

Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Main 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 project end date.

Submit to: BCF-Reports@niras.com including your project ref in the subject line.

IWT Challenge Fund Project Information

Project reference	IWT086
Project title	Mainstreaming traditional hunting communities of western Nepal in tiger conservation
Country(ies)	Nepal
Lead Organisation	National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC)
Project Partner(s)	Bardia National Park, Banke National Park, Tharu Women Upliftment Center
IWTCF grant value	£346,276.00
Start/end dates of project	15 April 2021 15 March 2024
Project Leader’s name	Dr. Naresh [REDACTED]
Project website/blog/social media	https://www.facebook.com/NTNCBARDIA https://www.facebook.com/groups/301595715022472
Report author(s) and date	Aji [REDACTED] July 7, 2024

1. Project summary

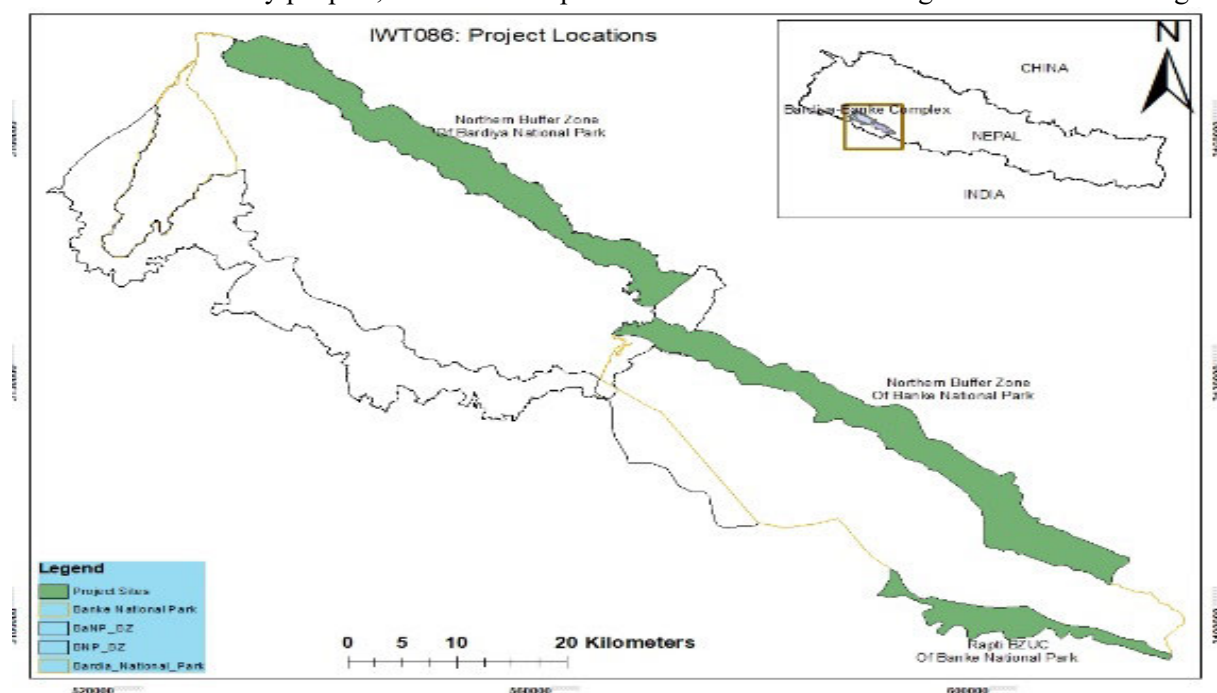
Bardia - Banke complex representing Bardia National Park and Banke National Park and their buffer zones in western Nepal provides a key habitat for tiger in Nepal. With current largest population of tiger, it also provides an extended habitat for tigers throughout the northern remote Siwalik Hills (Thapa and Kelly 2016). Thus, the complex has potential to hold increasing tiger population and acts as climate refugia.

