individual environmental and children's rights (ECR) projects to a comprehensive global ECR program, tdh and its partner organizations can adopt key strategies. These strategies include empowering youth, promoting intercultural education, emphasizing experiential learning, introducing structured ECR curricula, respecting cultural diversity, engaging with institutions and community-based organizations, considering humanitarian aid, establishing monitoring systems, prioritizing networking and advocacy, and promoting knowledge sharing and capacity building. Implementing these strategies collectively enables a holistic and sustainable approach to ECR, fostering environmental awareness and action among children and youth on a global scale.

2.3 Impact

Has the project successfully contributed to children and youth claiming their environmental rights?

The following key points summarize the findings from all four countries' projects on whether they have successfully contributed to children and youth claiming their environmental rights:

Firstly, the active engagement of children and youth in environmental protection has been a unquestionable success across all countries. In **India** and **Mozambique Eco-clubs and youth clubs** have emerged as powerful platforms, transforming young individuals into advocates for environmental rights and sustainability. In **Peru** young leaders are at the forefront of **defending ecological rights**. They generate awareness through territorial activities and campaigns, including addressing environmental incidents like oil spills.

Environmental education has been a cornerstone, enhancing awareness and knowledge about environmental rights among children and youth. In **Mozambique**, the project developed an **Environmental Education manual** that covered the management and sustainable use of natural resources. This manual became a valuable tool for environmental education at various levels.

Moreover, these projects have actively embraced advocacy and civil society engagement. Through petitioning local governments, raising awareness about environmental issues, and strengthening the capacity of local NGOs, they've prepared a path toward greater recognition of environmental rights.

An essential outcome has been the instillation of ownership and pride within communities. Residents in **Mozambique** have embraced their local environments; they have become active stewards of their land and resources, leading to a greater commitment to environmental sustainability.

The projects have fostered social cohesion among community members. Natural Resource Management Committees in **Mozambique**, youth clubs and eco-clubs in **India** have acted as bridges, bringing communities together and contributing substantially to the success and sustainability of environmental endeavors. In **Cambodia** the project successfully safeguarded and enhanced community forestry areas, which supply essential non-timber forest products (NTFPs) for local livelihoods.

One of the most tangible impacts has been the improvement in knowledge and practices related to environmental protection and sustainability. The **Cambodia** and the **Peru** team noted that this has manifested in significant **behavioral changes**, including reduced waste, enhanced natural resource management, heightened awareness of environmental issues, and support of communal water systems.

Furthermore, these projects have equipped communities with sustainable coping mechanisms during environmental shocks, like droughts, effectively reducing reliance on environmentally harmful activities and promoting climate-sensitive alternatives.

The projects have had a positive impact on the livelihoods of individuals and families, particularly women. Activities such as **savings and loan** programs in **India**, sustainable agriculture, and alternative **income sources** in **Mozambique** have elevated living standards and ensured access to fundamental rights like shelter, education, and health.

These initiatives have underscored the integration of environmental rights into broader discussions of human rights. The **India** team observed that participants have developed a nuanced understanding of how environmental rights interconnect with other fundamental rights, like access to food, shelter, education, and healthcare.

While the projects have demonstrated significant success, they have also faced challenges such as limited outreach and political recognition of children's environmental rights. In **India** and **Cambodia** teams reported that participation opportunities have **dwindled post-project**, raising concerns about the influence of broader social and political processes on this generation. The **Peru** team observed that in Lima's impoverished peripheral neighbourhoods, structural and **economic challenges deny these rights**, resulting in limited green spaces, inadequate waste management, and high pollution levels.

However, these challenges highlight opportunities for future projects to expand their impact and influence policy discussions at higher levels.

In summary:

The projects in India, Cambodia, Peru, and Mozambique have indeed contributed significantly to children and youth claiming their environmental rights. They achieved this through active engagement, environmental education, advocacy, community ownership, social cohesion, improved environmental practices, resilience building, enhanced livelihoods (especially for women), and the integration of environmental rights into broader human rights discussions. These initiatives have not only allowed young individuals to empower themselves as advocates for environmental rights but youth also acquired a sense of ownership and commitment within communities. While challenges like limited outreach and political recognition persist, they provide valuable insights for future projects to further expand their influence and contribute to policy discussions at higher levels.

In the four countries, India, Cambodia, Peru, and Mozambique, community engagement was a central theme in their ECR projects. India focused on eco-clubs within schools and collaboration with the government but faced challenges in expanding beyond the community. Cambodia's strategy allowed for adaptability but struggled to amplify advocacy beyond communities. Empowered youth in Peru promoted the creation a jurisprudence of the land, emphasizing community-level action. In Mozambique, alignment with government strategies and legalizing Natural Resource Management Committees enhanced community recognition and compliance. All recognized the significance of youth involvement but shared common challenges in expanding engagement beyond the community level, suggesting the need for tailored approaches to community engagement.

