

## Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Evidence: Final Report

To be completed with reference to the “Project Reporting Information Note”:  
(<https://iwt.challengefund.org.uk/resources/information-notes/>).

It is expected that this report will be a **maximum of 20 pages** in length, excluding annexes.

**Submission Deadline: no later than 3 months after agreed end date.**

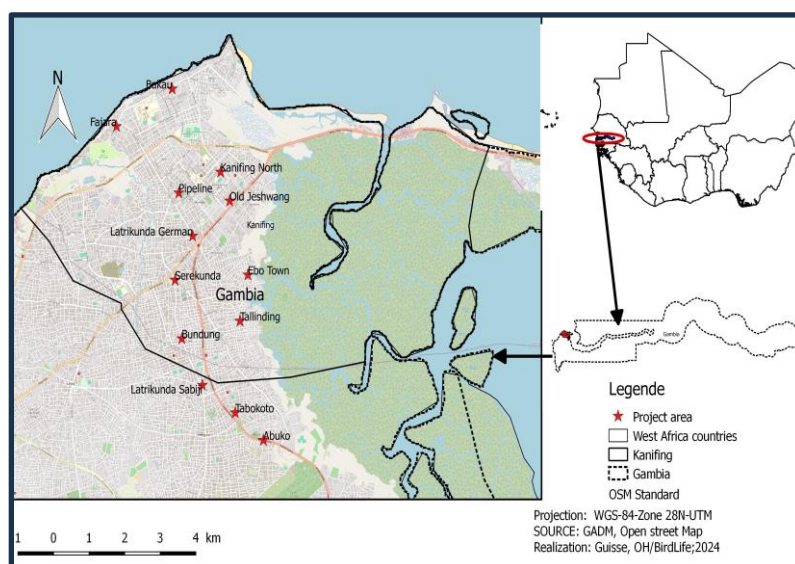
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### IWT Challenge Fund Project Information

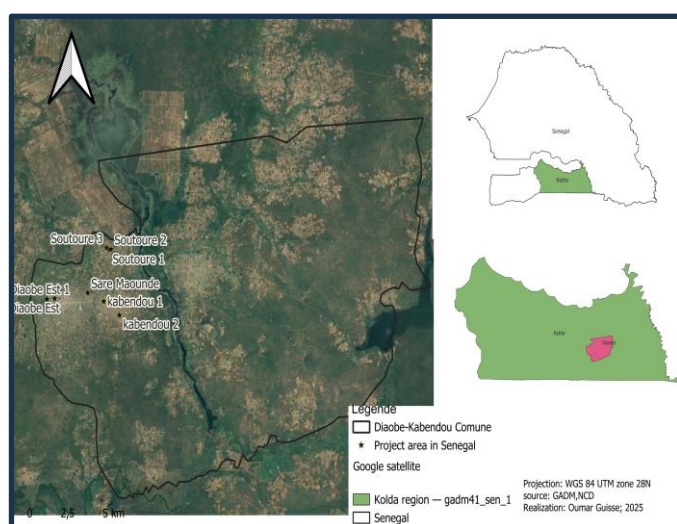
Project reference	IWTEV010
Project title	Behaviour change approaches to address belief-based use of vultures
Country(ies)	The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, and Senegal
Lead Organisation	BirdLife International
Project partner(s)	West Africa Birds Study Association (WABSA), Association Nature-Communautés-Développement (NCD), and Organization for the Defense and Development of Wetlands (ODZH)
IWTCF grant value	£100,000
Start/end dates of project	June 2023 to March 2025
Project Leader's name	Fadzai Matsvimbo
Project website/blog/social media	<a href="http://www.birdlife.org/africa/">www.birdlife.org/africa/</a>
Report author(s) and date	Fadzai Matsvimbo, Oumar Guisse, Francisco Wambar, Basse Diallo, Amadou John

### 1. Project summary

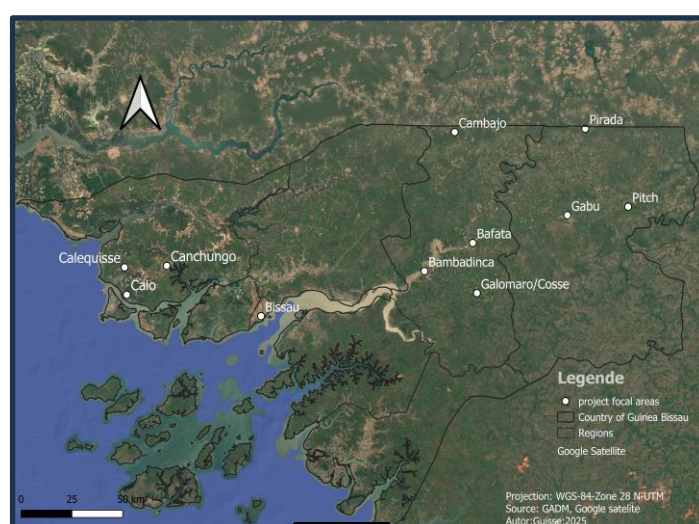
Hooded Vultures are globally Critically Endangered. The leading cause for their decline in West Africa is illegal trade for belief-based use. This project aimed to reduce demand from traditional healers (suppliers) and consumers (customers) by building the evidence base on the drivers and influencers behind this market and applied it to pilot social marketing campaigns in Senegal, The Gambia and Guinea Bissau, through instilling national pride in vultures and engaging traditional healers in identifying plant-based alternatives. The demand for vulture parts is fuelled by traditional healers who respond to demand from their customers. These groups of people are key stakeholders in reducing demand for the vulture parts. Lessons learned will inform national and regional scale-up. The problem of harvesting vulture parts for belief-based use was identified in various documents including the CMS Multispecies Vulture Action (**Annex 62**). The same problem was raised in the West Africa Vulture Conservation Action Plan (WAVCAP) 2023-2043 (**Annex 63**). Multiple stakeholders were represented in the drafting of the plan including traditional healers, conservation organisations and government officers. Traditional medicine is an important aspect of the lives of many African communities. The project sought to understand the extent, stakeholders and drivers of the trade and find alternatives to the use of vulture parts. The project also aimed to explore potential livelihood interventions for traditional healers and individuals engaged in the trade of vulture parts



1a



1b



1c

**Figure 1: Project focal areas: 1a The Gambia, 1b Senegal, 1c Guinea Bissau**

## 2. Project Partnerships

The project was implemented by BirdLife International in partnership with the West Africa Birds Study Association (WABSA), Organization for the Defense and Development of Wetlands (ODZH) and Nature-Communautés-Development (NCD). NCD is BirdLife's partner (formal partnership agreement) in Senegal, while WABSA and ODZH collaborate with BirdLife in Gambia and Guinea-Bissau, respectively. All three partners were involved in the project development, with initial motivation arising from, alongside follow-up planning and investigations conducted as part of an IUCN SOS Rapid Action Grant (2021-2022) following serious poisoning incidents linked to belief-based use and the massacre of over 2,000 hooded vultures in Guinea Bissau in 2019. At the start of the project, BirdLife presented the key things that the project aimed at achieving and an overview of the project and its key deliverables (**Annex 90**). Contracts with the project partners put in place indicating the resources for each partner and their obligations. The three institutions (WABSA, ODZH, NCD) played a key role in implementing the project in their respective countries. In The Gambia, WABSA collaborated with traditional healers' association (TAHARASS), Department Parks & Wildlife Management (DPWM), Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) focal point, community leaders, and youth leaders. In Guinea-Bissau, ODZH collaborated with Forestry Officers, Livestock and Veterinary Affairs agents, the CITES and the Convention on Migratory species (CMS) focal points, as well as Promotion of Traditional Medicines Organisation (PROMETRA), an international organization dedicated to the preservation and restoration of African traditional medicine and indigenous science headquartered in Senegal. In Senegal, NCD worked with the Diaobé-Kabendou Municipality, notably with the First Deputy Mayoress, women's groups, traditional healers, butchers, and the local CITES focal point (**Annex 4**,

**5, 12, 21, 28).** The municipal authority facilitated collaboration between NCD and other actors, such as women's groups and other organizations. Associations of traditional healers were responsible for facilitating dialogue with practitioners of traditional medicine, raising awareness about the importance of species conservation, and encouraging the adoption of plant-based alternatives to replace use of vulture parts (**Annex 26**). The CITES focal point was involved in monitoring the illegal trade of endangered species, including vultures. In the case of ODZH, they also provided technical and legal support to align the project with Guinea-Bissau's international commitments (**Annex 88**)

WABSA, ODZH and NCD submitted activity reports that contribute to the body of evidence of the progress of the project. In addition, they have been available to give more information/ clarity when needed. NCD provided their reports in French and ODZH in Portuguese. Time was needed to translate these reports, and the details have been included in the final template. The contribution did not come through at the end of project report only. After each activity related to the project, whether surveys, workshops, or social marketing activities, partners wrote reports that they shared with the BirdLife team (**Annex 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 21, 22, 24, 30, 32, 33**). These reports were reviewed to ensure effective monitoring. Regular meetings were held with partners to discuss progress on project activities, provide guidance, and make necessary corrections to report elements (**Annex 2,39**). This continuous exchange fostered better coordination, mentorship, and a more efficient implementation of the different phases of the project. These reports played a crucial role in gathering the information needed for the final report, ensuring a comprehensive analysis and an accurate representation of the project's results and impacts.

As part of its role as the lead organisation, BirdLife provided guidance to partners in various ways including support with organising their financial data and collecting appropriate evidence. In addition, BirdLife International supported the training of project staff in the three countries to enhance their ability to design social marketing strategies and launch them. A consultant specialising in behaviour change was hired to assist project partners in developing social marketing strategies. BirdLife facilitated working sessions between the consultant and local teams and supported the implementation of practical activities in the form of "missions" linked to the training (**Annex 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78**). This approach enabled partners to better understand the principles of social marketing and tailor them to field realities. In turn, the partners led project implementation in their respective countries.

The project strengthened institutional collaborations between the environmental, health, and cultural sectors, fostering the engagement of traditional medicine practitioners, who gradually showed willingness to use medicinal plants as alternatives to vulture use. However, behaviour change requires time, and a deeper understanding of the drivers and the most effective approaches for each target audience will require further testing – building on what we have learned from this (and similar) projects. Due to the timing of their implementation toward the conclusion of the project, we were unable to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the social marketing campaigns' impact. One of the challenges encountered was the initial resistance from some healers, which was gradually overcome through trust-building efforts and continuous discussions (**Annex 22, 29, 30**). In Guinea-Bissau, the project faced logistical limitations in remote rural areas, making access and implementation more difficult. Partners faced difficulties in adhering to the required procedures, such as delays in submitting reports and a lack of understanding or compliance with project guidelines, requiring extra supervision and coordination adjustments. BirdLife employed a project intern, Oumar Guisse, later becoming an officer, whose full-time job was to support the three project partners in implementation.

Different languages used by different partners (French, Portuguese, and English) meant that documents, meetings, etc. had to be translated largely from English. The cost of translation wasn't included in the project, but BirdLife used internal resources and online translation tools to make sure partners got training materials or any other documents in a language they could understand. This language barrier was lowered after Oumar joined BirdLife, as he was able to communicate with them in French, Wolof (local language in parts of The Gambia and Senegal), and English.

Through this project, an association of traditional healers was set up in Diaobe, Senegal following a workshop organised by NCD in the area (**Annex 21, 26**). The traditional healers did not have an association that registers and oversees their activities. NCD encouraged them to have this structure in places as it would help to legitimize their practice and make it easier to engage with them.

This project has enabled the project partner in Senegal, NCD, to start developing a vulture action plan (**Annex 67, 68, 69**) and other countries (Gambia and Guinea-Bissau) to explore the development of national plans for the conservation of vultures in their countries

The partnerships created during the project will continue beyond the existence of the project. BirdLife remains committed to collaborating with the project partners. As an official BirdLife partner, NCD will continue to play a pivotal role in the successful implementation of BirdLife's programs in West Africa. Continuity with ODZH, which is involved in other BirdLife projects, is assured. BirdLife intends to continue its collaboration with WABSA on vultures in the Gambia as the country is an important place for vultures, particularly Hooded vultures. In September 2025, ODZH and NCD participated in the BirdLife Council of Africa Partnership meeting in Senegal, which convened 100 participants from 35 countries to review BirdLife's strategy and governance (**Annex 64, 91**). There are plans to continue social marketing in the three countries and to create cross-border links. The strengthening of social

marketing is planned as part of the implementation of the West Africa Vulture Conservation Action Plan should resources be available.

In Guinea Bissau, technical experts consulted were phytotherapy scientists, and anthropologists, especially in the development of alternatives based on medicinal plants. Local communities were engaged through community meetings, participatory workshops and mobilization of traditional and religious leaders (**Annex 1**).

After observing 120 vultures poisoned at the abattoir in July 2024, NCD worked with the Diaobé municipal authorities to set up a monitoring scheme at the slaughterhouse, deploy one of the municipality employees to monitor the area to prevent the poisoning of vultures (**Annex 21**).

WABSA collaborated with the Department of Parks and Wildlife Management (DPWM) during a community dialogue organised as part of the social marketing campaign. The DPWM representative gave a presentation on vultures, highlighting their role as indicators of biodiversity health and their ecological importance. He discussed the threats they face, such as poisoning, habitat loss and illegal trade, and described the main conservation efforts, including legal protection, habitat restoration, community involvement, public awareness and collaboration with experts for research and monitoring (**Annex 27**).

Contact with the British Embassy in Dakar which oversees activities in Senegal and Guinea Bissau was established in August 2024 and information on this project and another Darwin Capacity and Capability project led by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), BirdLife Partner for the UK, and NCD, implemented in Senegal was shared.

3. Project Achievements

Output 1

**Indicator 1.1** By the second quarter of Year 2, the knowledge, attitudes, and practices, along with socio-demographic information, were assessed across target communities in The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, and Senegal. In total, 2,427 people were reached through quantitative surveys and focus group discussions conducted by WABSA, ODZH, and NCD, significantly exceeding the initial target of 350 participants. In The Gambia, 2,179 individuals from 13 communities were surveyed using questionnaires. In Guinea-Bissau, four focus groups brought together 25 participants, including 20 traditional healers and representatives from PROMETRA, while 39 traditional healers (31 men and 8 women) were also surveyed across four districts and in Canchungo. In Senegal, eight focus groups were held with 101 women from local women’s groups, complemented by a quantitative survey of 108 women from six neighbourhoods in the commune of Diaobé. Key informant interviews were also conducted with local authorities, CITES representatives, healers, and market actors.

Across the countries, awareness of vultures and their ecological role is relatively high. In The Gambia, all respondents reported knowing what vultures are, with 80% believing that vulture populations have declined over the past decade and 20% thinking they have increased. In Senegal, all participants recognized the scavenging role of vultures as beneficial. In Guinea-Bissau, 95% of traditional healers surveyed acknowledged that vulture parts are used in traditional medicine, although they personally did not engage in this practice.