However, the complex is also identified as a hotspot for illegal hunting and poaching. DNA-analysis of six cases of seizures in recent past revealed it originated from this complex (Karmacharya et al. 2018). During COVID-19 lockdown, a tiger was killed by poachers using hand-made snare (<https://kathmandupost.com/province-no-5/2020/9/26/tiger-carcass-found-inside-Bardia-national-park>). Two tiger skins were seized from BaNP periphery, and twenty-seven tiger prey were also poached for bush meat (BaNP 2019) which may further be accelerated due to socio-economic difficulty created by COVID-19 pandemic. It is estimated that over 20,000 youths working abroad (Middle - East and India) have returned due to job loss in this complex and the unemployment situation may further fuel up poaching and hunting. Moreover, the recent release of jailed notorious poachers by the court has come as additional threat to tiger conservation in the complex (<https://www.nepalitimes.com/banner/lax-laws-make-nepal-haven-for-tiger-poachers/>). These recent seizures indicate re-emergence of poaching in the complex. If adequate measures are not taken to improve wildlife enforcement and local livelihood, the situation may further worsen, and

tiger conservation will be severely compromised. Therefore, this project has focused to strengthen efforts to offset the economic impacts of COVID-19 in these communities and engage them on wildlife conservation together with strengthening wildlife enforcement.

Because of the underlying poverty and geographical remoteness, hunting, which was primarily for the purpose of bush-meat in the past, is now commercialized owing to growing road networks and highway markets (Bhattarai et al. 2016). It is associated with prevalent poverty, inadequate presence of park authorities and geographical remoteness (Bhattarai et al. 2016). The entire area is inhabited by the poor communities representing indigenous minorities and have always been left behind by the mainstream of development. Specially, during this pandemic, these communities are bearing increased hardship to support their livelihood. Therefore, the project intends to provide alternative livelihood to the people whose livelihood is dependent on bush-meat, forest resources and are affected by the IWT.

In 2019 alone, 9 people lost their life from tiger attack in this complex (~10 human casualties per annum). Similarly, ~450 livestock are depredated by large carnivores annually and they hardly get compensation to these losses. In retaliation, the affected farmers sometimes kill tigers and other wildlife species through poisoning, snaring and gunshots (~2 tigers/leopard killing per annum). These wildlife parts are often smuggled into the black markets. Thus, this project has been focused to establish the measures to minimize human wildlife conflict and strengthen compensations mechanism and decrease retaliatory killing of tiger and other wildlife significantly by obtaining support from the community peoples, which also helps to check the entrance of illegal traders in the villages.



2. Project Partnerships

To implement the project, NTNC coordinated with two governmental organizations: Bardia National Park and Banke National Park and two Non-Governmental local organizations: Ujjalo Nepal and Tharu Women Upliftment Center. Partnership among the organizations as established to work for human-wildlife coexistence, wildlife research, community mobilizations and engagement for wildlife conservation in Bardia - Banke Complex. This coordinated closely with the local organizations in project planning, monitoring, and evaluation to the decision-making process. Inception workshop and coordination meeting was organized before implementing the project activities in the project sites. Bardia and Banke National Parks, having their checkpoint in sites near to project locations directly helped to implement, monitor and evaluate project activities. Though the project sites have some geographical remoteness, project activities were implemented successfully with the help of local communities, community schools, local cooperatives, traditional women groups and particularly, with the help of Buffer Zone User Committee (BZUC). BZUC provided direct support to collect the socio-economic data of community members residing close to the forest area, beneficiary identification, and monitoring and regularly updating field progress. Community Based Anti-Poaching Unit (CBAPU) of respective project sites were involved in conducting household survey and also conducted

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illegal wildlife trade control awareness session to educate community people about safety from the aggressive wildlife and raise their awareness on the importance of wildlife conservation.

3. Project Achievements

3.1 Outputs

Output 1: Increased community stewardship in conservation through diversified alternative livelihood opportunities

Fourty households belonging to poor marginalized and hunting communities adopted homestay support for the alternative livelihood. Among them, eight homestays are completely managed by the women, and the IWT affected household manages 21 homestays. These IWT-affected households had voluntarily handed over their hunting guns to the park management in the park's anti-gun campaign in year 1. Sixteen existing homestays were also strengthened to prepare them to better cater to tourists since they are now connected to the Highway. With these activities, we expect the northern Chure area will be emerge as a new destination for adventure tourism, especially catering to domestic tourists. In the longer run, this will contribute to generate sustainable employment opportunities in the local communities and eventually increase conservation stewardship in communities. Before implementing homestay development activities, cooking and hospitality trainings were conducted to selected homestay operators.