2.4 Efficiency

How efficient was the use of resources (time, financial and human resources) in the ECR project and (how) could efficiency have been increased?

Efficiency in resource usage emerges as a common thread across all four countries, highlighting various aspects of success and some distinctions in their approaches:

All four countries demonstrated full compliance with planned activities, smoothly executing project objectives without encountering budget constraints. The allocated budgets aligned seamlessly with the disbursed funds, ensuring the efficient utilization of resources for project execution.

Moreover, field staff, program accountants, and project managers in each country attested to the adequacy of mobilized resources for realizing proposed activities. This alignment between

allocated resources and expected results underscores the efficiency of resource utilization across all projects.

Furthermore, the timely completion emphasizes the efficiency of resource utilization across all projects. Reports from all countries consistently indicated that activities were concluded within stipulated workplan periods, emphasizing the dedication to effective resource utilization.

However, there were also some distinctive aspects to consider:

In **India**, a **no structured environmental education** curriculum built into the project design and a delayed staffing resulted in some potential disturbances in program continuity.

Cambodia introduced a distinctive element by managing **budgets in both Euros and US Dollars**, leading to budgets adjustments based on exchange rates. The consultants also noted that one potential area for greater efficiency, would have been to delegate the management of ECR youth multipliers to the Community Forestry Management Committees rather than being managed solely by Santi Sena.

Challenges arose in **Peru** due to differences in administrative capacities of the partners; some partners required additional administrative strengthening, leading to resource allocation challenges. The complex multinational project management involving two countries with different norms and legislations and numerous partners presented significant administrative challenges. Budget changes due to the pandemic produced other complications.

Mozambique's consultants primarily relied on responses from field staff, project managers, and the tdh coordinator for analysis, without further literature or validation for triangulation.

In summary:

The efficiency of resource use in the ECR project varied across the countries and projects. In India, Cambodia, Peru, and Mozambique, the projects generally utilized their resources effectively, given their respective contexts.

However, some projects faced challenges related to political instability, which impacted resource efficiency by necessitating restarts in advocacy efforts due to changes in public servants. To increase efficiency, these projects could have benefited from more consistent political support and less turnover in government positions. Additionally, streamlining and sharing best practices among the projects and leveraging local partnerships more effectively could have further enhanced resource efficiency in promoting environmental child rights.

2.5 Effectiveness

Which project measures contributed significantly to strengthening children's and youth's rights and biodiversity protection?

In all four countries – India, Cambodia, Peru, and Mozambique – several common key points emerged in efforts to strengthen children's and youth's rights and protect biodiversity. These key points reflect shared strategies that aimed to empower communities and foster environmental awareness.

A notable commonality was the active **involvement of children and youth** in environmental conservation activities. They became integral members of green clubs, attended educational centers, and actively participated in campaigns. This hands-on engagement enriched their understanding of environmental issues and honed their communication skills.

Women experienced significant **empowerment** within these projects. This empowerment manifested as increased self-confidence, greater mobility, and improved engagement in livelihood opportunities. Notably, women gained financial independence through initiatives like individual bank accounts, reducing their dependency on others.

Empowered women are catalysts for positive change in ECR projects. They contribute to raising awareness, encouraging active involvement, and ensuring that children and youth have a strong foundation for understanding and advocating for their environmental rights. Their multifaceted roles lead to more robust, inclusive, and sustainable environmental protection efforts

Across these nations, **community mobilization** was a key driver of change. Organized efforts by women and youth empowered them to address pressing issues within their communities. This community mobilization was particularly effective at the grassroots level.

Environmental education played a pivotal role, reaching a wide audience through diverse methods and platforms. Children and youth actively participated in this educational process, often through activities in eco-clubs, in-school classes, and community events. These initiatives effectively raised environmental awareness among the populace.

A shared approach involved the creation of **"safe spaces" for children**, supervised by trusted adults such as teachers. These spaces not only provided opportunities for young people to develop livelihood skills but also served as channels for active citizenship and engagement with environmental issues.

Capacity building was a fundamental element of these projects. It **empowered communities** to take ownership of their environments and biodiversity. By developing the skills and knowledge needed for sustainable environmental protection, communities were better equipped to safeguard their natural surroundings.

Differences in Approaches:

While these common key points unite the projects, differences exist in approaches related to policy influence. In **India**, there was a **limited focus on national policy change** or advocacy efforts. In **Cambodia**, the emphasis was placed on implementing **existing policies at the local level** rather than influencing national policies. In **Peru**, the focus was on influencing specific ordinances and bills, albeit with **limited success** in broader policy changes. In **Mozambique**, the project laid the groundwork for **future policy influence**, with direct policy impacts yet to be realized.

Each country tailored its initiatives to its unique context. For example, India engaged women in livelihood options to promote empowerment. In **Cambodia**, the selection and **training of multipliers** played a crucial role in raising awareness. **Peru** facilitated the approval of **municipal ordinances** for environmental protection, and **Mozambique** established "**safe spaces**" within schools to engage children.