Perceptions regarding the ecological importance of vultures and the risks associated with their use in healing varied. In The Gambia, 60% of respondents understood the vital role vultures play in maintaining healthy ecosystems. In Guinea-Bissau, 81% were aware of the environmental impact of vulture part use. While similar questions were not asked in Senegal, all women surveyed affirmed the usefulness of vultures in waste removal.

Awareness of the use of vultures in traditional medicine was notable across countries. In The Gambia, 70% of respondents reported that vulture parts are used in healing practices. In Guinea-Bissau, 95% confirmed knowledge of this, even if they did not personally engage in it. Common reasons cited for their use included the pursuit of power, spiritual protection, healing, and good luck.

Knowledge and acceptance of alternative practices were also assessed. In Guinea-Bissau, 76% of respondents were aware of alternatives to vulture-based medicine, such as plant-based remedies and Koranic prayer. In Senegal, 88% of respondents viewed medicinal plants as beneficial, and 76% expressed willingness to consult healers using plants; 69% said they personally knew healers who worked with plants, though 29% did not, and 2% were unsure.

Finally, practices around consultation with healers showed that in Senegal, 45% of respondents had consulted a traditional healer in the past six months for health-related issues, while 52% had not (**Annex 3, 4, 5, 13**).

Table 1: Summary on Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices & Demographics by Country

Topic / Question	The Gambia	Guinea-Bissau	Senegal
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<b>Total Respondents (Gender-disaggregated)</b>	<b>2,179</b> (Gender not disaggregated)	<b>39</b> (31 men, 8 women) + 25 FGDs	<b>108</b> (all women) + 101 FGDs (all women)
<b># of Communities Reached</b>	13	4 districts + Canchungo	1 commune (Diaobé), 6 neighbourhoods
<b>Knowledge of vultures</b>	100% know what vultures are	95% know vultures are used in healing	100% know vultures
<b>Perceived vulture population trend</b>	80% say decreasing; 20% increasing	N/A	N/A
<b>Awareness of vultures' ecosystem role</b>	60% aware of importance	81% aware of environmental impact	100% know vultures clean up dead animals and see vultures' role as beneficial
<b>Knowledge of vulture part use in traditional healing</b>	70% aware	95% aware, but report not using them	N/A
<b>Main reasons for vulture part use (if applicable)</b>	Power, spiritual protection, health, luck	Power, spiritual protection, health, luck	N/A
<b>Awareness of alternatives (plants, prayers)</b>	N/A	76% aware of alternatives	69% know healers who use plants
<b>Consulted a traditional healer in last 6 months</b>	N/A	N/A	45% yes; 52% no
<b>Perception of plant-based healing as beneficial</b>	N/A	N/A	88% yes; 7% no
<b>Willingness to consult healers using plant-based practices</b>	N/A	N/A	76% yes; 24% no
<b>Know any healers who use plants for medicinal/spiritual purposes</b>	N/A	N/A	69% yes; 29% no; 2% don't know
<b>Stakeholder meetings (CITES, officials, healers, etc.)</b>	Yes	Yes (PROMETRA)	Yes (Mayor, CITES, healers, traders)

**Indicator 1.2** A behaviour change consultant was hired to take the partners through training in designing social marketing campaigns. The training covered different elements including Introduction to Social Marketing, Stakeholder Mapping and Research for Social Marketing. The first training took place in July and August 2023. Twenty-eight (28) people from BirdLife International, ODZH, WABSA, NCD and Biosfera, (a BirdLife Partner in Cabo Verde also supported by a Darwin Main Grants project with a behaviour change component), were trained, over 21 hours of training covering the introduction to social marketing through to target audience segmentation amongst others (**Annex 71**). The training was conducted virtually with simultaneous translation into French and Portuguese and the partners completed assignments given to them as part of the training. Further follow-up was done individually, with partners getting one-on-one support. Messages for the social marketing were designed based on the information from the focus groups and one-on-one interviews. Consultant managed to take the partners as far as the quantitative survey, post that the partners received support from the Preventing Extinctions Programme Coordinator and Assistant Ahead of starting the campaigns, each partner developed basic social marketing strategy (**Annex 6,7,8**): The title of the campaign in Gambia was *Why Vultures' Life Matter*, in Guinea-Bissau *Behavioural change among traditional healers* and in Senegal *Let's protect vultures*. In the Gambia, the messaging reached 954 people, in Guinea Bissau the messaging reached 709 people, whilst in Senegal the messaging reached 1774 people. (**Annex 23, 25, 34, 22,24,26,27,28,29,30,32**)



Across the three countries, the keys messages were mainly as follows:

**Vultures are critical in the ecosystem:** Vultures prevent the spread of disease by feeding on carcasses.

**Vultures are essential to public health:** They dispose of carcasses and prevent the spread of disease.

**Community leadership is essential:** Change must be led by the community

**Plants can be an alternative to vulture parts.** This message is aimed at healers to make them aware of the existence of plant-based remedies.

**Protecting our vultures is not at odds with preserving our culture:** Use natural, ethical alternatives that respect traditional knowledge.

**Indicator 1.3** The project explored how poverty reduction and livelihood interventions could promote desired behaviour change by piloting small-scale livelihood support initiatives to foster community engagement and by encouraging the use of plant-based alternatives to wildlife products. Guinea fowl farming was introduced as an alternative livelihood in Gambia in two villages (Dobo and Sare Banno) following a workshop conducted in January 2024. The village was chosen as it was well known that individuals who trade in vulture parts came from this area. A total of 60 guineafowl were distributed to 60 people (30 from each village). A total 25 people participated in the guineafowl distribution activity (**Annex 81**). A committee consisting of 10 women, 3 hunters, 2 traditional healers, 5 village authority representatives, 5 female youth and 5 male youths was established to oversee guineafowl farming. WABSA carried out a follow-up visit to Dobo and Sare Banno in June 2024 to monitor the project. The results were positive; the guineafowl has adapted to the environment and continues to increase. By the end of the project, the number of guinea fowl at Dobo increased from 30 to 294, and at Sare Banno from 30 to 308. No guinea fowl were sold as the plan was to increase numbers, before, they started selling. WABSA will continue to support the project by providing training for beneficiaries in marketing and accounting, as well as other business-related training (**Annex 9, 81, personal communication WABSA staff**). In Guinea-Bissau, ODZH worked together with traditional healers to produce a plant-based healing manual. Once completed this manual will be sold at a nominal price, exclusively to the healers, and the proceeds will go to the healers' association. The process started and is in progress. The goal is to reinforce the association's actions in promoting positive changes in behaviour (**Annex 1**). ODZH held discussions with some traditional healers about alternative livelihoods. This approach has been integrated into the work of raising awareness and valuing traditional knowledge, with a focus on options such as the cultivation of medicinal plants, the local production of natural potions, or participation in community activities with social and economic returns.

**Indicator 1.4** WABSA conducted a national vulture survey, recording 5761 Hooded Vultures and 14 White-backed Vultures (also Critically Endangered). The surveys were conducted through road counts covering 1070 km and point counts at 17 abattoirs in 2023 (**Annex 59**). In Senegal, over 3,000 individuals were recorded in the southwest of the country, which is the focal area of this project. These data, collected through the IUCN SOS Vultures project in 2021, are being used as the baseline for this project. In Senegal, regular monitoring was carried out at the Diaobé slaughterhouse, where vultures gather in large numbers to forage on animal remains. During a monitoring session in July 2024, 120 dead vultures were found on the site. The removal of their heads indicates that they were killed for belief-based use (**Annex 4**). NCD engaged the Municipality of Diaobe on the importance of vultures who then recruited a member of staff to secure the area and monitor an illegal activities or potential poisoning. The engagement of the staff was very successful as no cases of dead vultures were recorded after this intervention (**Annex 4, 21**). Guinea Bissau, which had experienced one of the biggest poisonings of vultures in 2019, however, only recorded poisoning of 18 vultures at Pitch in the eastern part of the country during the project period. This was reported in January 2025, just before the start of social marketing activities. This appeared to have been motivated by harvesting for belief-based use. This led ODZH to carry out social marketing activities in collaboration with the traditional healers in this area (**Annex 15**).

**Indicator 1.5** In July and August 2023, 24 people from BirdLife, WABSA, ODZH and NCD and 4 people from Biosfera (BirdLife partner in Cabo Verde) attended a training course on social marketing. Five staff members of NCD, including 2 women and 3 men, 4 members of ODZH 1 women and 3 men and 9 members of staff from WABSA including 4 men and 5 women, took part in the social marketing training course, carried out the project activities, from the surveys to the social marketing campaign. This helped them to understand the theory and its practical application (**Annex 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 84, 85, 21, 27, 22, 28**)

## Output 2

**Indicator 2.1** In the Gambia, the majority of respondents (80%) were of the view that the decline in the vulture population was mainly due to harvesting vultures for traditional beliefs. Other factors mentioned included deforestation of their habitat (10%), lack of community awareness (5%), lack of law enforcement (3%) and other miscellaneous causes (1%). In Guinea-Bissau, during the quantitative survey, 81% of the 36 people interviewed were aware of the environmental impact of the use of vulture parts said while (19%) were not. With regards to the long-term sustainability of the use of vulture parts, 61% of respondents were of the opinion felt that this practice was not

sustainable, as it could lead to the extinction of the species. On the other hand, 33% (n=11) thought it was sustainable, as the vultures would continue to reproduce. Finally, 6% (n=2) said they did not know (**Annex 5, 13**).

**Indicator 2.2** In Senegal, the majority (61%) of the 108 people interviewed in the quantitative surveys said they had consulted traditional healers. Regarding willingness to consult healers who use plants in their practice, most respondents (74%) said they were willing to consult healers who use plants in their practice, while 24% said they were not. The majority of respondents (51%) agreed that the use of vulture organs in traditional medicine is not beneficial. According to a quantitative survey, 88% of the 108 people interviewed believe that plants have beneficial effects on health, compared with just 7% who think the opposite. 88% of respondents believe that plants (in a traditional healing context) are beneficial to health (**Annex 3**).

Although no evaluation of the social marketing campaigns was carried out at the end of the project, it is important to note that the social marketing campaign reached a large and diverse audience 3437, including traditional healers, women's and men's associations, water and forestry officers, students, butchers and local leaders. All these groups understood the importance of protecting vultures (**Annex 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32**).

There is evidence of positive shifts in attitudes toward traditional healers who do not use vulture parts, though the specific 60% increase target (n=70) cannot be confirmed due to the absence of baseline data. In Senegal, 74% of the 108 survey respondents said they were willing to consult healers using plant-based remedies, and 88% believed these remedies are beneficial; 51% rejected the usefulness of vulture parts in medicine. In Guinea-Bissau, 76% of surveyed traditional healers were aware of sustainable alternatives such as plant use and Koranic prayer, and 95% acknowledged that vulture parts are used in healing, though they reported not using them themselves—suggesting a potential shift in norms. In The Gambia, while attitudes toward healers using alternatives were not directly measured, 60% of respondents recognized the ecological importance of vultures, and 70% were aware of their use in traditional medicine. These results indicate substantial progress toward building support for non-vulture-based healing practices, even if the exact target increase in positive attitudes cannot be quantitatively verified.

**Indicator 2.3** The target was exceeded. Across all three countries, a total of 279 traditional healers were involved in the various project activities. The majority of them support the idea of using plants as an alternative to hunting vultures. For example, In Gambia 35 traditional healers (30 men and 5 women) were engaged in awareness raising on the problems of using vulture parts in traditional healing practices and on vulture conservation in Kanifing Municipal Council (**Annex 34**). At the training workshop for healers in Gambia on alternatives to vulture parts held in April 2024, 20 plant-based products were listed as potential alternatives to vulture parts (**Annex 12**). In Guinea-Bissau, 216 traditional healers were engaged including 148 in the East Zone, 48 in the North Zone, and 20 in Bissau. Of these traditional healers, 46 were women (**Annex 25**). These healers gave examples of plants that could be used as alternatives. They are working together with OZDH to produce a manual on plant-based alternatives (**Annex: 1**). In Senegal, 28 traditional healers (20 men and 8 women) were engaged in the project. During the campaign and following a Knowledge-Sharing workshop on the use of plants as an alternative to vulture parts in Diaobé in November 2024, an association of traditional healers was created. At this workshop, the healers talked about the effectiveness of plant parts in traditional medicine and the importance of using them as alternatives to vulture parts.

The president of the Diaobé traditional healers spoke of the effectiveness of various plant parts in traditional medicine. He cited the roots, leaves, bark, fruit and flowers of trees, which can be used to treat a wide range of problems. The representative of the women traditional practitioners announced the existence of 1,533 trees used in traditional and cultural pharmacopoeia, the most important of which are:- the Kapok tree (*Ceiba pentandra*), 'the king of trees.

- Tabahi (*Cola cordifolia*), 'the village chief of trees.
- African Mahogany (*Khaya senegalensis*), 'the doctor of trees.
- The dwarf tree (*Parkia biglobosa*);
- The Apple of Sodom tree (*Calotropis procera*). (**Annex 26**):

### Output 3

**Indicator 3.1** The project progress was presented at the BirdLife Council of African Partnership in Senegal, September 2024, with contributions from Senegal and Guinea-Bissau (**Annex 65, 86, 87**).

On World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD), organised 2024 by various organisations in Guinea Bissau in October, ODZH took the opportunity to raise awareness among the participants of the importance of vultures. The conference was held at the Pedra Hermano Battisti school, close to the Bandim market, which the major market for animal parts sold for traditional medicinal in Bissau. Participants included the Director-General of Forests and Fauna (DGFF), the Judicial Police (PJ), the Ministry of the Environment, Biodiversity and Climate Action (MABAC), the Association of Traditional Healers (PROMETRA), the Nature and Environment Protection Brigade, the Institute of Biodiversity and Protected Areas (IBAP), the Coastal Planning Office (GPC) and ODZH. A radio debate on vultures was broadcast on Pindjiguite on 12 October 2024 (**Annex 88**).

Ramatoulaye Diallo, the NCD's head of conservation and one of the project leaders in Senegal, presented the project to a variety of conservation organisation representatives, including academics, teachers, students, national park

representatives, Wetland International representatives, and Centre for Ecological Monitoring (CSE) representatives. This was at the inception workshop of the national working group for the development of a national action plan for vulture conservation in Senegal (**Annex 89**).

By using social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, the partners were able to expand their reach far beyond local borders. This allowed them to connect with an international audience, raise awareness among different communities, and enhance the project's visibility on a global scale. This digital approach maximized the impact of initiatives by promoting broader engagement and ensuring the effective dissemination of key messages.