A total of 608 poor and marginalized peoples residing near to forest boundary who could not produce crops from the field because of the frequent intervention of wildlife, were provided with non-palatable crops such as turmeric seed, walnut plants, avocado plants and ginger to provide alternative livelihood strategies. Cash crops, such as turmeric and ginger were chosen for local climate suitability and high market value in both local and city markets. In addition to this, mushroom cultivation was also promoted as an alternative crop because of no crop raiding risk involved.

A total of 355 predator-proof corals were fully supported to HWC affected households. These households are highly impacted by HWC, mainly livestock predation by leopards and these communities are also known to be involved in poaching and IWT. Therefore, intervening to reduce economic loss from wild predators is seen to be vital for deviating them from poaching/IWT while garnering their positive sentiments to conservation.

Similarly, to instill a sustainable mechanism to engage poor and poaching/IWT prone communities in locally viable livelihood practices, particularly where women are highly marginalized, the project initiated community-banking approach through savings and credit cooperatives. This low interest financing approach has providing soft loans to marginalized and low income women for conducting innovative livelihood activities. We supported 16 women's cooperatives which includes 351 women from targeted category gaining access to the soft loans.

Output 2: Awareness of community towards IWT increased and hunting/poaching decreased

A total of 433 events of community training and community awareness on poaching/IWT, HWC and tiger conservation was conducted. This amounts to reaching 15,849 people on raising conservation awareness and sensitizing them on legal aspects of poaching/IWT. Poaching sensitive areas of the northern buffer zone were especially targeted. The project targeted to reach 60% of the population with awareness raising. Total population of project areas is 16,335, thus 97% of the population was reached.

Nineteen CBAPU members became good trainers to engage as social change agents and successfully conducting behavior change campaigns, aiming to change human behavior for human-wildlife coexistence and biodiversity conservation.

Two IWT booklets on tiger and elephant conservation were developed and distributed in the communities. The booklets provides knowledge on poaching and IWT issues of tigers and elephants.

Similarly, we organized 83 school-level awareness classes in 14 schools of the northern buffer zone areas. A total of 2,510 students were taught about poaching/IWT and tiger conservation. The project had originally targeted reaching 50 schools to conduct awareness classes, reaching at least 6,000 students, however, it was later known that there are only 15 schools altogether and the number of students in these schools does not reach this target of 6,000. Therefore, despite our best intentions, this target was not possible to fulfil.

Output 3: Enhanced Capacity of frontline park staff to handle IWT

The project provided wildlife crime control training to 70 frontline staff covering the topics – law enforcement roles and responsibilities of front-line officials, wildlife law and legal procedures, crime investigation techniques, weapons, evidence, forensics, animal parts, prosecution and judiciary procedures were the major session. Similarly, the project supported to organize 13 WCCB coordination meetings.

We have established an IWT database to manage poaching and IWT data from the northern buffer zone areas of Bardia NP. The Joint Command Operation Cell of the National Park and Nepal Army manages this database. In this process of establish the database, the project supported to establish a new Army check post in the Chisapani area of Bardia NP which adds to surveillance capacity of the park.

Project also supported on coordination meetings of the district-WCCBs of Rara, Banke, Bardia and Surkhet districts. Altogether, 13 WCCB meetings were supported by the project. Similarly, two law enforcement training was organized to strengthen wildlife crime control skills of frontline staff of National Park, DFO, and the corridor areas of Bardia district. Six RRTs activate in both parks were strengthened by providing logistics and equipment.

In order to share project learnings that would help to strengthen wildlife crime control in the western terai region; a regional workshop was organized involving various stakeholders. The workshop was fruitful to internalize project learnings in identifying ways to mainstream IWT affected families in conservation, create more investment of law enforcement capacity building and pilot innovative HWC insurance schemes to mitigate HWC.

3.2 Outcome

0.1 At least 75% of ~250 households involved in hunting adopted alternative livelihood options and give up hunting and poaching by year III:

We revised this target after the project area for this activity to be the communities of Chure hills. Since we worked at community level, we were able to include much more beneficiaries than originally planned, and especially our community-banking approach was able to absorb more beneficiary households. Thus, we were able to work with more than 600 household in this component.