The projects differed in their recognition of rights. **India** did not specify cases of policy recognition of rights. In **Cambodia**, there was a shift in focus towards ECR. In **Peru**, there was recognition of the rights of nature and specific ecosystems, reflected in municipal ordinances and proposed bills.

While these common key points underscore the collaborative efforts to strengthen children's and youth's rights and protect biodiversity across diverse nations, the differences highlight the unique approaches taken in each country. These approaches reflect the distinct challenges and opportunities present in their respective contexts.

In summary:

Several project measures significantly contributed to strengthening children's and youth's rights and biodiversity protection across India, Cambodia, Peru, and Mozambique. Active engagement of children and youth in environmental protection through eco-clubs, youth clubs, and youth-led initiatives emerged as a powerful strategy, instilling a sense of ownership and responsibility. Environmental education played a crucial role in enhancing awareness and knowledge among young individuals. Advocacy efforts and civil society engagement prepared the ground for greater recognition of environmental rights. Moreover, fostering social cohesion, improving knowledge and practices related to environmental protection, and equipping communities with sustainable coping mechanisms during environmental shocks were instrumental. These multifaceted approaches collectively strengthened children's and youth's rights and significantly contributed to biodiversity protection.

2.6 Coherence

What were the advantages and disadvantages of the decentralized global tdh working structure regarding the implementation of the ECR project?

Across all four countries the decentralized global working structure of tdh for the implementation of a Environmental Child Rights project had several advantages and some weaknesses.

Advantages of the Decentralized Global tdh Working Structure:

One significant advantage highlighted by **India** and **Peru** was the flexibility that the decentralized structure offered. It allowed **each country to adapt the ECR projects** to their specific needs and local contexts. This flexibility ensured that the projects were well-aligned with the realities on the ground, enhancing their effectiveness.

As the **Cambodia** team emphasized, the decentralized structure **facilitated awareness** and alignment with **tdh's global ECR policy**. This alignment was crucial in ensuring that the projects incorporated ECR principles, even if the proposals were developed before the policy existed. It improved the overall coherence of the projects.

The decentralized approach encouraged **knowledge sharing** between the different country projects. This was mentioned specifically between tdh **India** and other projects, fostering a collaborative approach and potentially increasing the impact of ECR initiatives across multiple projects. This collaborative environment meant that lessons learned in one location could benefit other projects, potentially increasing the overall impact of ECR initiatives across multiple regions.

The opportunity for project holders to participate in the **Delegate Conference** was another advantage mentioned in **India** and **Peru**. This conference provided a platform for the exchange of ideas and strategies, enriching the implementation of the projects through collective wisdom and experiences.

The **Peru** team considered one of the project's most significant accomplishments to be the development of a successful model of action and suitable approaches in alignment with tdh's global ECR objectives.

Weakness or disadvantages of the Decentralized Global tdh Working Structure:

A mentioned disadvantage was the **limited capacity for policy influence** within the decentralized structure; this was mentioned specifically in **India**. While the projects were well-aligned with ECR policies, there was a noted weakness in the ability to coordinate and advocate for policy changes effectively at higher levels. This could potentially hinder broader policy impacts.

Knowledge management and dissemination were areas where the decentralized structure faced challenges. While tdh supported numerous projects in **India**, it was noted that it needed to play a more active role as a knowledge producer and documenter. This could help in sharing best practices and lessons learned more effectively.

The **Mozambique** team observed that during the transition to the decentralized policy, the implementing partner encountered a **deficiency in technical support**, especially concerning climate-smart and regenerative agricultural methods.

Some partners in **Peru** felt that **tdh's role** during project execution was **insufficient**. They desired a more co-management model rather than just being a channel for resources. Increased commitment from tdh during critical project phases was also desired.

In summary:

The decentralized global working structure of Terre des Hommes (tdh) had both advantages and disadvantages in implementing the Environmental and Children's Rights project. On the positive side, this structure allowed for local adaptation and tailoring of projects to specific regional and cultural contexts. It fostered strong community engagement and local ownership, vital for ECR success. However, decentralization also posed challenges in terms of coordination and consistency across projects. Differences in local capacity and resources sometimes resulted in varying project outcomes. Nevertheless, the overall flexibility and community-centered approach outweighed these challenges, making the decentralized structure advantageous for the ECR project's implementation.

2.7 Relevance

How relevant was the BMZ co-financed ECR project for strengthening children's and youth rights and for biodiversity protection?

The ECR projects across the four countries hold significant relevance in strengthening children's and youth rights while simultaneously contributing to biodiversity protection. They address critical environmental challenges essential for sustainable regional development and align with global objectives, notably the Sustainable Development Goals. Furthermore, these projects integrate mostly with national and global environmental goals, ensuring adherence to established frameworks for environmental protection.