**Table 2.** Links to some of the social marketing campaign messages .

Organisation	Social media channel	Description	Links
NCD	Youtube	19 <b>March 2025/ Diaobé TV</b> aired a program on <b>vulture awareness</b>	
NCD	Youtube	1 <sup>st</sup> <b>April 2025/Diaobé TV's</b> broadcast on the <b>vulture awareness caravan</b> ,	
BirdLife International	Facebook	24 <sup>th</sup> <b>April 2024/ Launch of the Action Plan to save vultures in West Africa.</b>	
WABSA	Facebook	28 <sup>th</sup> <b>February 2025/ Vulture awareness campaign</b> in The Gambia	
ODZH	Facebook	24 <sup>TH</sup> <b>March 2025/ vulture awareness workshop in Pitché (Gabu region),</b>	
ODZH	Facebook	14 <sup>TH</sup> <b>March 2025/ ODZH awareness mission for vulture protection in Cacheu.</b>	
BirdLife International	Facebook	19 <sup>TH</sup> <b>January 2025,/ 18 Hooded Vultures found dead in Gabu, Guinea-Bissau, beheaded for belief-based practices.</b>	

**Indicator 3.2** The three partners collaborated with various government institutions that are engaged in vulture conservation particularly CITES and CMS focal points. In Gambia, WABSA conducted the awareness raising activities together with Department of Wildlife Management, interacted with communities to understand the knowledge they have on vultures and how to deal with threats (**Annex 24, 25**). In Guinea-Bissau, ODZH collaborated with five affiliated sectoral healer associations affiliated with PROMETRA and various local government structures (Veterinary, Nature and Environment Protection Brigade, Forest Guard, Public Order Police, Border Guard, Fiscal Action Brigade, General Directorate of Trade Inspection, Judicial Police, religious leaders, chiefs, etc.) Gambia and Guinea-Bissau were largely limited by resources to move forward with development of national strategies. In Senegal, NCD engaged the CITES and CMS focal persons, updating them on project progress. By the end of the project, the process of developing a vulture action plan for Senegal had begun (**Annex 67, 68, 69**). BirdLife represented by Oumar Guisse made a presentation on 25 March 2025 on the West Africa Vulture Conservation Action Plan, which is based on the CMS Vulture Multi-species Action Plan (**Annex 70**).

The project partners based in Senegal (NCD) and Gambia (WABSA) responded to the questionnaire which was used to collect information on the mid-term review of the CMS Vulture MsAP based on the work they have been doing, particularly Objective 4.

Ethiopia	Sciences, University of Eswatini) Mihret Ewnetu (Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority); Evan Beuchley (Peregrine Fund)
Finland	No response received
France	Charles-henri de Barsac (Ministère Ecologie); Emmanuel Rondeau (White Fox Pictures)
Gabon	No response received
Gambia	Fagimba Camara and Iamin Jobaate (West African Bird Study Association)

**Indicator 3.3** Senegal, with leadership from NCD, started the develop a national vulture action plan with the support of a renewable energy company, Infinity Power (**Annex 67,68, 69**). Thanks to this action plan and its forthcoming implementation, vulture conservation efforts in Senegal will be maintained. The supervision of the Diaobé slaughterhouse by an agent will help to maintain the efforts made as part of this project. In Guinea-Bissau, discussions have taken place between the ODZH and the government authorities and the CITES focal point on vulture conservation and the idea of further developing a national action plan. Although an action plan was initially



undertaken in Guinea Bissau, it has been delayed due to lack of funds (**Annex 16**). To ensure the sustainability of the project, ODZH in collaboration with PROMETRA are developing a manual on alternative medicinal plants. The aim of the manual is to strengthen the skills of traditional healers, promote the sustainable use of plants and reduce dependence on vulture parts. It will also serve as a reference for research, advocacy and public policy on traditional medicine (**Annex 1**). In The Gambia, efforts to introduce alternative livelihoods, such as the distribution of guinea fowl to the population, are yielding promising results. The number of guinea fowl has increased from 60 to 602, demonstrating rapid and encouraging progress (**Annex 9, 81**). This initiative appears to be effective, offering beneficiaries a sustainable source of income and reducing their dependence on the trade in vulture parts. This type of action could serve as a model for other countries and inspire future conservation and community development projects. In addition, the social marketing campaign has reached a wide and diverse audience, enabling people to learn about the role of vultures and the impact of their disappearance on human health and the environment. This project has helped to raise public awareness by providing lasting knowledge that will help to preserve vulture populations in the three countries for future generations.

**Indicator 3.3** BirdLife International, Preventing Extinctions Coordinator and Senior and Vulture Conservation Officers for Southern and East Africa contributed to the drafting of the CMS Vulture MsAP mid-term review and shared lessons from their engagements in West Africa on belief-based use of vulture parts.



Cover of the CMS Vulture MsAP mid-term review

Fadzai Matsvimbo attended the Regional National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan in South Africa in 2024 where she had a side meeting with CITES, CMS, CBD focal points from West Africa in which she encouraged member states to implement the West Africa Vulture Conservation Action Plan (**Annex 94**).

## Outcome

### Outcome

**Indicator 0.1** The social marketing campaign successfully reached a large audience, 3437 people in the three target countries, raising awareness among different communities of the importance of vultures and the risks associated with using their body parts in traditional medicine. In Gambia, the campaign reached 13 communities in Kanifing Municipal Council. In Guinea Bissau, the campaign reached seven localities in the east of the country, three in the north and the capital, Bissau. In Senegal, it reached 8 different neighbourhoods in the commune of Diaobé. The audience included traditional practitioners (healers and traders), members of women's groups, butchers, forestry agents, livestock farmers, imams, village chiefs and more (**Annex 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 34, 47, 48, 49, 52**). They all recognised the ecological value of vultures and identified them with pride, marking a significant shift in perception towards these species.

Some quotes from people who were engaged

In The Gambia, during a community dialogue, an Ecologist from the National Environment Agency (NEA) described vultures as *"nature's frontline health workers—silently protecting us by preventing the spread of deadly diseases."* (**Annex 27**)

In Caio, Guinea-Bissau, the village chief admitted: *"I didn't know vultures were so important. I am committed to protecting them and encouraging others to do the same."* (**Annex 30**)

In Bafatá, an Ustas (Arabic teacher) emphasized: *"Vultures have co-existed with humans since the origin of life. Those who kill vultures will not find peace."* The local Imam added, *"Each participant should help spread the awareness messages."* (**Annex 22**)

At a knowledge-sharing workshop in Diaobé, Senegal, Mr. Sekou Diao, representing community, stressed that, *"Vultures play a crucial role in preventing disease. People should seek health care or use medicinal plants when ill."* (**Annex 21**)

**Indicator 0.2** A total of 279 traditional healers actively participated across three countries, 35 traditional healers, in The Gambia, 216 in Guinea-Bissau, and 28 in Senegal, (**Annex 21, 23, 25, 26, 29, 30, 32, 34**). They contributed by

giving examples of alternative plants and expressed a willingness to collaborate in creating an official list of substitutes to use of vulture parts. In Senegal, the establishment of a Traditional Healers' Association strengthened this commitment, fostering collective action for sustainable traditional medicine practices.

**Indicator 0.3** The regional vulture action plan covering 16 West African countries, which provides for intensified interventions in Senegal, Gambia and Guinea-Bissau was launched in April 2024 (**Annex 63, 97, 99**) with the support of BirdLife. Senegal has started to develop a national action plan. The first workshop of the Vulture Working Group, which was established to develop the Senegal Vulture Action plan, took place on 25 March 2025. Since then, two more workshops have been held: one to validate the working group and propose a roadmap, and another on training in open standards for conservation. (**Annex, 67, 68, 16**). NCD is leading in the development of the plan. In Guinea-Bissau, discussions have taken place between the ODZH and the government authorities and the CITES focal point on vulture conservation and the idea of developing a national action plan. Although an action plan was initially discussed in Guinea Bissau, it has been delayed due to lack of funding (**Annex 59**).

**Indicator 0.4** One poisoning event was recorded in Pitche, one of the pilot sites Guinea Bissau in which 18 vultures were killed, in Senegal a single poisoning event killed 120 vultures at an abattoir in Diaobe. In the two cases the motivation was suspected to be harvesting for belief-based use. Whilst this number may appear small; this is against background of a Critically Endangered, declining species. The impact of these two events on existing populations is unknown as vultures are long-lived species. In Guinea Bissau, ODZH conducted an awareness campaign in Pitche following that event. In Senegal post the poisoning, NCD engaged the managers of slaughterhouse and deployed someone to monitor the area. After this intervention, no poisoning event took place. With regards to maintenance of vulture populations, it was not possible, within the project timeframe, to undertake a meaningful follow up vulture survey. It is also recognised that changes in vulture population must be monitored over a longer period. However, the impacts on vultures at the project sites, as described, are positive (**Annex 4, 21**).

**Indicator 0.5** Behaviour change training was delivered to 28 people from five organisations, NCD, ODZH, WABSA and BirdLife International (**Annex 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76**). For WABSA, eight people were involved in implementing the project, for ODZH, 8 people, and for NCD, 6 people. The skill set gained by partners was not just limited to social marketing but wider project implementation and management. They have improved in documenting events and activities across the project as part of tracking progress. However, the process was challenging for partners as they found it time consuming and frustrating, producing assignments and having them reviewed and making appropriate changes. Should we do this in the future, the support for such long-term learning would be done via internal resources and persons.

### 3.3 Monitoring of assumptions

**Assumption 1:** *Traditional healers are willing to engage and share truthfully, supported by participatory discussions and triangulation with other sources.*

The assumption held true. The meetings between the partners and the traditional healers were fruitful, with the latter indicating that they were willing to work to find solutions to the use of vulture parts in traditional medicine. Some healers made recommendations for alternatives (**Annex 21, 29, 32**). In Guinea Bissau, a collaboration between traditional healers and ODZH, are in a process of developing a manual for the use of plant-based alternatives. (**Annex 1**)

**Assumption 2:** *Survey participants are representative of the target communities based on informed selection. Assumption held true.*

The social marketing training courses helped the partners to segment their target audience, produce stakeholder matrices, etc. to refine their target audience (**Annex 71 84**). The survey participants are representative of the target communities, and interviews were held in the various communities with traditional healers, women's associations, butchers and traders (**Annex 3, 4, 5, 13**).

**Assumption 3:** *There are alternatives to vulture parts that traditional healers are willing to use, supported by collaboration and based on experience.*

The assumption held true. Plant-based alternatives other non-wildlife-based methods, such as the use of Koranic verses were suggested during surveys and workshops as replacements of the use of vulture parts. In The Gambia, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau traditional healers are ready to use these solutions (**Annex 12, 21, 26, 29, 32**). During the workshop on Knowledge Sharing about the Use of Plants as an Alternative to Vulture parts in Senegal (**Annex 21**), held in November 2024, the traditional healers highlighted the existence of **1,533 trees** utilized in traditional and cultural pharmacopoeia.

**Assumption 4:** *Vultures can be viewed favourably, based on well-designed communications and experience.*

The assumption held true. This was shown by the reaction of participants in the radio programmes, the creation of an association of traditional healers in Senegal, the firm commitment of the deputy mayor of Diaobé, women's groups and the butchers' association. However, it is important to carry out a post-project evaluation to clearly identify these changes (**Annex 21, 28, 33**).

**Assumption 5:** *Traditional healers are trusted community members and likely to be key influencers, a change in their behaviour would increase the potential for change in customer attitudes towards vultures.* This remains true, as evidenced, inter alia, by the expert's workshop held in Senegal where traditional healers highlighted the existence of many plants that can be used as alternatives to vulture's parts. Same was highlighted during workshop in Gambia with traditional healers. As for Guinea Bissau their plant-based manual which is in production in collaboration between ODZH and traditional healers (**Annex 1,12, 21**)

### 3.4 Impact

#### a. Short term

*Species populations are maintained at current baselines and no further mass poisoning incidences or killing for belief-based use occur in the project focal areas.*

In Senegal, 120 vultures were found dead at the Diaobé slaughterhouse in July 2024 during routine monitoring NCD worked with the Diaobé municipal authorities to set up a monitoring framework at the slaughterhouse (**Annex 3,21**). Post the sensitisation and awareness given to the Municipal Authorities, they incorporated monitoring of the slaughterhouse into their work stream. No further poisoning took place once this arrangement was in place. In Guinea Bissau, 18 vultures were killed in Pitche in early 2025, in the Gabou region (**Annex 15**). However, since these incidents, no further cases of mortality or poisoning have been observed. No cases of poisoning were reported in Gambia.

*Evidence of poverty as a driver of trade is gathered. Livelihoods of traditional healers remain secure. Traditional healers are increasingly engaged and willing to explore options to reduce belief-based use of vultures. Safe, legal alternatives are explored, assessed, and piloted where possible.*

Stakeholder engagements and surveys helped to identify how poverty was a driver of trade although it was not a simple equation. Tradition and long-held beliefs were equally important.

Poverty is a reality for most stakeholders and illegal vulture trade likely provides a seemingly easy income although the project was not able to gather much information from those involved in killing vultures.

For healers, vulture parts trade is an income source, but that this could be replaced with legal products, with support. Also, legal risks of being associated with illegal trade, which has been gaining greater attention is likely to be a serious risk to income and liberty.

Providing sustainable livelihoods support (e.g. Guineafowl raising) was tested as a relatively low cost means to engage communities.

Guineafowl farming was introduced as an alternative livelihood in The Gambia in two villages—Dobo and Sare Banno—both known hotspots for the trade in vulture parts. A community committee was established to oversee the activity, with more than 50% of members representing women and youth (**Annex 9, 81**). By the end of the project, the number of guineafowls in each village had increased nearly tenfold, laying the foundation for a new and sustainable source of income. Rather than distributing profits individually, the communities set up a community development loan scheme: a revolving fund that allows members to borrow between GMD 2,000 and 5,000 (approximately GBP £24–£60). Borrowers repay the loans with a small interest, which feeds back into the fund—allowing the cycle of borrowing and repayment to continue and grow over time.

If profits were to be distributed outright, each member would receive around GMD 2,000 per year (GBP ~£24). While modest, this amount is meaningful for many households in the area, where annual incomes range from GMD 18,000 to 360,000 annually (GBP ~£217–£4,300). For individuals on the lower end of that spectrum, this represents more than a full month's income and an 11% increase compared to the situation before the revolving fund and guineafowl farming was introduced. Crucially, the revolving fund model creates a longer-term impact, promoting local financial inclusion, supporting small-scale enterprise, and reducing dependency on unsustainable or illegal income sources.

*Communities demonstrate national pride in vultures and continue to have access to affordable healthcare through their traditional healers.*

The awareness raising events, including the TV and radio programmes, demonstrated that engaged communities understood and appreciated the value of vultures and valued having a role in their conservation. The project also successfully engaged traditional healers in a way that respected the sector and their standing in the community, seeking to support their continued operation, without the use of unsustainable and illegal vulture parts. Also described in outcome 01.

*BirdLife is co-leading the drafting of a Regional Action Plan for the conservation of West African Vultures, building on numerous online meetings and a 3-day workshop in October 2022. Lessons learned from this project will have a direct channel for scale up by feeding into the implementation of this regional and national vulture action plans to be developed in 2023.*

The West African Vulture Conservation Action Plan (WAVCAP) was officially launched in April , 2024. It has been recognised by the CMS and Raptors MOU, making it more likely that priority actions will be implemented. In Senegal, an action plan is currently being developed, while other countries are still in discussions (**Annex 67, 68, 69**). NCD in Senegal is the initiator of the National Action Plan and the leader of this project in Senegal. Furthermore, this project has facilitated partners in Guinea-Bissau and The Gambia in initiating discussions regarding their own plans.

