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CASE STUDY: ADDRESSING HUMAN-ELEPHANT CONFLICT IN THAILAND

Growing and selling the right forest crops to reduce human-elephant conflict.

Lead organisation (sponsors) and partner:
Zoological Society of London (ZSL) and EcoExist (HEVN)

Country/region: Thailand – Kanchanaburi



“We received invaluable guidance from the incubator's experts, who have brought a wealth of experience in project management and business development from the industry.”
- Reuben Clements, ZSL

Overview: This project addresses human-elephant conflict in southern Thailand while improving income and land security for smallholders. The team is developing an investable business model with local stakeholders, enabling farmers to transition from elephant-attracting cash crops (e.g. cassava, sugar cane, banana) to agroforestry systems featuring less-palatable crops (e.g. coffee, marigold, chilli). This shift reduces crop consumption by elephants, lowers input costs, enhances soil health, boosts carbon sequestration, and delivers ecosystem services like water regulation and biodiversity. ZSL aims to identify the most suitable agroforestry model and create an investment proposition to scale this approach across 2,000 hectares.

Current status: Working with local partners, ZSL have confirmed the geographical scope of the project and 30-50 farms to include in the expanded pilot phase. Both the

financial model and legal structure have been developed, capturing not only farm level income and cost estimates, but processing and marketing functions via a co-operative.

Successes or innovative features:

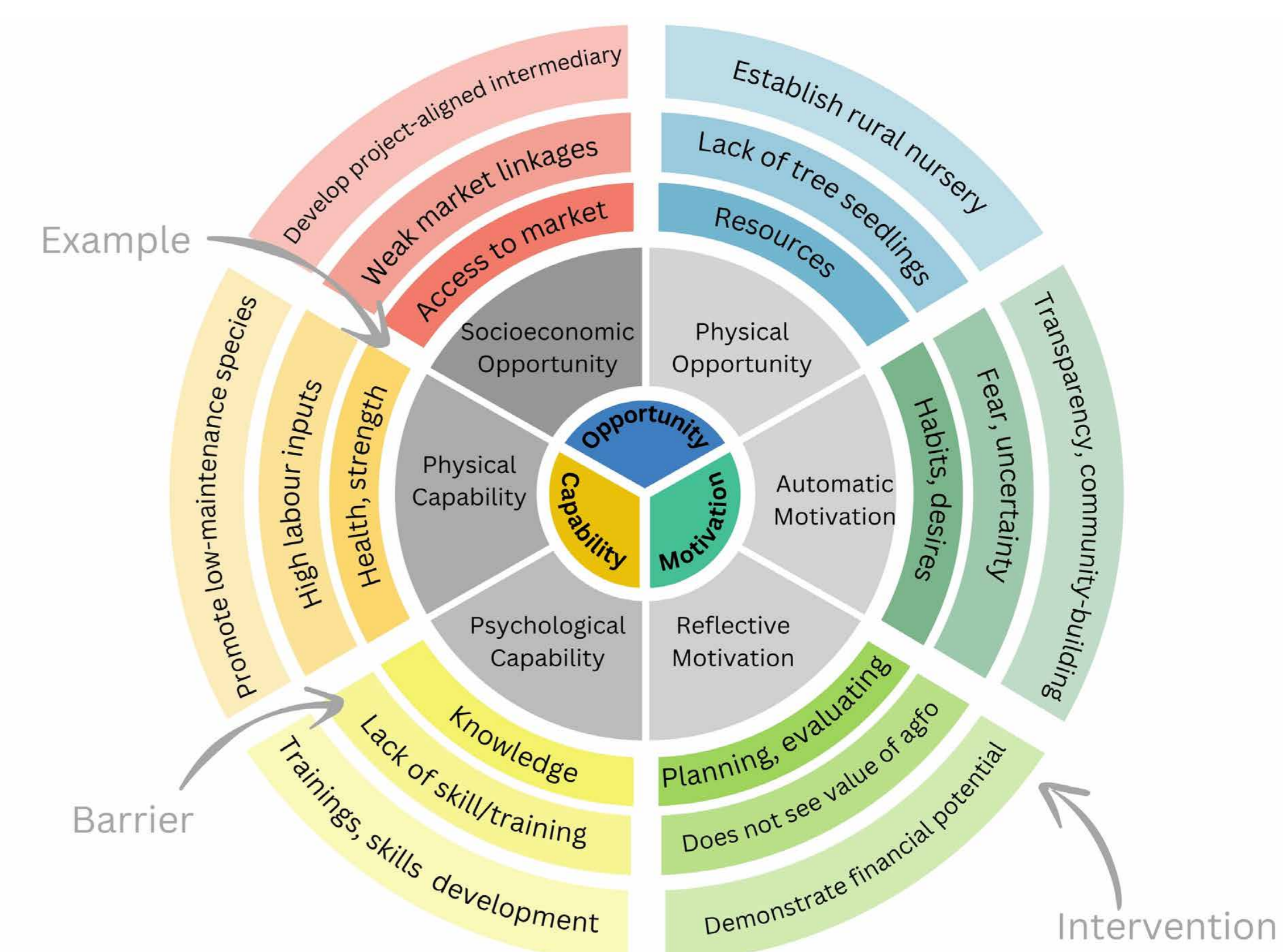
- **Use of farmer co-operative structure to align farm-level agroforestry with processing and marketing**, providing equitable routes to market
- **Importance of strong connections with local partners** to secure buy-in and engagement to the project by local farms
- **Focus on high-integrity NbS** that offers triple benefits through carbon sequestration, improving community livelihoods and protecting endangered species
- **Enablement of additional funding:** the foundations established during the Accelerator support phase helped secure funding for its next phase through UK PACT

Impact Measurement: Success will be measured by:

- Net reductions in human-elephant conflict incidents and damage
- Changes to the incomes of participating smallholder farmers
- Job creation in processing, input supplies, and marketing
- Enhanced land security for smallholder farmers through improved lease arrangements
- Increased carbon sequestration
- Improved access to financing for biodiversity conservation and restoration

Scalability and replication potential: ZSL aim to develop demonstration farms in three agroclimatic zones, then recruit more farmers and scale up to other farms facing similar challenges. A local agroforestry specialist has been hired to develop demonstration farms, oversee training, help to establish a cooperative, and ensure community engagement and technical expertise.

Barriers and targeted interventions:



FACTSHEET