A distinguishing feature of these initiatives is their community-centered approach, tailoring interventions to directly meet the immediate needs and aspirations of local communities and target districts. Moreover, they place a strong emphasis on empowering children and youth. Through active involvement in various environmental conservation activities, young individuals acquire valuable knowledge, skills, and a heightened sense of responsibility toward their environment.

Another noteworthy outcome is the cultivation of positive attitudes among children and youth concerning biodiversity protection and sustainable resource utilization. This transformation in environmental consciousness has a lasting impact.

Participation rates among children and youth have surged across all countries. They have engaged in environmental activities, campaigns, and educational programs, empowering them to advocate for their rights within the realm of environmental conservation.

In Peru, the projects have gone a step further by incorporating indigenous worldviews and cultural heritage into environmental education. This integration underscores the intricate connections between children's rights, cultural values, and the preservation of biodiversity.

These initiatives successfully bridge the gap between education and action, involving both schools and communities in activities that enhance their understanding of biodiversity and local water culture. Through these key points, the projects' collective impact on children's and youth's rights and the safeguarding of biodiversity becomes evident.

In summary:

The projects were highly relevant as they actively engaged children and youth, empowering themselves as advocates for environmental rights and fostering a sense of responsibility for environmental conservation. Prioritizing environmental education, they raised awareness and knowledge about environmental rights among young generations. These initiatives encouraged advocacy and civil society engagement, laying the groundwork for greater recognition of environmental rights. They also promoted community cohesion, led to significant behavioral changes, improved livelihoods, and integrated environmental rights into broader discussions of human rights. Overall, the projects were relevant for strengthening children's and youth rights while contributing significantly to biodiversity protection through a multifaceted approach.

It's noteworthy that at the time of the ex-post evaluation, many of the positive impacts remained sustained and continued to benefit the communities involved in the ECR projects: In **India** green clubs and networks established during the project continued to function independently, maintaining their roles in environmental education and conservation. Also Initiatives like cleaning the Ram Ganga River led to community involvement and the formation of committees. In **Cambodia** connecting environmental protection with local beliefs, particularly Buddhism, has had a positive impact in reducing illegal exploitation of forest resources. This connection remains a strong deterrent. In **Peru** regulations of Land Jurisprudence are in place and community-led organizations maintain efforts to enforce them. Also in Peru youth from various networks and platforms persist in sharing information via social media and radio broadcasts and educational farms are maintained thanks to teacher networks. In **Mozambique** the legalization of NRMCs has enhanced their recognition by communities and increased compliance with local environmental protection activities.

3 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Conclusions and Lessons Learned

Empowering Children and Youth:

- Y**outh Advocates for ECR**: Engaging children and youth in advocacy activities strengthens their sense of responsibility and empowers them as effective advocates for environmental rights.
- **Early Environmental Education**: Starting environmental rights education at a young age instills a lasting understanding and permits children to demand and protect these rights effectively.
- **Fostering Environmental Awareness**: Environmental education plays a crucial role in raising awareness and knowledge among children and youth, nurturing a sense of responsibility for environmental conservation.
- **Intercultural Education Success**: Practical, experiential intercultural education methodologies instill an understanding of ecological rights and promote positive actions and attitudes toward nature.
- **Sustaining Youth Engagement**: Continuous engagement is essential to maintaining momentum and impact, even as older participants move on.

Nature's Rights and Indigenous Knowledge:

- **Empowering Nature**: Recognizing the rights of nature as a powerful tool for protecting ecosystems shifts the paradigm from viewing nature as property to recognizing it as a rights-bearing entity**.**
- **Jurisprudence of the Land:** The Peru project establishes a jurisprudence of the land, recognizing and protecting ecological rights of natural resources, with a focus on safeguarding vital water sources.
- **Indigenous Wisdom:** Indigenous communities possess profound knowledge of their natural surroundings, offering unique insights into sustainable resource management and biodiversity protection.

Community Empowerment and Engagement:

- **Youth and Women as Changemakers:** Projects lead to increased involvement of youth and women in decision-making processes, challenging societal norms and hierarchies.
- **Ownership and Pride within Communities:** Projects instill a sense of ownership and pride within communities, turning residents into active stewards of their land and resources, fostering commitment to environmental sustainability.
- **Fostering Social Cohesion:** Natural Resource Management Committees, youth clubs, and eco-clubs act as bridges, bringing communities together and significantly contributing to the success and sustainability of environmental initiatives.
- **Sustainable Community Engagement:** Community-based structures like Green Clubs, women's groups, and farmers' groups remain active even after project completion, ensuring sustained community engagement.
- **Resource Enhancement:** Enhancements in water catchment areas, agricultural production, and renewable energy utilization positively impact the resource base, promoting sustainability and productivity.