*Replication of the application of a social marketing approach to reducing the killing, sale and consumption of endangered and legally protected vultures will be facilitated. This will be achieved by building a solid portfolio of lessons learned, factoring in different sets of audiences, ensuring multiple tools and messaging and their impact which can be leveraged in similar contexts in other countries.*

#### **b) Long term**

*This evidence and follow up projects will contribute towards the BirdLife Vulture 10 Year Plan, which aims for a 50% reduction of vulture parts being traded in areas where we intervene in the next 10 years.*

*Illegal trade in vultures is reduced through addressing poverty as a driver of trade in target communities With increased vulture populations, communities will benefit from the ecosystem services brought by the species locally including reduction in disease transmission and a cleaner environment. Hooded vultures are a semi-urban species, being found around abattoirs and markets. Their clean-up role, already understood by some, can be easily demonstrated. Potentially negative impacts of handling poisoned vulture parts will be reduced.*

This project, and future, initiatives related to belief-based use of vultures is fully in line with BirdLife's 10-year Vulture Strategy, alongside other approaches to address vulture poisoning and mortality. The project helped to promote the ecosystem services value of vultures amongst all stakeholders. Their qualitative value was further enhanced by an ecosystem services report, produced by BirdLife in 2024, which showed that ecosystem services given by vultures in Southern Africa are in excess of USD 1 billion per / year. Sanitation service was the second most valued ecosystem service. Whilst this work was done in Southern Africa, the value of vultures can be inferred for West Africa (**Annex 92**)

*The BirdLife Vulture Programme is active in 11 countries in Africa and although belief-based use is the main threat to vultures in West Africa, there are at least 19 African countries where it constitutes a major threat. The internal and external means of knowledge sharing will enable a quicker spread of successful practices across the continent.*

The focus on interventions on belief-based use continues to grow within the BirdLife Vulture Programme. During the BirdLife Africa Vulture Conservation Forum conducted in July 2024, BirdLife partners East, West, Southern and North Africa exchanged ideas on work they are doing including on belief-based use. The forum has been in existence for more than four years and will continue to run as part of lesson sharing within BirdLife's Vulture Programme (**Annex 64**).

#### **Potential to scale up**

*Vulture conservation is one of BirdLife in Africa's top priorities. This project will provide valuable evidence to test whether the innovative behaviour change approach being taken in Nigeria, to encourage and support traditional healers to move away from using vultures, alongside awareness raising and policy work, can be applied in other countries.*

The project supports the application of the approaches piloted and tested in this project to future projects - both initiating the approach in new areas and developing the approach where it is still in the early stages.

*The Regional Vulture Conservation Action Plan is a multi-organisation initiative, initiated through online meetings and a 3-day workshop in October 2022, involving 35 representatives from 13 countries including BirdLife, West African BirdLife Partners, government representatives, IUCN, veterinary and industry representatives amongst others. The Action Plan will provide a focus for study and analysis in addition to policy advocacy and joint fundraising (Annex 63).*

The West Africa Vulture Conservation Action plan published in 2024 has a big focus on tackling belief-based use in this region. It is now recognised as CMS document with countries that are party to this convention to implement the plan. The success indicators of the plan include improved conservation status the six species of vultures, vulture legally protected across the region and reduced trade of vultures amongst others.

## **4. Contribution to IWT Challenge Fund Programme Objectives**

### **4.1 Thematic focus**

Project focused on reducing demand for vulture parts for belief-based use, by identifying and engaging targeted stakeholders of the vulture trade value chain, traditional healers, consumers, and traders, and understanding what is driving the demand for each of them and piloting some targeted messaging to each of them to reduce the attraction and incentive of using vulture parts.

## 4.2 Impact on species in focus

The project was not intended to have a population level impact as it was a relatively small project, designed to collect evidence and try new approaches.

However, the project had considerable impact, particularly in the target communities, in terms of awareness raising, engagement of critical stakeholders in finding solutions, species monitoring data gathering, and in the reduction of poisoning incidents. Equally importantly, capacity was built to apply social marketing approaches to a challenging problem facing this species.

## 4.3 Project support for multidimensional poverty reduction

The project contributed to multidimensional poverty reduction by addressing both the material and cultural drivers of illegal vulture trade, particularly among communities and traditional healers. Stakeholder consultations and community surveys confirmed that poverty plays a role in the trade, though it is closely intertwined with traditional beliefs. For many, particularly traditional healers, the trade in vulture parts offers a seemingly easy source of income but it also exposes them to increasing legal risks. The project helped demonstrate that, with support, this income could be replaced by legal, sustainable alternatives.

In The Gambia, guineafowl farming was introduced as a low-cost livelihood pilot in two communities known for links to the vulture trade. Sixty people (half women) each received a guineafowl, and a locally led committee was established to manage the initiative. Within 12 months, the guineafowl populations multiplied nearly tenfold, showing both strong local engagement and potential for future income generation. Continued training in marketing and business skills is planned to ensure long-term benefits.

In Guinea-Bissau, ODZH worked with traditional healers to develop a plant-based healing manual both to strengthen and commercialize traditional knowledge. Though not finalised within the project period, the initiative fostered dialogue on sustainable alternatives, such as cultivating medicinal plants and producing natural remedies for sale.

Overall, the project tested scalable approaches to engage communities through culturally relevant and legally viable livelihoods, laying the groundwork for longer-term poverty alleviation linked to biodiversity conservation.

### Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

<b>GESI Scale</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Put X where you think your project is on the scale</b>
<b>Not yet sensitive</b>	The GESI context may have been considered but the project isn't quite meeting the requirements of a 'sensitive' approach	
<b>Sensitive</b>	The GESI context has been considered and project activities take this into account in their design and implementation. The project addresses basic needs and vulnerabilities of women and marginalised groups and the project will not contribute to or create further inequalities.	X
<b>Empowering</b>	The project has all the characteristics of a 'sensitive' approach whilst also increasing equal access to assets, resources and capabilities for women and marginalised groups	
<b>Transformative</b>	The project has all the characteristics of an 'empowering' approach whilst also addressing unequal power relationships and seeking institutional and societal change	

The project meets the criteria for a GESI Sensitive approach, having systematically integrated gender equality and social inclusion considerations across its design and implementation. From the onset, the project recognised the complex interplay between poverty, traditional beliefs, and wildlife use, including gendered roles in the use and trade of vulture parts. Consultations conducted in all three countries revealed that both men and women are engaged in this practice, either as users or traditional healers. For example, 60% of respondents to an ODZH survey in Guinea-Bissau indicated that users of vulture parts included either women (30%) or both men and women (30%).



The project ensured meaningful and inclusive participation throughout. The social marketing campaign reached 3,228 people, 1,645 women and 1,869 men including 279 traditional healers (59 women and 220 men), traders, butchers, schoolchildren, and women's groups. In Guinea-Bissau, women healers, midwives, and community leaders actively participated in risk identification and campaign design. In Senegal, the deputy mayoress of Diaobé played a leadership role from start to finish, facilitating meetings with 250 women and helping to embed GESI in local structures.

Women also held decision-making roles within the project teams and field activities. Female representation in implementing partner staff was strong: 3 out of 6 in Senegal (including the finance officer), 5 out of 9 in The Gambia, and 1 out of 4 in Guinea-Bissau. In The Gambia, women made up 50% of the guineafowl project committee (15 out of 30 members), sharing oversight with youth, traditional healers, and community leaders.

Focus group discussions were deliberately structured to reflect gender perspectives, helping to surface specific vulnerabilities and attitudes that may otherwise have been overlooked. These efforts supported behaviour change by ensuring that women's voices, roles, and knowledge were acknowledged and integrated into community strategies.

A key lesson has been that inclusive engagement improves project relevance and reach. While gender gaps remain for instance, the disparity between male (220) and female (59) traditional healers this project helped highlight and begin to address them. Continued support for alternative livelihoods and leadership by women in conservation-linked initiatives is essential to sustaining gains and deepening equity outcomes.

## **5. Monitoring and evaluation**

The project kick-off meeting held in June 2023 served to align expectations across all partners, providing clarity on required actions and deliverables (**Annex 90**). The Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) system operated on two levels: BirdLife International led the overall coordination and oversight of partner activities, while each implementing partner managed country-level M&E. Partner contracts explicitly required regular reporting and monthly check-ins with BirdLife staff, including the project lead and finance team. These sessions ensured alignment on project requirements and enabled ongoing feedback. Notes were taken during each meeting and shared as part of follow-up communications and next steps (**Annex 2,39**), enabling responsive, real-time support to partners.

At the partner level, M&E included the production of activity reports and meeting minutes to document engagement with stakeholders. Initially, partners encountered challenges with preparatory assignments set by the consultant to support field surveys and campaign design. In response, the consultant simplified the syllabus, which improved partner performance and understanding.

The first phase of M&E confirmed focal areas in each country, using data from a prior pilot study and further validated through consultation with community leaders and traditional healers. This helped identify zones with high prevalence of vulture part use. Continuous local feedback informed the refinement of these target areas.

During the development of the social marketing strategy, partners attended training sessions and participated in one-on-one exchanges with the consultant. Later on this role of supporting partners was taken on by the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme Coordinator and the PEP assistant. Using standardised templates were completed, reviewed, and returned with corrections, which clarified misunderstandings and reinforced learning (Annex: meeting note). Although time-intensive, this process significantly enhanced partners' grasp of core concepts.

Information sharing was structured and ongoing. Feedback from the field was regularly communicated to BirdLife through coordination meetings, allowing for dynamic project adaptation. Regular survey reports and early analyses of both qualitative and quantitative data fed into decision-making processes. Feedback forums with traditional healers and stakeholders provided critical insights, enabling the social marketing strategy to be adjusted to better reflect local needs and perceptions.

Although no formal external evaluation was conducted, internal monitoring revealed capacity concerns with one partner (NCD). A meeting between BirdLife's Deputy Regional Director and NCD in February 2024 addressed these challenges, leading to improved communication and responsiveness.

The final logframe, including indicators and means of verification, is presented in Annex 2. A narrative report against the logframe is provided in Annex 1.

## **6. Lessons learnt** **Lessons learned**

It was important for partners to differentiate Awareness from Social Marketing: Although project partners had experience with awareness campaigns, it was critical to distinguish these from social marketing. Generic messaging, especially in interactions with traditional healers and customers, posed risks. Following the logical steps in developing a social marketing strategy allowed partners to better define target audiences and design specific, tailored materials.

Cultural practices and conservation can co-exist. The project demonstrated that it is possible to protect biodiversity without eliminating cultural practices. By promoting alternatives compatible with community well-being and species conservation, a balance was achieved. This allowed conversations with traditional healers to be solution-focused **(Annex 12, 21, 26)**

Engagement with local structures/ leadership can open doors for engagement with the right audiences and helps to build trust: In Senegal, NCD benefitted from the support of the deputy mayoress. She helped them access the women's group which made it easy to interact and talk to the women. Involving traditional governance structures and healer associations was crucial for the acceptance of alternative practices. This approach required mutual respect and trust before proposing changes, thereby increasing community buy-in.

Matching resources and effort: With a grant of the same size, a future approach would involve concentrating the project on a single country. This would free up resources, both for staff time and in-person training sessions. Such an organization would benefit BirdLife and partner teams alike, by facilitating more effective integration of the lessons learned.

## **Challenges**

Adjusting Time Investments: Time investments for project management must be evaluated and appropriately adjusted. Coordinating and supporting partner organizations with varying capacity levels requires considerable time, which should be accounted for in donor-approved budgets. Challenges related to staff turnover and recruitment delays complicated coordination efforts with partners.

Investment in training and Social Marketing Strategy needs to be done in the long term to allow enough time for training and practice: Training for the development of the social marketing strategy was particularly intensive, requiring significant participation in workshops, assignments, and one-on-one follow-ups with a consultant. While essential, these time demands were difficult to integrate given the multiple commitments of team members. In response, the consultant simplified the materials, making them easier to understand but limiting the capacity-building benefits.

Optimizing Human Resources: To mitigate the lack of time among existing staff, an intern was recruited in July 2024. This intern, then became an officer working full-time until the project's completion, provided optimal support for coordination-related issues.

Partner Implementation Delays: Certain partners, such as ODZH and NCD, faced delays in implementing their activities due to limited staff availability and only began their work in 2024. These partners adjusted their approach and successfully conducted their campaigns during the project extension period.

Logistical and Cultural Challenges: Logistical issues, cultural resistance in certain areas, and institutional changes required rapid adaptation of planned strategies, including resource reallocation and intermediate goal adjustments. The language barrier is a challenge: the partners have different languages, which can lead to a loss of meaning when reports are translated, hence the lesson to work in one country only or focus on one language when limited time and resources can be provided on translation.

## **7. Response to Annual Report reviews- Included in Annex**

## **8. Risk Management**

No risks that required adaptations to the project design were added during the past 12 months.

## **9. Scalability and Durability**

This project has built strong foundations for sustainability by enhancing the capacities of partners and stakeholders, fostering cross-sectoral collaboration, and integrating project actions into local systems. Partner organisations and field staff are now better equipped with technical skills in conservation, social marketing, Theory of Change, and community engagement. This capacity will help sustain and scale project outcomes beyond the project's lifespan.

The social marketing campaign played a critical role in establishing trusted relationships with key adopters, particularly traditional healers and community leaders. Training sessions and dialogue forums have raised awareness of the ecological and legal risks of vulture part use, while promoting culturally relevant alternatives. Early adoption of these alternatives, as seen in initiatives like the development of a plant-based healer's manual in Guinea-Bissau and guineafowl farming in The Gambia, demonstrates the attractiveness and feasibility of the approach. In Senegal, the active engagement of local leadership, including the deputy mayoress of Diaobé, and the development of a national action plan for vultures by NCD, are key steps toward institutionalising conservation efforts.

The integration of project actions into community management plans and traditional health structures ensures local ownership and alignment with existing priorities. In several areas, stakeholders now perceive biodiversity protection as a community-led effort, supported by intersectoral partnerships between government, traditional health associations, CSOs, and local leaders. These alliances are expected to continue advocating for sustainable practices and wildlife protection.