On an average 20% increase in monthly household income of those 75% households by year III (baseline \$ 1133 in Banke, \$1086 in Bardia district and \$1086 in Surkhet district):

The average income of targeted communities was \$1,100 per annum (average of Banke, Bardia and Surkhet districts) in year 1. The project supported the beneficiary households to adopt cash crop farming and homestay business as alternative livelihood. In year 3, the beneficiaries have been successful in generating income from these livelihood measures. Post-intervention socio-economic survey in year 3 shows that the individual homestays receive about 20-25 guests per year that helps to generate on average NPR 87,500 annually (\$654). Similarly, farmers engaged in cash crop production earn on average NPR 16,450 (\$125) annually by selling their products in local markets. Thus, this is an average increase in annual income of beneficiary households by 58.5%.

0.2 >25% decline in human wildlife conflict cases and 50% reduce in retaliatory killings of wildlife by year III (baseline = ~450 livestock depredation per annum, ~10 human casualties per annum, ~2 tigers/leopard killing per annum):

- As per DNPWC's annual report of fiscal year 2023/24, there were 259 cases of livestock depredation by tigers in Bardia NP – this is a decline by 42.5% of tiger related HWC cases.
- As per DNPWC's annual report of fiscal year 2023/24, 6 people were killed by tigers. This is a reduction by 40% in human casualties by tigers.
- Similarly, as per NTNC-BCP records, there was one tiger killed on retaliation in Kailali buffer zone area of Bardia NP. This is a reduction in retaliatory of tiger killing by 50%.

0.3 Wildlife poaching cases declined at least by 25% by year III (baseline = ~45 per annum):

As per DNPWC's annual report of fiscal year 2023/24, there were 22 legal cases handled by Bardia NP, out of which 3 cases were related to poaching/IWT. This is a reduction in poaching cases by 93%.

0.4 30% tiger population and 10% prey base increased by 2024 (Baseline = 108 tigers and prey base density of 97 and 15 per km² in BNP and BaNP, respectively in 2018): As per tiger nation-wide tiger census conducted by DNPWC in 2022, there are 125 tiger in Bardia NP. This is an increase of tiger numbers by 13.6% in Bardia NP. Prey-base density is BNP and adjoining forest id 90.2 per km² and prey-base density in BaNP is 32.6 per km². There is a decline in BNP's prey-base density by 7% and increase in BaNP's prey-base density by 117.3%.

3.3 Monitoring of assumptions

Outcome level assumptions:

Assumption 1: Country remains committed to increasing its tiger and other wildlife populations

Nepal's commitment in tiger conservation is evident from the achievement of Tx2 goal pledged in 2010 St. Petersburg Summit. This has been possible from the previous five-year tiger conservation action plans that were rigorously implemented by the government, partner organizations and local communities. The current 10-year action plan sets more ambitious goals to secure tigers in the long-term. Thus, the country remains committed to increasing tiger and other wildlife populations.

Assumption 2: Covid 19 pandemic will not further worsen the community engagement, livelihood and society

The COVID-19 outbreak had brought some setbacks mainly from increased tiger poaching incidents triggered by unemployment issues in buffer zone communities, and this was the main reason behind developing this project – to address the issue by strengthening law enforcement and improving economic conditions of the affected communities. The project has been successfully implemented, especially in the first year despite the COVID challenges. Due to strict government enforcement, the project areas did not experience prolonged COVID impacts, which helped the project to run smoothly.

Output level assumptions:

Assumption 1: Tourism industry will revive by mid-2021 passing the current stage of COVID-19 pandemic

Tourist visitors declined by 80% in 2020 and this decline further went down in 2021. This assumption did not hold true. However, tourist arrival figures increased from 2022 and reached over a historic 1,000,000 in 2023.

Assumption 2: Local municipalities/line agencies will also collaborate with project interventions

One of the key strengths of the project was the collaborative approach to implementation. The project successfully worked jointly with the BZUC, local NGOs and national park authorities. The project contributed to local municipalities' socio-economic development goals, helped to strengthen poaching/IWT control of the national parks and contributed to the social outreach of local NGOs operating in the project areas.