- **Building Capacity for Future Impact:** Children and youth involvement in environmental activities and advocacy shows promise for future policy influences, with alignment to government strategies and community structures contributing to success.
- **Integrating Alternative Energy Sources:** Despite challenges, integrating alternative energy sources like solar cookers and biogas raises awareness and reduces drudgery associated with traditional energy methods.

Organizational Efficiency:

- **Decentralized Structure Benefits**: A decentralized organizational structure - as of tdh - provides an effective framework for ECR advocacy, enabling experiences and issues to flow through partners from local to global levels, strengthening advocacy efforts.
- **Effective Documentation and Knowledge Sharing:** Comprehensive documentation serves as a valuable resource for knowledge sharing and capacity building.
- **Strategic Alignment with Global Frameworks:** Aligning ECR programs closely with international frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child maximizes their impact and relevance.

Addressing Challenges:

- **Sustainable Management**: Efficient resource use, overcoming consortium management challenges, and adapting to administrative and budgetary alterations contribute to sustainable management and effective project implementation.
- **Effective Engagement with Policy and Institutions:** There's a need for more effective engagement with policymakers and local institutions to ensure sustained progress and broader advocacy.
- **Policy Advocacy Challenges**: Sustained advocacy for policy changes remains a challenge, with limited structured cooperation with local institutions.
- **Challenges of Youth Mobility:** Engaging youth in ECR can be challenging when they must leave for higher education, especially in areas with limited third-level education options.
- **Succession Planning:** Sustainability depends on preparing youth for leadership roles and implementing mechanisms for knowledge transfer and leadership succession.
- **Selecting Suitable Local Partners:** Identifying suitable local partners can be challenging, as some organizations excel in child rights but lack environmental experience, while others have little knowledge of child rights**.**

3.2 In answering the key question

"*How successfully have the ECR projects established and strengthened the long-term involvement of children and youth in environmental decision-making structures and protection measures for the environment and biodiversity in the project regions?"*

The key question at hand relates to the effectiveness of the ECR (Environmental Child Rights) projects in establishing and enhancing the sustained engagement of children and youth within the environmental decision-making processes and protective measures for the environment and biodiversity, specifically within the project regions. An exploration of this question reveals that these projects have achieved significant success on multiple fronts.

First and foremost, these initiatives have successfully encouraged active participation from children and youth in various environmental endeavors. This involvement spans a range of activities, including community-based projects, advocacy campaigns, and educational initiatives. Importantly, this hands-on participation has not only enabled young individuals to empower themselves but has also cultivated a strong sense of ownership and responsibility regarding environmental preservation.

Another vital aspect of the success story lies in the educational component of these projects. They have placed a strong emphasis on environmental education, ensuring that children and youth gain a profound understanding of their environmental rights from a very early age. This early exposure has equipped them with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively advocate for their rights concerning environmental conservation.

Advocacy has been a cornerstone of these efforts as well. The projects have actively engaged children and youth in advocacy endeavors linked to biodiversity and broader environmental concerns. This strategic approach has resulted in more than just empowerment; it has nurtured a deep sense of responsibility for environmental protection, effectively turning these young individuals into highly capable advocates for ECR and agents of change.

Crucially, these projects have succeeded in fostering a positive shift in attitudes among children and youth towards biodiversity preservation and responsible resource usage. This change in perspective has had a lasting impact, with these young advocates continuing to champion environmental causes well beyond their initial involvement.

Furthermore, by integrating environmental education into both formal and informal learning settings, the projects have effectively conveyed the interconnectedness of environmental rights with the broader spectrum of human rights. This holistic approach has played a significant role in ensuring the ongoing commitment of children and youth to environmental protection.

The community has played an essential role in this equation as well. By encouraging the participation of local communities, including parents and community leaders, in educational initiatives, these projects have fostered a supportive environment for the long-term engagement of children and youth in environmental decision-making processes.

Youth leadership has also been a pivotal factor in these endeavors. Enabling young individuals to take the lead in environmental education efforts has been a deliberate strategy. This approach has been instrumental in raising awareness and educating their peers about the principles of ECR.

In summary, the ECR projects have achieved remarkable success in establishing and reinforcing the enduring engagement of children and youth on various and sometimes different levels within environmental decision-making frameworks across the four countries. Through education, advocacy, active participation, and community involvement, the younger generation were empowered to become effective advocates and stewards of the environment, ensuring a sustainable and responsible approach to environmental protection in the years to come.