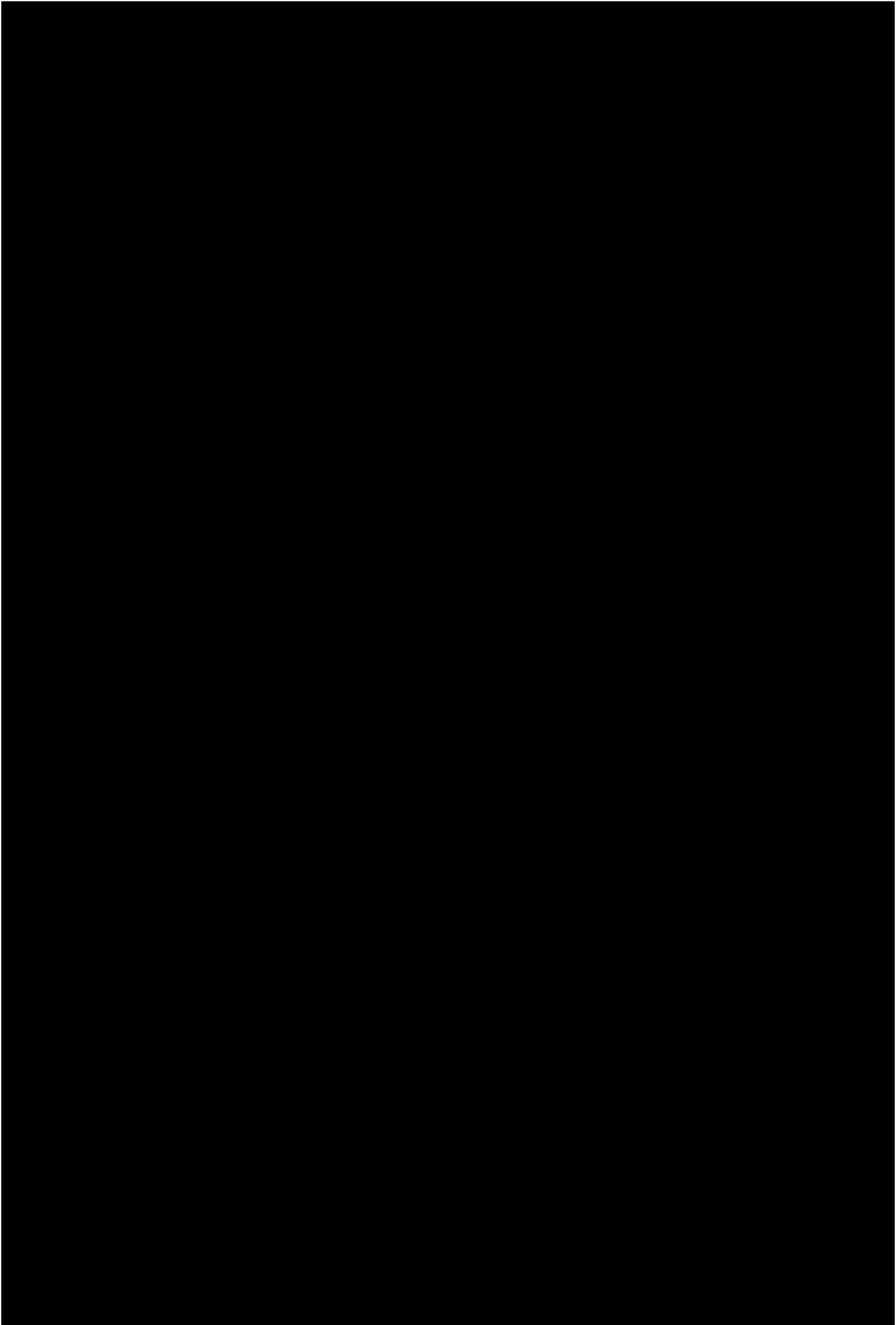
Efforts are ongoing to secure follow-up funding for further implementation and geographic expansion. In-country momentum is growing, with other countries beginning to develop national action plans, using this project as a model. Project staff remain engaged at national and regional level, with partner organisations planning to retain key personnel as they also seek future funding.

In terms of legacy, the most durable achievements are likely to be the strengthened local capacities, the shift in norms among traditional healers, and the formation of durable, multi-stakeholder coalitions. These are embedded in local institutions and continue to function beyond project closure.

#### **10. IWT Challenge Fund Identity**

The logo of the IWT Challenge Fund was used where appropriate in presentations and meetings held by BirdLife partners. This included discussions on project inception, development of work plans, invitations, and training agendas. Efforts to promote the initiative also extended to events, publications, and communications across social media platforms, such as Facebook, and YouTube although this was not always practical because, for example, the topics were broader than just the project or the message was brief.

#### **11. Safeguarding**



## 12. Finance and administration

### Project expenditure

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2024/25 Grant (£)	2024/25 Total actual Darwin Initiative Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs (see below)				
Consultancy costs				
Overhead Costs				
Travel and subsistence				
Operating Costs				
Capital items (see below)				
Others (see below)				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>56,223.00</b>	<b>56,223.00</b>	<b>0%</b>	

Staff employed (Name and position)	Cost (£)
Lewis Kihumba-Communications Manager, BirdLife	
Dalphine Adre-Finance Coordinator, BirdLife	
Fadzai Matsvimbo-Project Leader, BirdLife	
Amadou Diallo-Project officer, BirdLife	
Lamin Joabote-Project coordinator-WABSA	
Francisco Gomes Wambar-Project coordinator-OZDH	
Bass Diallo-Project Coordinator-NCD	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

Capital items – description	Capital items – cost (£)
<b>TOTAL</b>	

Other items – description	Other items – cost (£)
Audit costs-BL Transport refunds to participants (Training traditional healers)-WABSA Contribution for internet (April 2024-March 2025)-NCD Transport refunds & per diems while conducting social marketing workshops-OZDH	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

### Additional funds or in-kind contributions secured

Matched funding leveraged by the partners to deliver the project	Total (£)
Overheads-BL	



Salary to the project leader	
Salary to the PEP intern	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

<b>Total additional finance mobilised for new activities occurring outside of the project, building on evidence, best practices and the project</b>	<b>Total (£)</b>
Project to protect vultures, particularly hooded, in the Taïba Ndiaye, Tivaoune, Kébémér, Léona and Ferlo sectors, Senegal supported by Infinity Powerl	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

### Value for Money

The project demonstrated value for money in several key areas, particularly through its use of existing knowledge, local implementation capacity, and resource-conscious planning. Drawing on the successful experience of BirdLife's partner in Nigeria, which developed a handbook of herbal alternatives with traditional healers and reduced vulture part sales in target areas, the project adapted a proven methodology to local contexts. This avoided the need to start from scratch, improving effectiveness and saving on time and resources. Similar strategies have been piloted in BirdLife Zimbabwe and Nature Tanzania's Darwin-funded project in the Serengeti, showcasing lesson-sharing and efficiency across the BirdLife Africa Partnership and Biodiversity Challenge Fund investments.

All three implementing partners (WABSA, ODZH, NCD) are nationally based and used in-house staff rather than external consultants for activities such as data collection and campaign implementation. This significantly reduced costs while enhancing local ownership. Surveys and social marketing campaigns were delivered efficiently thanks to these embedded teams. BirdLife also maximised existing opportunities by meeting partners during the September 2024 Council of Africa Partnership meeting in Senegal, reducing the need for costly country visits.

However, the project did face challenges in terms of time and administrative resources. With four partner organisations involved, coordination and oversight were time-consuming. Activities such as training, interviews, translation, and iterative feedback loops required substantial staff input. While some staff costs were covered through co-funding, the overall time investment exceeded what the project budget could sustainably support. From BirdLife's perspective, the administrative oversight and extended support required outweighed the value derived, particularly given the scale of the project.

In conclusion, while the project was highly effective and efficient at the field level especially due to localisation and cost-saving measures it was less economical at the coordination level for BirdLife, whose input exceeded the budgeted support. Nonetheless, the long-term conservation and behaviour change outcomes represent strong returns on investment.

### 13. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

A similar approach has been successfully taken by BirdLife's partner in Nigeria, resulting in considerable intelligence about the trade, the production of a handbook of herbal alternatives, developed in collaboration between NCF and traditional healers, a significant reduction in sales of vulture parts in the target areas. BirdLife Zimbabwe is also seeing early success gathering data and engaging traditional healers and Nature Tanzania has piloted similar methods in a recently completed Darwin funded project in the Serengeti landscape.

### 14. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes

I agree for the Biodiversity Challenge Funds to edit and use the following for various promotional purposes (please leave this line in to indicate your agreement to use any material you provide here).

Across The Gambia, Senegal, and Guinea-Bissau, this pioneering project addressed one of West Africa's most urgent and complex conservation challenges: the illegal trade in vulture parts for traditional medicine. The hooded vulture (*Necrosyrtes monachus*), now *Critically Endangered*, has declined by more than 80% across West Africa over recent decades. As key scavengers, their disappearance threatens ecosystem stability, public hygiene, and disease regulation.

Field surveys and focus groups revealed that belief-based motivation such as spiritual protection, health remedies, power enhancement and good fortune remain central to the demand for vulture parts. While poverty plays a role, tradition and deeply rooted cultural practices are equally significant. Importantly, women were found to be involved

throughout the value chain as users, intermediaries, and traditional healers making their inclusion in awareness and behaviour-change efforts essential. Collecting such data required sensitive, trust-based approaches, given the reluctance of some actors to disclose illegal or socially taboo practices.

To address these multifaceted drivers, the project implemented innovative behaviour change and social marketing strategies. In Guinea-Bissau, a plant-based healing manual is being co-developed with traditional healers. These efforts build directly on BirdLife-led in Nigeria and Zimbabwe, where participatory alternatives helped reduce demand for vulture parts. The project also supported the development of alternative livelihoods in vulture trade strongholds, offering community members more sustainable pathways.

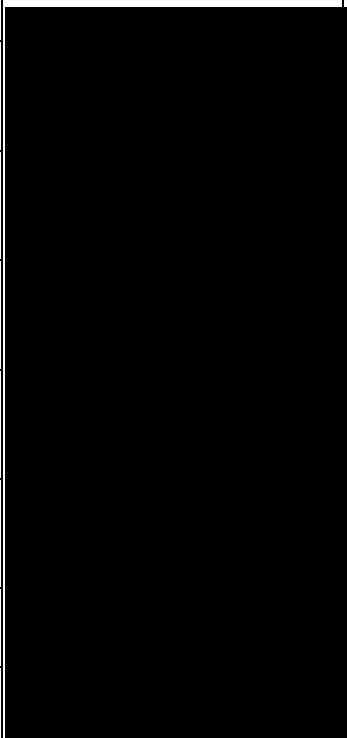
The role of community leaders and local authorities such as mayors, traditional healers, and forestry officers proved critical to curbing vulture persecution, including poisoning. Their engagement improved local enforcement, shifted social norms, and reinforced shared responsibility for vulture protection in high-risk zones.

The project directly contributed to the development of Senegal's national Vulture Conservation Action Plan (by NCD) and laid the foundations for broader regional coordination under the 10-year West Africa Vulture Conservation Action Plan (WAVCAP), 2024.

More than 3,000 stakeholders including 279 traditional healers and hundreds of women were reached through the campaign. With tested methods, empowered communities, and a strong foundation for expansion, this initiative is well positioned for future scale-up.

Beyond tools and strategies, the project leaves behind empowered local actors and a growing regional network committed to protecting vultures ensuring they continue to soar over West Africa for generations to come.

#### Image, Video or Graphic Information:

File Type (Image / Video / Graphic)	File Name or File Location	Caption, country and credit	Online accounts to be tagged (leave blank if none)	Consent of subjects received (delete as necessary)
Image	1. Social Marketing Workshop	ODZH social marketing workshop in Guinea-Bissau		Yes
Image	2. TV Broadcast in Diaobé	TV show in Diaobé FM, Senegal, NCD		Yes
Image	3. social marketing caravan	Awareness-raising in Gambia., WABSA		Yes
Image	4. Survey with traditional healers	Interview with a traditional healer in Diaobé, Senegal. NCD		Yes
Image	5. Traditional healers sensitisation	Traditional healer awareness in Guinea Bissau. OZDH		Yes
Image	6. Vulture Monitoring	Monitoring vultures in Gambia. WABSA		Yes
Image	7. Survey	Survey in Gambia. WABSA		Yes