Assumption 3: Local communities show willingness to change attitudes and participate in project activities

The project was designed around raising conservation awareness and developing conservation incentives in the target communities such that involvement of local people in poaching/IWT would decrease. The communities received the project positively and participated in project activities that has helped to bring change in attitudes to tigers and wildlife. The project reached over 15,000 people from awareness activities that helped to fill the knowledge and awareness gap about tiger conservation, legal and conservation consequences of poaching, and how locals can play the assumed role of conservation stewardship. Similarly, project supported over 600 people in adopting alternative livelihood that provides the income need that would otherwise be fulfilled through involvement in illegal activities like poaching/IWT.

Assumption 4: Park retains the trained staff during project period

As per the government's rule, park staff are normally transferred to other parks in 2 years time. Accordingly, many staff of Banke and Bardia National Parks have transferred while some still remain in the parks, and this assumption is not fully met.

3.4 Impact

The impact-level contribution of this project is to sustain growth of tiger and its prey base with resilient local livelihood in Banke-Bardia complex. By examining the progress towards outcome indicators in section 3.3 above, the project is contributing to achieving this impact of sustained growth of tiger and its prey base. However, it is also to be noted that expected increase in prey-base density of BNP is not achieved. As for developing resilient local livelihood, the project has engaged more than 600 households in alternative livelihood measures that provides alternative means of generating income, gradually making them less prone to be used by wildlife criminals. In the project's viewpoint, this will contribute to household's economic empowerment that will avoid such external forces that drive them into poaching/IWT. By year 3, cases of wildlife poaching declined by 93% in Banke-Bardia complex

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which is supported by project's contribution to wildlife crime control capacity enhancement of frontline staff, awareness raiding and promotion of alternative livelihood among poaching/IWT involved communities.

4. Contribution to IWT Challenge Fund Programme Objectives

4.1 Thematic focus

Developing sustainable livelihood: Supporting alternative high values cash crops seed, homestay management support and local cooperative support to the poor, marginalized, people residing close to forest boundary has provided alternative livelihood options for affected households that has helped to increase the average annual income. This change in income provides conditions to give up hunting and poaching and involvement in IWT among the target communities. This outcome is evident from progress towards indicator 0.1.

Strengthen law enforcement: Improved wildlife crime control skills of frontline park staff, mobilization of RRT and IWT database has helped to control poaching an IWT in the Banke-Bardia complex. These outcomes are evident from achievement towards outcome indicators 0.2, 0.3 and 0.4.

Generating poaching/IWT awareness: Raising awareness in poaching and IWT prone communities coupled with promotion of alternative livelihood was the main strategy to disengage local communities from poaching/IWT. In the process of awareness generation, 433 community awareness campaigns and 83 school level classes were conducted, reaching a mass of about 18,000 people. Nineteen local youths (CBAPU members) were capacitated to become community trainers on wildlife conservation. The target audience from project sites were relatively less knowledgeable about wildlife conservation and this project helped to raise awareness. Although awareness alone cannot be a deterrent factor, it can best work if this can be approached by addressing other root causes. Therefore, by addressing livelihood issues and raising poaching/IWT awareness, the project has been able to support in reducing poaching incidents in Banke-Bardia complex, as shown in section 3.2 above.

4.2 Impact on species in focus

Royal Bengal Tiger is an umbrella species of the sub-tropical ecosystems. Reduction in poaching threat to tiger thus will contribute to the conservation and protection of the species particularly Royal Bengal Tiger, Common Leopard, Greater one-horned rhinoceros and Pangolins. As per recent national tiger census, the landscape holds 150 tigers, which was previously 108. This tiger population growth presents an increase in tiger population by 13.6% and 16% in Bardia and Banke National Parks, respectively. Similarly, there is a decline in Bardia NP's prey-base density by 7% and increase in Banake NP's prey-base density by 117.3%. Therefore, the targeted tiger population increase is not fully achieved, and the targeted prey population increase in underachieved in Bardia NP.

4.3 Project support for multidimensional poverty reduction

Primary beneficiaries of the project are communities of the Chure hills who belong to the poor, marginalized and vulnerable category, and the people residing close to the forest boundary who have been facing economic loss from HWC. Because of their poor economic situations, target communities were known to be involved in poaching/IWT and poaching/IWT risk could increase under conditions like COVID-19. This project has focused to change their livelihood practices from forest and wildlife dependency to the alternative income generation measures through cash crop farming, community banking, and HWC mitigation, aiming to help improve their socio-economic condition. A total of 608 beneficiaries were supported to adopt alternative livelihood measures. In the third year of the project, post-intervention survey has showed that average annual income in beneficiary households has increased by 58.5%. This increase in income supports to increase overall well-being of beneficiary households through better access to basic needs such as education and health.