3.3 Recommendations

For Building a Global ECR Program by tdh:

Based on the lessons learned from the four evaluations, key recommendations for tdh when developing of a global ECR program can be distilled:

- **Youth-Centric Approach**: Prioritize youth engagement as central to the ECR project's success. Enable young individuals to lead environmental initiatives, fostering a sense of responsibility and agency. Invest in leadership development, skill-building, and mentorship programs for youth participants.
- **Interconnected Education**: Incorporate environmental education into formal and informal educational systems. Develop an ECR curriculum or learning modules that can be integrated into schools and community-based programs. Ensure that children and youth understand the interconnectedness of environmental rights with broader human rights. (see also detailed recommendations to this topic below)
- **Recognize Indigenous Knowledge:** Acknowledge the significance of indigenous knowledge and worldviews in environmental conservation. Indigenous communities often have a deep understanding of the land and its ecological intricacies. Collaborate with these communities and integrate their perspectives into **environmental projects and policies.**.
- **Promote Rights of Nature**: Consider advocating for legal frameworks that recognize the rights of nature itself. This legal approach, as seen in the jurisprudence of the land, can be

a powerful tool for protecting ecosystems. It shifts the paradigm from viewing nature as property to recognizing it as a rights-bearing entity.

- **Community Ownership**: Emphasize community ownership and engagement in ECR initiatives. Foster a sense of ownership and pride within communities to promote active stewardship of their land and resources.
- **Knowledge Sharing and Capacity Building**: Promote knowledge sharing and capacity building among tdh and partner organizations. Establish regional hubs or centers of excellence to concentrate expertise in ECR. These hubs can serve as training and resource centers for local partner organizations, ensuring a consistent approach to ECR education and advocacy.
- **Advocacy and Networking**: Facilitate advocacy efforts and networking at both local and international levels. Collaborate with government agencies, local authorities, and regional organizations to embed ECR principles into official policies and programs. Strengthen partnerships with local and national youth organizations to amplify advocacy efforts.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation**: Implement robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track project progress and youth participation. Use data-driven insights to refine strategies, assess the impact of youth engagement, and guide project improvements.
- **Succession Planning**: Address the challenge of youth leaving their communities by implementing succession planning strategies. Encourage youth leadership within project communities and establish mentorship programs to facilitate knowledge transfer and continuity of ECR initiatives. (see also detailed recommendations to this topic below)
- **Local Partner Selection**: Consider organizations that have experience in both child rights and environmental issues, when selecting local partners for ECR projects or facilitate partnerships between specialized organizations to maximize expertise.
- **Sustainable Development Alignment**: Ensure that ECR initiatives are closely aligned with national strategies on climate change and environmental protection to contribute effectively to sustainable development goals.
- **Policy Advocacy**: Advocate for policies and programs that recognize the value of youth engagement in environmental conservation. Collaborate with local and national institutions to integrate ECR principles into official policies and educational curricula.
- **Political Engagement**: Actively engage with global and regional political bodies and initiatives related to environmental and child rights to build support and advocate for the inclusion of ECR principles in national environmental policies and regulations. (see also detailed recommendations to this topic below)

For Environmental Education:

Environmental education plays a crucial role in raising awareness, fostering a sense of responsibility, and promoting sustainable practices among children and youth. The ECR projects have made significant strides in integrating environmental education into their initiatives. However, there is room for further enhancement to maximize their impact.

To strengthen environmental education efforts, both tdh and its partners can consider the following strategies:

- **Curriculum Integration**: Work closely with educational authorities and institutions to integrate ECR principles into formal and informal education curricula. This ensures that environmental education becomes a fundamental part of children's learning experiences.
- **Teacher Training**: Provide training programs and resources for teachers to equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively deliver environmental education. This includes understanding ECR concepts and methods for engaging students in practical activities.
- **Experiential Learning**: Promote hands-on, experiential learning approaches. This can involve outdoor activities, nature exploration, and ecological projects that directly involve students in environmental conservation efforts.
- **Learning Materials**: Develop age-appropriate, culturally relevant, and engaging educational materials that convey ECR concepts. These materials should be accessible to both educators and students.

- **Multilingual Materials**: Recognize the linguistic diversity within project areas and develop educational materials in local languages to ensure that language is not a barrier to learning.
- **Community Involvement**: Encourage community participation in environmental education. This includes involving parents, local leaders, and community organizations in educational initiatives to create a holistic approach to ECR.
- **Youth-Led Initiatives**: Empower youth to take the lead in environmental education efforts. Youth can play a vital role in raising awareness and educating their peers on ECR principles.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation**: Implement robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of environmental education programs. Collect feedback from students, teachers, and communities to make continuous improvements.
- **Partnership with Schools**: Strengthen partnerships with local schools and educational institutions to integrate environmental education into the formal education system. Partnering with organizations that specialize in education can enhance the quality and reach of educational initiatives.
- **Knowledge Sharing**: Establish platforms for knowledge sharing and best practice dissemination among tdh and its partner organizations. Learning from each other's successes and challenges can lead to more effective environmental education strategies.

For tackling the Problem of Succession and Sustainability:

The issue of children and young people leaving the communities poses a significant challenge to the sustainability of ECR initiatives. While ECR projects have achieved noteworthy progress, addressing the problem of succession is critical for ensuring the long-term impact of such ventures.