## Annex 1 Report of progress and achievements against logframe for the life of the project

Project summary	Progress and achievements
<p><b>Impact</b></p> <p>Short term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Species populations are maintained at current baselines and no further mass poisoning incidences or killing for belief-based use occur in the project focal areas</li> <li>Evidence of poverty as a driver of trade is gathered. Livelihoods of traditional healers remain secure. Traditional healers are increasingly engaged and willing to explore options to reduce belief-based use of vultures. Safe, legal alternatives are explored, assessed, and piloted where possible.</li> <li>Communities demonstrate national pride in vultures and continue to have access to affordable healthcare through their traditional healers.</li> </ul>	<p>a) Short terms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Senegal, 120 vultures were found dead at the Diaobé slaughterhouse in July 2024 during routine monitoring NCD worked with the Diaobé municipal authorities to set up a monitoring framework at the <b>slaughterhouse (Annex 3,21)</b>. Post the sensitisation and awareness given to the Municipal Authorities, they incorporated monitoring of the slaughterhouse into their work stream. No further poisoning took place once this arrangement was in place. In Guinea Bissau, 18 vultures were poisoned in Pitche in early 2025, in the Gabou region <b>(Annex 15)</b>. However, since these incidents, no further cases of mortality or poisoning have been observed. No cases of poisoning were reported in Gambia.</li> <li>Stakeholder engagements and surveys helped to identify how poverty was a driver of trade although it was not a simple equation. Tradition and long-held beliefs were equally important. Poverty is a reality for most stakeholders and illegal vulture trade likely provides a seemingly easy income although the project was not able to gather much information from those involved in killing vultures. For healers, vulture parts trade is an income source, but that this could be replaced with legal products, with support. Also, legal risks of being associated with illegal trade, which has been gaining greater attention is likely to be a serious risk to income and liberty. Providing sustainable livelihoods support (e.g. Guinea fowl raising) was tested as a relatively low cost means to engage communities.</li> <li>Guinea fowl farming was introduced as an alternative livelihood in The Gambia in two villages—Dobo and Sare Banno—both known hotspots for the trade in vulture parts. A community committee was established to oversee the activity, with more than 50% of members representing women and youth <b>((Annex: 9, 81))</b>. By the end of the project, the number of guinea fowls in each village had increased nearly tenfold, laying the foundation for a new and sustainable source of income. Rather than distributing profits individually, the communities set up a community development loan scheme: a revolving fund that allows members to borrow between GMD 2,000 and 5,000 (approximately GBP £24–£60). Borrowers repay the loans with a small interest, which feeds back into the fund—allowing the cycle of borrowing and repayment to continue and grow over time.</li> <li>If profits were to be distributed outright, each member would receive around GMD 2,000 per year (GBP ~£24). While modest, this amount is meaningful for many households in the area, where annual incomes range from GMD 18,000 to 360,000 annually (GBP ~£217–£4,300). For individuals on the lower end of that spectrum, this represents more than a full month's income and an 11% increase compared to the situation before the revolving fund</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BirdLife is co-leading the drafting of a Regional Action Plan for the conservation of West African Vultures, building on numerous online meetings and a 3-day workshop in October 2022. Lessons learned from this project will have a direct channel for scale up by feeding into the implementation of this regional and national vulture action plans to be developed in 2023.</li> <li>• Replication of the application of a social marketing approach to reducing the killing, sale and consumption of endangered and legally protected vultures will be facilitated. This will be achieved by building a solid portfolio of lessons learned, factoring in different sets of audiences, ensuring multiple tools and messaging and their impact which can be leveraged in similar contexts in other countries.</li> </ul> <p>b) Long term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This evidence and follow up projects will contribute towards the BirdLife Vulture 10 Year Plan, which aims for a 50% reduction of vulture parts being traded in areas where we intervene in the next 10 years.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illegal trade in vultures is reduced through addressing poverty as a driver of trade in target communities.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With increased vulture populations, communities will benefit from the ecosystem services brought by the species locally including reduction in disease transmission and a cleaner environment. Hooded vultures, in particular, are a semi-urban species, being found around abattoirs and markets. Their clean-up role, already understood by some, can be easily demonstrated. Potentially negative impacts of handling poisoned vulture parts will be reduced.</li> <li>• The BirdLife Vulture Programme is active in 11 countries in Africa and although belief-based use is the main threat to vultures in West Africa, there are at least 19 African countries where it constitutes a major threat. The internal and external</li> </ul>	<p>and guineafowl farming was introduced. Crucially, the revolving fund model creates a longer-term impact, promoting local financial inclusion, supporting small-scale enterprise, and reducing dependency on unsustainable or illegal income sources._</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The awareness raising events, including the TV and radio programmes, demonstrated that engaged communities understood and appreciated the value of vultures and valued having a role in their conservation. The project also successfully engaged traditional healers in a way that respected the sector and their standing in the community, seeking to support their continued operation, without the use of unsustainable and illegal vulture parts. Also described in outcome 01.</li> <li>• The West African Vulture Conservation Action Plan (WAVCAP) was officially launched in April , 2024. It has been recognised by the CMS and Raptors MOU, making it more likely that priority actions will be implemented. In Senegal, an action plan is currently being developed, while other countries are still in discussions (<b>Annex 67,68, 69</b>). NCD in Senegal is the initiator of the National Action Plan and the leader of this project in Senegal. Furthermore, this project has facilitated partners in Guinea-Bissau and The Gambia in initiating discussions regarding their own plans.</li> </ul> <p>b) Long term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This project, and future, initiatives related to belief-based use of vultures is fully in line with BirdLife's 10-year Vulture Strategy, alongside other approaches to address vulture poisoning and mortality. The project helped to promote the ecosystem services value of vultures amongst all stakeholders. Their qualitative value was further enhanced by an ecosystem services report, produced by BirdLife in 2024, which showed that ecosystem services given by vultures in Southern Africa are in excess of USD 1 billion per / year. Sanitation service was the second most valued ecosystem service. Whilst this work was done in Southern Africa, the value of vultures can be inferred for West Africa (<b>Annex 92</b> )</li> <li>• The focus on interventions on belief-based use continues to grow within the BirdLife Vulture Programme. During the BirdLife Africa Vulture Conservation Forum conducted in July 2024, BirdLife partners East, West, Southern and North Africa exchanged ideas on work they are doing including on belief-based use. The forum has been in existence for more than four years and will continue to run as part of lesson sharing within BirdLife's Vulture Programme (<b>Annex 64</b>).</li> </ul> <p>b) Long term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This project, and future, initiatives related to belief-based use of vultures is fully in line with BirdLife's 10-year Vulture Strategy, alongside other approaches to address vulture poisoning and mortality. The project helped to promote the ecosystem services value of vultures amongst all stakeholders. Their qualitative value was further enhanced by an ecosystem services report, produced by BirdLife in 2024, which showed that ecosystem services given by vultures in Southern Africa are in excess of USD 1 billion per / year.</li> </ul>
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<p>means of knowledge sharing will enable a quicker spread of successful practices across the continent.</p> <p>c) Potential to scale up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vulture conservation is one of BirdLife in Africa's top priorities. This project will provide valuable evidence to test whether the innovative behaviour change approach being taken in Nigeria, to encourage and support traditional healers to move away from using vultures, alongside awareness raising and policy work, can be applied in other countries.</li> <li>• The Regional Vulture Conservation Action Plan is a multi-organisation initiative, initiated through online meetings and a 3-day workshop in October 2022, involving 35 representatives from 13 countries including BirdLife, West African BirdLife Partners, government representatives, IUCN, veterinary and industry representatives amongst others. The Action Plan will provide a focus for study and analysis in addition to policy advocacy and join fundraising.</li> </ul>	<p>Sanitation service was the second most valued ecosystem service. Whilst this work was done in Southern Africa, the value of vultures can be inferred for West Africa (<b>Annex 92</b> )</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The focus on interventions on belief-based use continues to grow within the BirdLife Vulture Programme. During the BirdLife Africa Vulture Conservation Forum conducted in July 2024, BirdLife partners East, West, Southern and North Africa exchanged ideas on work they are doing including on belief-based use. The forum has been in existence for more than four years and will continue to run as part of lesson sharing within BirdLife's Vulture Programme (<b>Annex 64</b>).</li> </ul> <p>c) Potential to scale up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project supports the application of the approaches piloted and tested in this project to future projects - both initiating the approach in new areas and developing the approach where it is still in the early stages.</li> <li>• The West Africa Vulture Conservation Action plan published in 2024 has a big focus on tackling belief-based use in this region. It is now recognised as CMS document with countries that are party to this convention to implement the plan. The success indicators of the plan include improved conservation status the six species of vultures, vulture legally protected across the region and reduced trade of vultures amongst others.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome: A pilot Social Marketing Campaign, promoting vultures and engaging traditional healers in 10 communities in Senegal, The Gambia and Guinea Bissau reduces demand for vulture parts and informs scaling up.</b></p>	
<p>Outcome indicator 0.1: By EOP, the proportion of consumers who know and value the role of vultures and recognise them as valuable species and identify them with pride is at least 60% of the target audience (n=70).</p>	<p>The social marketing campaign successfully reached a large audience, 3437 people in the three target countries, raising awareness among different communities of the importance of vultures and the risks associated with using their body parts in traditional medicine. In Gambia, the campaign reached 13 communities in Kanifing Municipal Council. In Guinea Bissau, the campaign reached seven localities in the east of the country, three in the north and the capital, Bissau. In Senegal, it reached 8 different neighbourhoods in the commune of Diaobé. The audience included traditional practitioners (healers and traders), members of women's groups, butchers, forestry agents, livestock farmers, imams, village chiefs and more (<b>Annex 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 34, 47, 48, 49 52, 55</b> ). They all recognised the ecological value of vultures and identified them with pride, marking a significant shift in perception towards these species.</p>



	<p>Some quotes from people who were engaged</p> <p>In The Gambia, during a community dialogue, an Ecologist from the National Environment Agency (NEA) described vultures as <i>“nature’s frontline health workers—silently protecting us by preventing the spread of deadly diseases.”</i> <b>(Annex 27)</b></p> <p>In Caio, Guinea-Bissau, the village chief admitted: <i>“I didn’t know vultures were so important. I am committed to protecting them and encouraging others to do the same.”</i> <b>(Annex 30)</b></p> <p>In Bafatá, an Ustas (Arabic teacher) emphasized: <i>“Vultures have co-existed with humans since the origin of life. Those who kill vultures will not find peace.”</i> The local Imam added, <i>“Each participant should help spread the awareness messages.”</i> <b>(Annex 22)</b></p> <p>At a knowledge-sharing workshop in Diaobé, Senegal, Mr. Sekou Diao, representing community, stressed that, <i>“Vultures play a crucial role in preventing disease. People should seek health care or use medicinal plants when ill.”</i> <b>(Annex 21)</b></p>
Outcome indicator 0.2 By EOP, the number of traditional healers who accepts to use non-animal alternatives increased by 50% (n=70)	<p>A total of 279 traditional healers actively participated across three countries, 35 traditional healers, in The Gambia, 216 in Guinea-Bissau, and 28 in Senegal, <b>(Annex 21, 23, 25, 26, 29, 30, 32, 34)</b>. They contributed by giving examples of alternative plants and expressed a willingness to collaborate in creating an official list of substitutes to use of vulture parts. In Senegal, the establishment of a Traditional Healers’ Association strengthened this commitment, fostering collective action for sustainable traditional medicine practices.</p>
Outcome indicator 0.3 By EOP, at least 3 West African countries have included key recommendations from this project into their national vulture strategies/action plans.	<p>The regional vulture action plan covering 16 West African countries, which provides for intensified interventions in Senegal, Gambia and Guinea-Bissau <b>was</b> launched in April 2024 with the support of BirdLife <b>(Annex 63,97,99)</b>. Senegal has started to develop a national action plan. The first workshop of the Vulture Working Group, which was established to develop the Senegal Vulture Action plan, took place on 25 March 2025. Since then, two more workshops have been held: one to validate the working group and propose a roadmap, and another on training in open standards for conservation. <b>(Annex 67, 68, 69)</b>. NCD is leading in the development of the plan. In Guinea-Bissau, discussions have taken place between the ODZH and the government authorities and the CITES focal point on vulture conservation and the idea of developing a national action plan. Although an action plan was initially discussed in Guinea Bissau, it has been delayed due to lack of funding <b>(Annex 16 )</b>.</p>
Outcome indicator 0.4 By EOP, vulture populations in the three vulture strongholds are maintained at the baseline and zero mass poisoning incidences are recorded in the piloted communities.	<p>One poisoning event was recorded in Pitche, one of the pilot sites Guinea Bissau in which 18 vultures were killed <b>(Annex 15)</b>, in Senegal a single poisoning event killed 120 vultures at an abattoir in Diaobe. In the two cases the motivation was suspected to be harvesting for belief-based use. Whilst this number may appear small; this is against background of a Critically Endangered, declining species. The impact of these two events on existing populations is unknown as vultures are long-lived species. In Guinea Bissau, ODZH conducted an awareness campaign in Pitche following that event. In Senegal post the poisoning, NCD engaged the managers of slaughterhouse and deployed someone to monitor the area. After this intervention, no poisoning event took place. With regards to maintenance of vulture populations, it was not possible, within the project timeframe, to undertake a meaningful follow up vulture survey. It is also recognised that changes</p>

	<p>in vulture population must be monitored over a longer period. However, the impacts on vultures at the project sites, as described, are positive (<b>Annex 4, 21</b>).</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.5 By EOP, increased capacity from project partners in conducting social marketing and social change M&amp;E.</p>	<p>Behaviour change training was delivered to 28 people from five organisations, NCD, ODZH, WABSA and BirdLife International (<b>Annex 71, 72, 73,74</b> ). For WABSA, eight people were involved in implementing the project, for ODZH, 8 people, and for NCD, 6 people. The skill set gained by partners was not just limited to social marketing but wider project implementation and management. They have improved in documenting events and activities across the project as part of tracking progress. However, the process was challenging for partners as they found it time consuming and frustrating, producing assignments and having them reviewed and making appropriate changes. Should we do this in the future, the support for such long-term learning would be done via internal resources and persons.</p>
<p><b>Output 1: The drivers and influencers of belief-based use of vulture parts are determined by Y1 Q2 and inform the design of a pilot social marketing campaign.</b></p>	
<p>Output indicator 1.1</p> <p>By Y1 Q2, the knowledge, attitude and practice as well as socio-demographics of the target audience are understood in 10 target communities (at least 350 people, 50% women).</p>	<p>By the second quarter of Year 2, the knowledge, attitudes, and practices, along with socio-demographic information, were assessed across target communities in The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, and Senegal. In total, 2,427 people were reached through quantitative surveys and focus group discussions conducted by WABSA, ODZH, and NCD, significantly exceeding the initial target of 350 participants. In The Gambia, 2,179 individuals from 13 communities were surveyed using questionnaires. In Guinea-Bissau, four focus groups brought together 25 participants, including 20 traditional healers and representatives from PROMETRA, while 39 traditional healers (31 men and 8 women) were also surveyed across four districts and in Canchungo. In Senegal, eight focus groups were held with 101 women from local women's groups, complemented by a quantitative survey of 108 women from six neighbourhoods in the commune of Diaobé. Key informant interviews were also conducted with local authorities, CITES representatives, healers, and market actors.</p> <p>Across the countries, awareness of vultures and their ecological role is relatively high. In The Gambia, all respondents reported knowing what vultures are, with 80% believing that vulture populations have declined over the past decade and 20% thinking they have increased. In Senegal, all participants recognized the scavenging role of vultures as beneficial. In Guinea-Bissau, 95% of traditional healers surveyed acknowledged that vulture parts are used in traditional medicine, although they personally did not engage in this practice.</p> <p>Perceptions regarding the ecological importance of vultures and the risks associated with their use in healing varied. In The Gambia, 60% of respondents understood the vital role vultures play in maintaining healthy ecosystems. In Guinea-Bissau, 81% were aware of the environmental impact</p>

	<p>of vulture part use. While similar questions were not asked in Senegal, all women surveyed affirmed the usefulness of vultures in waste removal.</p> <p>Awareness of the use of vultures in traditional medicine was notable across countries. In The Gambia, 70% of respondents reported that vulture parts are used in healing practices. In Guinea-Bissau, 95% confirmed knowledge of this, even if they did not personally engage in it. Common reasons cited for their use included the pursuit of power, spiritual protection, healing, and good luck.</p> <p>Knowledge and acceptance of alternative practices were also assessed. In Guinea-Bissau, 76% of respondents were aware of alternatives to vulture-based medicine, such as plant-based remedies and Koranic prayer. In Senegal, 88% of respondents viewed medicinal plants as beneficial, and 76% expressed willingness to consult healers using plants; 69% said they personally knew healers who worked with plants, though 29% did not, and 2% were unsure.</p> <p>Finally, practices around consultation with healers showed that in Senegal, 45% of respondents had consulted a traditional healer in the past six months for health-related issues, while 52% had not (<b>Annex 3, 4, 5, 13</b>).</p>
	<p>A behaviour change consultant was hired to take the partners through training in designing social marketing campaigns. The training covered different elements including Introduction to Social Marketing, Stakeholder Mapping and Research for Social Marketing. The first training took place in July and August 2023. Twenty-eight (28) people from BirdLife International, ODZH, WABSA, NCD and Biosfera, (a BirdLife Partner in Cabo Verde also supported by a Darwin Main Grants project with a behaviour change component), were trained, over 21 hours of training covering the introduction to social marketing through to target audience segmentation (<b>Annex 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 84, 85</b>). The training was conducted virtually with simultaneous translation into French and Portuguese and the partners completed assignments given to them as part of the training. Further follow-up was done individually, with partners getting one-on-one support. Messages for the social marketing were designed based on the information from the focus groups and one-on-one interviews. Ahead of starting the campaigns, each partner developed basic social marketing strategy (Annex: Marketing social templates). The title of the campaign in Gambia was <i>Why Vultures' Life Matter</i>, in Guinea-Bissau <i>Behavioural change among traditional healers</i> and in Senegal <i>Let's protect vultures</i>. In the Gambia, the messaging reached 954 people, in Guinea Bissau the messaging reached 709 people, whilst in Senegal the messaging reached 1774 people. (<b>Annex 6, 7, 8</b>)</p> <p>Across the three countries, the keys messages were mainly as follows:</p> <p><b>Vultures are critical in the ecosystem:</b> Vultures prevent the spread of disease by feeding on carcasses.</p> <p><b>Vultures are essential to public health:</b> They dispose of carcasses and prevent the spread of disease.</p>

