Project Update: June 2017

1.   Monitoring prey base for snow leopard:
We used direct count method from different appropriate vantage points (fixed point count) to determine the population status of blue sheep (*Pseudois nayur*). We also counted the blue sheep in minimum of five transects (each transect about 1 km) in each grids of 5 x 5 km.

Photo 2: Blue sheep in the Pasture of Upper Mustang

2.   Snow leopard sign survey:
In November 2016, we visited the seven Village Development Committees in upper Mustang and met with local people and herders. Then, we prepared a participatory map for quantifying the distribution of the snow leopard. We divided upper Mustang into grids with a cell size of 5 x 5 km and based on the survey with local people and herders, we first visited grids that contained the most probable snow leopard habitat, including riverbeds, ridges, and gullies in minimum of five transects in each grid, each transects of 1 km to search for snow leopard sign on horseback as well as by foot. For remote and inaccessible areas, we used information from local people to determine snow leopard presence or absence.

Photo 3: Sign of Snow leopard

3. Herder level mini workshop:

We organised a herder level mini workshop in Marang village of Charang VDC and another in in Nomads camp of Chonnup VDC. Problems faced by herders from snow leopard and the need of conservation of snow leopard were discussed. This workshop was mainly focused on raising awareness of snow leopard conservation especially at herder level, as herders are the one who are directly affected by snow leopard.

Photo 4: Herder level mini-workshop at Marang Village of Charang Vdc

4. Livestock depredation data

We also conducted a questionnaire survey, semi-structured interviews and a group discussion with local herders and pastoral communities to identify the extent and nature of livestock losses due to snow leopard and their perception towards snow leopard conservation in Samar, Chaile, Tetang, Chusang and Tangbe village of Chusang Vdc.

Photo 5: Livestock depredation and perception survey with Herder at Pasture