To tackle the challenge of succession and ensure the sustainability of ECR projects, future initiatives should consider the following:

- **Youth Leadership Development**: Place a strong emphasis on nurturing youth leadership within project communities. Provide opportunities for young participants to take on leadership roles, acquire essential skills, and assume responsibilities in the absence of older generations.
- **Engage Local Institutions**: Collaborate with local educational institutions, vocational training centers, and community-based organizations to create pathways for youth to gain relevant knowledge and skills, ensuring they are equipped to continue environmental protection efforts.
- **Mentorship Programs**: Establish mentorship programs that connect experienced project participants, including youth who have aged out of the project, with newer generations. This can facilitate knowledge transfer, guidance, and a sense of continuity.
- **Networking and Partnerships**: Forge partnerships with local and national youth organizations to provide ongoing opportunities for young leaders to connect, learn, and collaborate on ECR initiatives.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation**: Implement robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that track the involvement and impact of youth participants over time. Use this data to refine strategies for youth engagement and succession planning.
- **Advocacy and Awareness**: Advocate for policies and programs at local and national levels that recognize the value of youth engagement in environmental conservation and support initiatives focused on youth leadership and succession planning.

For Cooperation with Other Institutions, Including Government Authorities:

Collaboration with various institutions, including government authorities, is essential for the success and sustainability of projects focused on environmental child rights:

To enhance cooperation with other institutions, including government authorities, tdh and its partners can consider the following strategies:

- **Formalized Partnerships**: Establish formalized partnerships and memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with relevant government authorities and agencies at national and local levels. Clearly define roles, responsibilities, and commitments to ensure effective collaboration.
- **Advocacy and Policy Engagement**: Engage in policy advocacy and dialogues with government authorities to advocate for the integration of ECR principles into national and local policies, strategies, and frameworks related to environmental conservation.
- **Capacity Building**: Provide training and capacity-building programs for government officials and staff on ECR, emphasizing the importance of children's and youth participation in environmental decision-making processes.
- **Local Government Engagement**: Strengthen engagement with local government authorities, particularly at the commune and district levels, to ensure that ECR initiatives align with community development plans.
- **Indigenous Community Collaboration**: Forge partnerships with indigenous communities and collaborate with government authorities to ensure that ECR initiatives respect indigenous rights, knowledge, and traditions.
- **Environmental Monitoring**: Collaborate with government environmental agencies to monitor and evaluate the impact of projects on biodiversity and environmental conservation. Share findings and recommendations for evidence-based policy formulation.
- **Resource Sharing**: Collaborate with government institutions responsible for natural resource management to share best practices, resources, and expertise in sustainable resource utilization.

4 ANNEXES

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

Consultancy to conduct an ex-post-evaluation of four projects concerned with environmental child rights, located in India, Cambodia, Peru, and Mozambique

Details

terre des hommes Germany

Veröffentlicht: 24. April 2023

terre des hommes
Help for Children in Need

terre des hommes Germany (tdh) will carry out a global ex-post-evaluation of four projects in the working area of climate change, biodiversity, and environmental child rights. The projects have been co-financed by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and comprise:

- *Conservation and sustainable use of natural resources in 20 smallholder villages of Almora and Dehradun in Uttarakhand, India* (2014 to 2017): aimed at increasing the protection and sustainable use of natural resources in local communities, especially in forestry, agriculture and water use.
- *Protecting natural resources and strengthening the resilience of Kam-Bodzh communities against adverse impacts of climate change, Cambodia* (2016 to 2018): aimed at strengthening the protection and conservation of natural resources and the resilience of vulnerable families in the project area against the negative effects of climate change.
- *Promoting innovative approaches to the protection of biological and cultural diversity, Peru* (2019 to 2021): aimed to systematize and replicate existing approaches, drawing on traditional knowledge of Buen Vivir in the cultures of the Andean region, the participation of children and youth, and the use of innovative techniques to combat negative impacts of environmental degradation and climate change, and hold responsible institutions accountable.
- *Protection of forest and mangrove ecosystems through the introduction of sustainable and climate change adapted use systems in Inhambane Province, Mozambique* (2018 to 2020): aimed at supporting local communities in establishing effective protection systems and reforestation mechanisms for mangrove and tropical forests.

terre des hommes Germany and its efforts regarding environmental child rights

tdh is an international child rights organization promoting equitable development without racial, religious, political, cultural, or gender-based discrimination since 1967. Given that climate change and biodiversity loss are accompanied by various human rights violations, since 2013, tdh and partner organizations worldwide implement ECR (environmental child rights) projects focusing on interdependencies between child rights, intergenerational justice, and environmental protection.

tdh is looking for…

a diverse team of eight evaluators, two from each project country. Applications are accepted from global teams covering all four countries or from individual teams of two evaluators from one project country, which may be matched with other country teams, provided respective applications from all countries are available.