	<p><b>Community leadership is essential:</b> Change must be led by the community</p> <p><b>Plants can be an alternative to vulture parts.</b> This message is aimed at healers to make them aware of the existence of plant-based remedies.</p> <p><b>Protecting our vultures is not at odds with preserving our culture:</b> Use natural, ethical alternatives that respect traditional knowledge.</p>
<p>Output indicator 1.3</p> <p>By EOP, the socio-economic impact of subsequent interventions is known and opportunities for alternative livelihoods for hunters, traders and traditional healers identified in 3 West African countries for post-project action. Target: 55 traders and 35 hunters surveyed across 3 countries.</p>	<p>The project explored how poverty reduction and livelihood interventions could promote desired behavior change—by piloting small-scale livelihood support initiatives to foster community engagement and by encouraging the use of plant-based alternatives to wildlife products. Guinea fowl farming was introduced as an alternative livelihood in Gambia in two villages (Dobo and Sare Banno) following a workshop conducted in January 2024. The village was chosen as it was well known that individuals who trade in vulture parts came from this area. A total of 60 guineafowl were distributed to 60 people (30 from each village). A total 25 people participated in the guineafowl distribution activity (<b>Annex 81</b>). A committee consisting of 10 women, 3 hunters, 2 traditional healers, 5 village authority representatives, 5 female youth and 5 male youths was established to oversee guineafowl farming. WABSA carried out a follow-up visit to Dobo and Sare Banno in June 2024 to monitor the project. The results were positive; the guineafowl has adapted to the environment and continues to increase. By the end of the project, the number of guinea fowl at Dobo increased from 30 to 294, and at Sare Banno from 30 to 308. No guinea fowl were sold as the plan was to increase numbers, before, they started selling. WABSA will continue to support the project by providing training for beneficiaries in marketing and accounting, as well as other business-related training (<b>Annex 9, 81</b>). In Guinea-Bissau, ODZH worked together with traditional healers to produce a plant-based healing manual. Once completed this manual will be sold at a nominal price, exclusively to the healers, and the proceeds will go to the healers' association. The process started and is in progress. The goal is to reinforce the association's actions in promoting positive changes in behaviour (<b>Annex 1</b>). ODZH held discussions with some traditional healers about alternative livelihoods. This approach has been integrated into the work of raising awareness and valuing traditional knowledge, with a focus on options such as the cultivation of medicinal plants, the local production of natural potions, or participation in community activities with social and economic returns.</p>
<p>Output indicator 1.4</p> <p>By Q1 a baseline of vulture populations in target locations is established.</p>	<p>WABSA conducted a national vulture survey, recording 5761 Hooded Vultures and 14 White-backed Vultures (also Critically Endangered). The surveys were conducted through road counts covering 1070 km and point counts at 17 abattoirs in 2023 (<b>Annex 59</b>). In Senegal, over 3,000 individuals were recorded in the southwest of the country, which is the focal area of this project. These data, collected through the IUCN SOS Vultures project in 2021, are being used as the baseline for this project. In Senegal, regular monitoring was carried out at the Diaobé slaughterhouse, where vultures gather in large numbers to forage on animal remains. During a monitoring session in July 2024, 120 dead vultures were found on the site. The removal of their heads indicates that they were killed for belief-based use (<b>Annex 4</b>). NCD engaged the Municipality</p>

	<p>of Diabobe on the importance of vultures who then recruited a member of staff to secure the area and monitor an illegal activities or potential poisoning. The engagement of the staff was very successful as no cases of dead vultures were recorded after this intervention. <b>(Annex 4, 21)</b>. Guinea Bissau, which had experienced one of the biggest poisonings of vultures in 2019, however, only recorded poisoning of 18 vultures at Pitch in the eastern part of the country during the project period. This was reported in January 2025, just before the start of social marketing activities. This appeared to have been motivated by harvesting for belief-based use. This led ODZH to carry out social marketing activities in collaboration with the traditional healers in this area <b>(Annex 15)</b>.</p>
<p>Output indicator 1.5</p> <p>By EOP, at least 6 members of staff from 3 grassroots conservation organisations have increased capacity in social research M&amp;E..</p>	<p>In July and August 2023, 24 people from BirdLife, WABSA, ODZH and NCD and 4 people from Biosfera (BirdLife partner in Cabo Verde) attended a training course on social marketing Five staff members of NCD, including 2 women and 3 men, 4 members of ODZH 1 women and 3 men and 9 members of staff from WABSA including 4 men and 5 women, took part in the social marketing training course, carried out the project activities, from the surveys to the social marketing campaign. This helped them to understand the theory and its practical application <b>(Annex 72, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77,84, 85)</b></p>
<p><b>Output 2. Improved understanding of the role and value of vultures by consumers in 10 pilot communities and increased engagement of 35 traditional healers towards finding alternatives to vulture parts.</b></p>	
<p>Output indicator 2.1</p> <p>By the end of the project, the proportion of traditional healers/consumers who understand that belief-based use is causing vulture decline is at least 60% of the target audience (n=140) against baseline.</p>	<p>In the Gambia, the majority of respondents (80%) were of the view that the decline in the vulture population was mainly due to harvesting vultures for traditional beliefs. Other factors mentioned included deforestation of their habitat (10%), lack of community awareness (5%), lack of law enforcement (3%) and other miscellaneous causes (1%). In Guinea-Bissau, during the quantitative survey, 81% of the 36 people interviewed were aware of the environmental impact of the use of vulture parts said while (19%) were not. With regards to the long-term sustainability of the use of vulture parts, 61% of respondents were of the opinion felt that this practice was not sustainable, as it could lead to the extinction of the species. On the other hand, 33% (n=11) thought it was sustainable, as the vultures would continue to reproduce. Finally, 6% (n=2) said they did not know <b>(Annex 5,13)</b>.</p>
<p>Output indicator 2.2 By the end of the project, the proportion of consumers who have a positive attitude towards traditional healers who do not use vulture parts increases by 60% (n=70).</p>	<p>In Senegal, the majority (61%) of the 108 people interviewed in the quantitative surveys said they had consulted traditional healers. Regarding willingness to consult healers who use plants in their practice, most respondents (74%) said they were willing to consult healers who use plants in their practice, while 24% said they were not. The majority of respondents (51%) agreed that the use of vulture organs in traditional medicine is not beneficial. According to a quantitative survey, 88% of the 108 people interviewed believe that plants have beneficial effects on health, compared with just 7% who think the opposite.88% of respondents believe that plants (in a traditional healing context) are beneficial to health <b>(Annex 3)</b>.</p> <p>Although no evaluation of the social marketing campaigns was carried out at the end of the project, it is important to note that the social marketing campaign reached a large and diverse audience</p>



	<p>3437, including traditional healers, women's and men's associations, water and forestry officers, students, butchers and local leaders. All these groups understood the importance of protecting vultures (<b>Annex 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32</b>)</p> <p>There is evidence of positive shifts in attitudes toward traditional healers who do not use vulture parts, though the specific 60% increase target (n=70) cannot be confirmed due to the absence of baseline data. In Senegal, 74% of the 108 survey respondents said they were willing to consult healers using plant-based remedies, and 88% believed these remedies are beneficial; 51% rejected the usefulness of vulture parts in medicine. In Guinea-Bissau, 76% of surveyed traditional healers were aware of sustainable alternatives such as plant use and Koranic prayer, and 95% acknowledged that vulture parts are used in healing, though they reported not using them themselves—suggesting a potential shift in norms. In The Gambia, while attitudes toward healers using alternatives were not directly measured, 60% of respondents recognized the ecological importance of vultures, and 70% were aware of their use in traditional medicine. These results indicate substantial progress toward building support for non-vulture-based healing practices, even if the exact target increase in positive attitudes cannot be quantitatively verified.</p>
<p>2.3 By the end of the project, at least 50% of traditional healers are engaged in establishing a list of potential non-animal-based alternatives to vulture parts and mechanism put in place for its adoption (n=70).</p>	<p>The target was exceeded. Across all three countries, a total of 279 traditional healers were involved in the various project activities. The majority of them support the idea of using plants as an alternative to hunting vultures. For example, In Gambia 35 traditional healers (30 men and 5 women) were engaged in awareness raising on the problems of using vulture parts in traditional healing practices and on vulture conservation in Kanifing Municipal Council (<b>Annex 34</b>). At the training workshop for healers in Gambia on alternatives to vulture parts held in April 2024, 20 plant-based products were listed as potential alternatives to vulture parts (<b>Annex 12</b>). In Guinea-Bissau, 216 traditional healers were engaged including 148 in the East Zone, 48 in the North Zone, and 20 in Bissau. Of these traditional healers, 46 were women (<b>Annex 25</b>) These healers gave examples of plants that could be used as alternatives. They are working together with OZDH to produce a manual on plant-based alternatives (<b>Annex 1</b>). In Senegal, 28 traditional healers (20 men and 8 women) were engaged in the project. During the campaign and following a Knowledge-Sharing workshop on the use of plants as an alternative to vulture parts in Diaobé in November 2024, an association of traditional healers was created. At this workshop, the healers talked about the effectiveness of plant parts in traditional medicine and the importance of using them as alternatives to vulture parts.</p> <p>The president of the Diaobé traditional healers spoke of the effectiveness of various plant parts in traditional medicine. He cited the roots, leaves, bark, fruit and flowers of trees, which can be used to treat a wide range of problems. The representative of the women traditional practitioners announced the existence of 1,533 trees used in traditional and cultural pharmacopoeia, the most important of which are:- the Kapok tree (<i>Ceiba pentandra</i>), 'the king of trees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tabahi (<i>Cola cordifolia</i>), 'the village chief of trees.</li> <li>- African Mahogany (<i>Khaya senegalensis</i>), 'the doctor of trees.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The dwarf tree (<i>Parkia biglobosa</i>);</li> <li>- The Apple of Sodom tree (<i>Calotropis procera</i>). (<b>Annex:23, 26</b>)</li> </ul>
<b>Output 3.</b> Output 3 Lessons are shared nationally and regionally and implementation of CITES Decisions, the CMS Vulture MsAP and the Sub-Regional Action Plan addressing the direct persecution of vultures in West Africa.	
<p>Output indicator 3.1</p> <p>Lessons learned from the pilot behaviour change compiled by Y2 and shared through internal community of learning, the BirdLife Africa Vulture Conservation Forum and within 2 relevant national and regional fora by EOP.</p>	<p>The project progress was presented at the BirdLife Council of African Partnership in Senegal, September 2024, with contributions from Senegal and Guinea-Bissau (<b>Annex 65, 86, 87</b>).</p> <p>On World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD), organised 2024 by various organisations in Guinea Bissau in October, ODZH took the opportunity to raise awareness among the participants of the importance of vultures. The conference was held at the Pedra Hermano Battisti school, close to the Bandim market, which the major market for animal parts sold for traditional medicinal in Bissau. Participants included the Director-General of Forests and Fauna (DGFF), the Judicial Police (PJ), the Ministry of the Environment, Biodiversity and Climate Action (MABAC), the Association of Traditional Healers (PROMETRA), the Nature and Environment Protection Brigade, the Institute of Biodiversity and Protected Areas (IBAP), the Coastal Planning Office (GPC) and ODZH. A radio debate on vultures was broadcast on Pindjiguite on 12 October 2024 (<b>Annex 88</b>).</p> <p>Ramatoulaye Diallo, the NCD's head of conservation and one of the project leaders in Senegal, presented the project to a variety of conservation organisation representatives, including academics, teachers, students, national park representatives, Wetland International representatives, and Centre for Ecological Monitoring (CSE) representatives. This was at the inception workshop of the national working group for the development of a national action plan for vulture conservation in Senegal. (<b>Annex 89</b>).</p> <p>By using social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, the partners were able to expand their reach far beyond local borders. This allowed them to connect with an international audience, raise awareness among different communities, and enhance the project's visibility on a global scale. This digital approach maximized the impact of initiatives by promoting broader engagement and ensuring the effective dissemination of key messages.</p>
<p>Output indicator 3.2</p> <p>National vulture strategies influenced by lessons from this project in the 3 target countries by end of project and recommendations taken up by decision-makers and implementers in other West African countries. Baseline: national strategies in development in Guinea Bissau</p>	<p>The three partners collaborated with various government institutions that are engaged in vulture conservation particularly CITES and CMS focal points. In Gambia, WABSA conducted the awareness raising activities together with Department of Wildlife Management, interacted with communities to understand the knowledge they have on vultures and how to deal with threats (<b>Annex 24,25</b>). In Guinea-Bissau, ODZH collaborated with five affiliated sectoral healer associations affiliated with PROMETRA and various local government structures (Veterinary, Nature and Environment Protection Brigade, Forest Guard, Public Order Police, Border Guard, Fiscal Action Brigade, General Directorate of Trade Inspection, Judicial Police, religious leaders, chiefs, etc.) Gambia and Guinea-Bissau were largely limited by resources to move forward with development of national strategies. In Senegal, NCD engaged the CITES and CMS focal persons,</p>

	<p>updating them on project progress. By the end of the project, the process of developing a vulture action plan for Senegal had begun (<b>Annex 67, 68, 69</b>). BirdLife represented by Oumar Guisse made a presentation on 25 March 2025 on the West Africa Vulture Conservation Action Plan, which is based on the CMS Vulture Multi-species Action Plan (<b>Annex 70</b>).</p> <p>The project partners based in Senegal (NCD) and Gambia (WABSA) responded to the questionnaire which was used to collect information on the mid-term review of the CMS Vulture MsAP based on the work they have been doing, particularly Objective 4.</p>
<p>Output indicator 3.3</p> <p>Scale up intervention action plan in Senegal, The Gambia, and Guinea Bissau is available by EOP</p>	<p>Senegal, with leadership from NCD, started the develop a national vulture action plan with the support of a renewable energy company, Infinity Power (<b>Annex 67,68 69</b>). Thanks to this action plan and its forthcoming implementation, vulture conservation efforts in Senegal will be maintained. The supervision of the Diaobé slaughterhouse by an agent will help to maintain the efforts made as part of this project. In Guinea-Bissau, discussions have taken place between the ODZH and the government authorities and the CITES focal point on vulture conservation and the idea of further developing a national action plan. Although an action plan was initially undertaken in Guinea Bissau, it has been delayed due to lack of funds (<b>Annex 16</b>). To ensure the sustainability of the project, ODZH in collaboration with PROMETRA are developing a manual on alternative medicinal plants. The aim of the manual is to strengthen the skills of traditional healers, promote the sustainable use of plants and reduce dependence on vulture parts. It will also serve as a reference for research, advocacy and public policy on traditional medicine (<b>Annex 1</b>). In The Gambia, efforts to introduce alternative livelihoods, such as the distribution of guinea fowl to the population, are yielding promising results. The number of guinea fowl has increased from 60 to 602, demonstrating rapid and encouraging progress (<b>Annex 9, 81</b>). This initiative appears to be effective, offering beneficiaries a sustainable source of income and reducing their dependence on the trade in vulture parts. This type of action could serve as a model for other countries and inspire future conservation and community development projects. In addition, the social marketing campaign has reached a wide and diverse audience, enabling people to learn about the role of vultures and the impact of their disappearance on human health and the environment. This project has helped to raise public awareness by providing lasting knowledge that will help to preserve vulture populations in the three countries for future generations.</p>
<p>Output Indictor3.4</p> <p>National CMS and CITES authorities supported to share lessons relevant to CMS Vulture MsAP and CITES Decisions, and input where appropriate to convention dialogues, targeting Animals Committee in 2024 and CMS COP14 in 2023/24.</p>	<p>BirdLife International, Preventing Extinctions Coordinator and Senior and Vulture Conservation Officers for Southern and East Africa contributed to the drafting of the CMS Vulture MsAP mid-term review and shared lessons from their engagements in West Africa on belief-based use of vulture parts. Fadzai Matsvimbo attended the Regional National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan in South Africa in 2024 where she had a side meeting with CITES, CMS, CBD focal points from West Africa in which she encouraged member states to implement the West Africa Vulture Conservation Action Plan (<b>Annex 94</b>).</p>