For coordination purposes, one Lead Consultant must ensure the sound work within the global team and be responsible for report writing. In addition, there should be a Country Lead and a Co-Consultant in each country; the Lead Consultant acting as Country Lead in her/his country.

Evaluators are expected to

- have experiences with evaluations regarding child rights and child participation, environmental protection, biodiversity, and adaptation to climate change
- have experiences with method and data triangulation and with participatory and child-oriented approaches of social research
- be team players and proactively contribute to the global evaluation team
- hold a university degree in social or environmental sciences
- have a good knowledge of the socio-economic and environmental situation in the project countries
- possess necessary language skills (for Lead Consultant and Country Leads: good command of oral and written English; all evaluators: ability to communicate in languages commonly spoken in their respective study region)
- have the necessary physical fitness to travel to project regions.

Compliance with tdh Child Safeguarding Guidelines and EU GDPR is required.

tdh is commissioning the ex-post-evaluation…

for two main purposes: 1) Learning function: highlight which project components were effective and which require improvements, inducing an open dialogue on promising ECR projects between tdh, partner organizations, and representatives from politics and the professional public. 2) Steering function: gain better understanding of this highly topical issue that will shape international cooperation in the coming decades.

Evaluation questions

Key evaluation question: **"How successfully have the ECR projects established and strengthened the long-term involvement of children and youth in environmental decision-making structures and protection measures for the environment and biodiversity in the project regions?"**

Further core questions have been defined for each OECD-DAC criterion:

- **Sustainability**: 1) Did the projects each help to raise local, national, and global awareness of ECR and integrate it into government action? 2) How can tdh and partner organizations implement a global ECR program instead of individual projects on this topic in the long term?
- **Impact**: Have the projects successfully contributed to children and youth claiming their environmental rights?
- **Efficiency**: How efficient was the use of resources (time, financial and human resources) in the ECR projects and (how) could efficiency have been increased?
- **Effectiveness**: Which project measures contributed significantly to strengthening children's and youth's rights and biodiversity protection? Which were less successful and why?
- **Coherence**: What were the advantages and disadvantages of the decentralized global tdh working structure regarding the implementation of the ECR project?
- **Relevance**: How relevant were the BMZ co-financed ECR projects for strengthening children's and youth rights and for biodiversity protection?

Evaluation methodology

A mixed-methods approach to data collection and analysis is expected, paying special attention to participatory and child-oriented methods. Data collection must be adapted to target groups and local conditions. A joint inception workshop will serve to finalize the timeline and methodology and will be held online.

tdh suggests the following research methods:

- Observations
- Standardized surveys among project participants
- In-depth storytelling approaches and group discussions with project participants
- Storytelling approaches and/or interviews with key actors

Following the rationale of analyzing all four projects together, each country team will be represented in a multi-day, in-person analysis workshop, enabling the joint compilation of empirical findings, identifying commonalities and differences between projects and countries, and developing generalizable findings for tdh's future ECR work. This data analysis shall include a network analysis, shedding light on potential synergies and cooperations between projects and regions.

Timeline and deliverables

The following dates and deliverables are subject to discussion with the evaluation team.

What?	Who?	When?
Online coordination meeting	tdh & Lead Consultant	Before or on 22nd June 2023
Delivery inception report	Lead Consultant & Country Leads	*Before inception workshop*
Online inception workshop	tdh & evaluation team	Early to mid-July 2023
Data collection	Evaluation team	Until early September 2023
3 days in-person analysis workshop	tdh, Lead Consultant, Country Leads	Before 15th September 2023
Report writing (including 3 feedback loops)	Lead Consultant	Until 3rd November 2023
Online meeting with political decision-makers, researchers & practitioners	tdh & evaluation team	October/November 2023
Online follow-up WS for tdh	tdh & evaluation team	November 2023

When and how to apply?

We are accepting offers until **31st May 2023**, midnight CET. Shortlisted teams will be contacted by 3rd June 2023.

Please express your interest by filling in a brief questionnaire following this link **and** sending the following attachments to Dr. Ann-Christin Hayk (she/her) at a.hayk@tdh.de (Subject line: "Expression of interest: Ex-Post-Evaluation ECR"):

- A CV for each team member (no longer than 3 pages per team member, highlighting relevant experiences in the following fields: child rights, climate change adaptation, biodiversity conservation, participatory research, collaboration with international NGOs)
- A brief description of the methodology you are suggesting for empirical data collection for the ex-post-evaluation (no longer than 1 page)
- The timeline you are suggesting for empirical data collection and analysis for the ex-post-evaluation, which should not exceed 1 page and is ideally visualized in a figure or table
- A detailed financial proposal for your engagement in the ex-post-evaluation, which should not exceed 1 page and is ideally visualized in a table. N. B. travel expenses will be reimbursed upon presentation of proof only.

Detailed information about the projects, the full list of research questions, and any further information will be provided upon request. Please contact Dr. Ann-Christin Hayk (she/her) at a.hayk@tdh.