Monitoring of assumptions	
<b>Assumption 1:</b> <i>Traditional healers are willing to engage and share truthfully, supported by participatory discussions and triangulation with other sources.</i>	The assumption held true. The meetings between the partners and the traditional healers were fruitful, with the latter indicating that they were willing to work to find solutions to the use of vulture parts in traditional medicine. Some healers made recommendations for alternatives ( <b>Annex 21, 29, 32</b> ). In Guinea Bissau, a collaboration between traditional healers and ODZH, are in a process of developing a manual for the use of plant-based alternatives. ( <b>Annex 1</b> )
<b>Assumption 2:</b> <i>Survey participants are representative of the target communities based on informed selection. Assumption held true.</i>	The social marketing training courses helped the partners to segment their target audience, produce stakeholder matrices, etc. to refine their target audience ( <b>Annex 71,84</b> ). The survey participants are representative of the target communities, and interviews were held in the various communities with traditional healers, women's associations, butchers and traders ( <b>Annex 3, 4, 5, 13</b> ).
<b>Assumption 3:</b> <i>There are alternatives to vulture parts that traditional healers are willing to use, supported by collaboration and based on experience.</i>	The assumption held true. Plant-based alternatives other non-wildlife-based methods, such as the use of Koranic verses were suggested during surveys and workshops as replacements of the use of vulture parts. In The Gambia, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau traditional healers are ready to use these solutions ( <b>Annex 12, 21, 26, 29, 32</b> ). During the workshop on Knowledge Sharing about the Use of Plants as an Alternative to Vulture parts in Senegal ( <b>Annex 21</b> ), held in November 2024, the traditional healers highlighted the existence of <b>1,533 trees</b> utilized in traditional and cultural pharmacopoeia.
<b>Assumption 4:</b> <i>Vultures can be viewed favourably, based on well-designed communications and experience.</i>	The assumption held true. This was shown by the reaction of participants in the radio programmes, the creation of an association of traditional healers in Senegal, the firm commitment of the deputy mayor of Diaobé, women's groups and the butchers' association. However, it is important to carry out a post-project evaluation to clearly identify these changes ( <b>Annex 21, 28, 33</b> ).
<b>Assumption 5:</b> <i>Traditional healers are trusted community members and likely to be key influencers, a change in their behaviour would increase the potential for change in customer attitudes towards vultures.</i>	This remains true, as evidenced, interalia, by the expert's workshop held in Senegal where traditional healers highlighted the existence of many plants that can be used as alternatives to vulture's parts. Same was highlighted during workshop in Gambia with traditional healers. As for Guinea Bissau their plant-based manual which is in production in collaboration between ODZH and traditional healers ( <b>Annex 1,12, 21</b> )

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

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<b>Impact:</b>			
<b>Outcome:</b> A pilot Social Marketing Campaign, promoting vultures and engaging traditional healers in 10 communities in Senegal, The Gambia and Guinea Bissau reduces demand for vulture parts and informs scaling up.	0.1 By EOP, the proportion of consumers who know and value the role of vultures and recognise them as valuable species and identify them with pride is at least 60% of the target audience (n=70). 0.2 By EOP, the number of traditional healers who accepts to use non-animal alternatives increased by 50% (n=70). 0.3 By EOP, at least 3 West African countries have included key recommendations from this project into their national vulture strategies/action plans. 0.4 By EOP, vulture populations in the three vulture strongholds are maintained at the baseline and zero mass poisoning incidences are recorded in the piloted communities. 0.5 By EOP, increased capacity from project partners in conducting social marketing and social change M&E	0.1 and 0.2 Final report with summary results of Endline questionnaire survey and Semi-structured interviews with consumers and traditional healers. 0.3 National vulture action plans derived from the sub-regional action plan to address the direct persecution of vultures in other West African countries. 0.4 Baseline and EOP vulture monitoring surveys showcasing stable population and Africa Wildlife Poisoning Database shows no mass poisoning events in project focal areas. 0.5 Training attendees' lists, Master class on train the trainer, toolkits to guide trainers on conducting SM & social change M&E.	
<b>Output 1</b> The drivers and influencers of belief-based use of vulture parts are determined by Y1 Q2 and inform the design of a pilot social marketing campaign.	1.1 By Y1 Q2, the knowledge, attitude and practice as well as socio demographics of the target audience are understood in 10 target communities (at least 350 people, 50% women). 1.2 By Y1 Q3, pilot social marketing campaigns are designed.	1.1.1 Questionnaire survey and Semi structured interview guide for baseline data collection with consumers, traditional healers, hunters, traders. 1.1.2 Progress report with summary baseline results. 1.2 Social marketing strategies.	

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
	<p>1.3 By EOP, the socio-economic impact of subsequent interventions is known and opportunities for alternative livelihoods for hunters, traders and traditional healers identified in 3 West African countries for post-project action. Target: 55 traders and 35 hunters surveyed across 3 countries.</p> <p>1.4 By Q1 a baseline of vulture populations in target locations is established.</p> <p>1.5 By EOP, at least 6 members of staff from 3 grassroots conservation organisations have increased capacity in social research M&amp;E.</p> <p>2.1 By the end of the project,</p>	<p>1.3 Report on surveys and Semi structured interview results.</p> <p>1.4 Report on vulture monitoring surveys in the three countries building on previous surveys conducted.</p> <p>1.5 Training attendees' lists, Master class on train the trainer, toolkits to guide trainers on conducting SM &amp; social change M&amp;E.</p>	
<p><b>Output 2</b></p> <p>Improved understanding of the role and value of vultures by consumers in 10 pilot communities and increased engagement of 35 traditional healers towards finding alternatives to vulture parts.</p>	<p>2.1 the proportion of traditional healers/consumers who understand that belief-based use is causing vulture decline is at least 60% of the target audience (n=140) against baseline.</p> <p>2.2 By the end of the project, the proportion of consumers</p>	<p>2.12.1 and 2.2 Baseline reports. Final report with summary Endline questionnaire survey and Semi-structured interview results with consumers, traditional healers, hunters, traders.</p> <p>2.3 List of alternatives to vulture parts agreed with traditional healers.</p>	



Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
	<p>who have a positive attitude towards traditional healers who do not use vulture parts increases by 60% (n=70).</p> <p>2.3 By the end of the project, at least 50% of traditional healers are engaged in establishing a list of potential non-animal-based alternatives to vulture parts and mechanism put in place for its adoption (n=70).</p>		
<p><b>Output 3</b></p> <p>Lessons are shared nationally and regionally and implementation of CITES Decisions, the CMS Vulture MsAP and the Sub-Regional Action Plan addressing the direct persecution of vultures in West Africa.</p>	<p>3.1 Lessons learned from the pilot behaviour change compiled by Y2 and shared through internal community of learning, the BirdLife Africa Vulture Conservation Forum and within 2 relevant national and regional fora by EOP.</p> <p>3.2 National vulture strategies influenced by lessons from this project in the 3 target countries by end of project and</p>	<p>3.1.1 Case studies from the 3 target countries.</p> <p>3.1.2 Photo and video stories shared on BirdLife and Hatch websites.</p> <p>3.1.3 Reports from outcomes of events attended (e.g., Africa Vulture Forum, IUCN Specialist Group, ECOWAS West Africa Action plan steering meetings)</p> <p>3.2.1 Report on recommendations included in National vulture strategies in</p>	

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
	<p>recommendations taken up by decision-makers and implementers in other West African countries.</p> <p>Baseline: national strategies in development in Guinea Bissau.</p> <p>3.3 Scale up intervention action plan in Senegal, The Gambia, and Guinea Bissau is available by EOP.</p> <p>3.4 National CMS and CITES authorities supported to share lessons relevant to CMS Vulture MsAP and CITES Decisions, and input where appropriate to convention dialogues, targeting Animals Committee in 2024 and CMS COP14 in 2023/24.</p>	<p>West African countries.</p> <p>3.3 Scale up action plan document in Senegal, The Gambia, and Guinea Bissau.</p> <p>3.4 CMS Multispecies Action Plan, CITES draft decisions text feeding into Animal Committee.</p>	
<p><b>Activities</b> (each activity is numbered according to the output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1)</p> <p>1.1 Identify focal areas to pilot the social marketing scheme in each country based on data from market research conducted previously.</p> <p>1.2 Conduct training for project staff on social marketing approaches and design and social change M&amp;E.</p> <p>1.3 Design social marketing research including qualitative and quantitative research questions and sampling strategy. Review surveys with appropriate consultants</p> <p>1.4 Engage/recruit participants (healers, consumers and traders) and conduct quantitative and qualitative surveys, record results and analyse data</p> <p>1.5 Design the social marketing strategy including description of target audience segments, and design of branding materials, messaging etc</p> <p>1.6 Analyse existing vulture survey data, conduct baseline vulture monitoring surveys in target locations and establish baseline population to be maintained.</p> <p>1.7 Identify and work with governance structures for traditional healers e.g., traditional healers' associations co-design and participate in focus group conversations.</p>			

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<p>1.8 Conduct focus group sessions, 1-1 interviews with key traditional healers</p> <p>1.9 Input traditional healer perspectives into social marketing strategy to ensure they are respected and not villainised.</p> <p>2.1 Implement the social marketing strategies for consumers (likely to include awareness raising, using influential figures)</p> <p>2.2 Conduct general awareness sessions with traditional healers on the role and value of vultures.</p> <p>2.3 With traditional healers, develop solutions to help them move to using alternatives to vulture or other endangered species parts.</p> <p>2.2 Conduct quantitative research to understand impact of project on knowledge, attitude and practices of customers and healers.</p> <p>2.3 Conduct end of project vulture monitoring surveys</p> <p>2.4 Analyse data from pre and post quantitative surveys to assess impact of social marketing strategy and work with healers.</p> <p>2.4 Document what worked and didn't work as part of the social marketing strategy.</p> <p>3.1 Lessons learned developed into guidance documents and shared on internal and external platforms such as HATCH, BirdLife Africa social media, CMS Raptors MOU case studies</p> <p>3.2 Present lessons learned to CMS Raptors MOU, IUCN Vulture Specialist Group,</p> <p>3.3 Develop and share case study documents to incorporate into West Africa Action Plan reporting process and national action plans.</p> <p>3.4 Develop and document national action plans based on project results</p> <p>3.5 Present and attend at relevant subregional, regional and international conferences</p> <p>3.6 Based on impact assessment, design a scale up plan that adapts the social marketing strategy and incentive package for traditional healers.</p> <p>3.7 National CITES and CMS authorities engaged in the project in all 3 countries</p> <p>3.8 Project outputs support advancement of CITES and CMS agendas on West African vultures in response to Decisions taken at COP19 (2022) and the Vulture MsAP.</p>			

**Table 1 Project Standard Indicators**

Please see the Standard Indicator Guidance for more information on how to report in this section, including appropriate disaggregation. N.B. The annual total is not cumulative. For each year, only include the results achieved in that year. The total achieved should be the sum of the annual totals.

IWTCF Indicator number	Name of indicator	Units	Disaggregation	Year Total 1	Year Total 2	Year Total 3	Total date to	Total planned during the project
IWTCF-A01	Number of people who received training in sustainable livelihood skills	People	Men Women	15 15			30	55
IWTCF-A008	Number of sustainable livelihoods enterprises established	Number		1			1	1
IWTCF-D03	Number of local/national organisations with improved capability and capacity as a result of the project.	Number of organisations	Organisation Type.	5			5	3

**Table 2 Publications**

Title	Type (e.g. journals, manual, CDs)	Detail (authors, year)	Gender of Lead Author	Nationality of Lead Author	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. weblink or publisher if not available online)
In stronghold of Guinea-Bissau, endangered vultures soar again.	News Article	Sam Bradpiece, 2023	Male	UK	Christian Science Monitor	<a href="https://www.csmonitor.com/World/Africa/2023/0606/In-stronghold-of-Guinea-Bissau-endangered-vultures-soar-again">https://www.csmonitor.com/World/Africa/2023/0606/In-stronghold-of-Guinea-Bissau-endangered-vultures-soar-again</a>
Belief-based use of vultures in West Africa: a review	Research Article	Michael Bode Agunbiade, Olayinka Amos Oladosu, Klaus Birkhofer, Darcy Ogada, 2025	3 Males, 1 Female	Nigeria, Sweden, U.S.A	African Journals Online, Vulture News	<a href="https://www.ajol.info/index.php/vulnew/article/view/295529">https://www.ajol.info/index.php/vulnew/article/view/295529</a>

<b>Title</b>	<b>Type</b> (e.g. journals, manual, CDs)	<b>Detail</b> (authors, year)	<b>Gender of Lead Author</b>	<b>Nationality of Lead Author</b>	<b>Publishers</b> (name, city)	<b>Available from</b> (e.g. weblink or publisher if not available online)
Mapping suitable habitat for Hooded Vultures <i>Necrosyrtes monachus</i> in one of the last West African strongholds for the species, The Gambia	Research Article	Michael Bode Agunbiade, Fagimba Camara (WABSA), Jallow Mawdo, Chefor Fotang, Elvis Tangwa, Olayinka Amos Oladosu, Luc Roscelin Dongmo Tédonzong, Yisa Ginath Yuh, Darcy Ogada, Klaus Birkhofer, 2025	9 Males, 1 Female	Nigeria Gambia Cameroun U.S.A Germany	African Journals Online, Ostrich: Journal of African Ornithology	<a href="https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ostrich/article/view/297008">https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ostrich/article/view/297008</a>

## Checklist for submission

	Check
Different reporting templates have different questions, and it is important you use the correct one. Have you checked you have used the <b>correct template</b> (checking fund, type of report (i.e. Annual or Final), and year) and <b>deleted the blue guidance text</b> before submission?	X
<b>Is the report less than 10MB?</b> If so, please email to <a href="mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com">BCF-Reports@niras.com</a> putting the project number in the subject line.	
<b>Is your report more than 10MB?</b> If so, please consider the best way to submit. One zipped file, or a download option, is recommended. We can work with most online options and will be in touch if we have a problem accessing material. If unsure, please discuss with <a href="mailto:BCF-Reports@niras.com">BCF-Reports@niras.com</a> about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line.	X
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, <b>do these meet the outlined requirements (see section 14)?</b>	X
<b>Have you included means of verification?</b> You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	X
<b>Have you provided an updated risk register?</b> If you have an existing risk register you should provide an updated version alongside your report. If your project was funded prior to this being a requirement, you are encouraged to develop a risk register.	
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors?	X
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	X
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	