4.4 Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

Please quantify the proportion of women on the Project Board ¹ .	4
Please quantify the proportion of project partners that are led by women, or which have a senior leadership team consisting of at least 50% women ² .	30%

GESI Scale	Description	Put X where you think your project is on the scale
Not yet sensitive	The GESI context may have been considered but the project isn't quite meeting the requirements of a 'sensitive' approach	
Sensitive	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
Empowering	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	
Transformative	The project has all the characteristics of an 'empowering' approach whilst also addressing unequal power relationships and seeking institutional and societal change	

The communities residing in Chure hills are poor and marginalized with less assets (such as land) and live in poor economic conditions. They do not have the option to pursue sustainable livelihood options due to low economic opportunities, and face livelihood challenges from conflict with wildlife. The project thus worked in this area to change the underlying causes that leads to poaching and IWT. Majority of the project beneficiaries come from this background of poverty and involvement in poaching/IWT for income because of limited economic choices.

Women from the target communities have indirect involvement in wildlife poaching. Women bear the more hardship of sustenance when male members are convicted and serve jail term. Therefore, women are highly vulnerable to poaching/IWT and marginalized in the context of low economic opportunities and low capability. This project aimed significant women participation in the project through socio-economic analysis of the project areas in year 1. Women-headed households with poor economic conditions were especially targeted, as well as women from poor economic background who had marginal earning from agriculture and wage, and suffered economic loss from HWC. Sixteen cooperatives, run by the community women, were established to provide low interest loans credits for adopt livelihood measures. A total of 351 women are cooperative members who has access to such small scale financing for operating small green businesses, out of which 325 women have received the loans. This community-banking approach is a self-sustaining revolving fund system, which sustains from monthly deposits of the members and interest paid by burrowers. Additionally, women manage eight homestays proving them with income source and they are decision-makers in their business. Therefore, considering the participation of women and marginalized households who face livelihood challenges, the project has been able to provide equal opportunities for women and marginalized groups of the Chure hills.

5. Monitoring and evaluation

¹ A Project Board has overall authority for the project, is accountable for its success or failure, and supports the senior project manager to successfully deliver the project.

² Partners that have formal governance role in the project, and a formal relationship with the project that may involve staff costs and/or budget management responsibilities.

There were no major changes to the project design since project's approval from Defra. However, as noted in section 3.2 above, the target for livelihood activities was modified.

The M&E system provided a useful guide to monitor progress and make the needed adjustments to the implementation approach as well as pace of implementation. The project's M&E plan provided a good basis to communicate with the park authorities and BZUC, whose roles were significant to smooth project implementation. The project faced no major issues in implementation and project monitoring was carried out as per the M&E plan. M&E role primarily NTNC's, and target and indicator level information was shared with partner organization and their activities were monitored accordingly.

6. Lessons learnt

Project activities were implemented by making initial contract with the BZUC on particular activities which were directly related with community, predator proof corral house, alternative high values cash crops, homestay management and women cooperative for respective project sites. Other activities: administrative, management, training, technical work and reporting were led by the project staffs. If we need to repeat the same work, this project implementation experience recommends starting project on planned time but the project implement modality could be same. Similarly, wildlife damage insurance schemes is necessary to reduce HWC, which also reduces risks of poaching and IWT. Additionally, law enforcement capacity to frontline staff is insufficient of Banke-Bardia complex due to regular transfer of the Park staff, thus capacity building training, particularly on wildlife parts identification and crime scene handling is necessary for frontline staff regularly.

7. Actions taken in response to Annual Report reviews

N/A

8. Sustainability and legacy

Law enforcement capacity: Law enforcement capacity enhancement such as in skills for wildlife parts/products identification and crime scene procedures are regular conducted both by the government and through external source, such as this project, and these training need continuity. From the training feedback and stakeholder interaction workshops, capacity building on developing advanced skills on wildlife crime control and making best use of available technology to combat wildlife crime was identified as additional areas of capacity need.

Poverty reduction: The project was able to bring new livelihood opportunities in targeted communities. Such activities are more relevant to local municipalities who are responsible for improving social welfare in project areas. On the positive side, the project was able to involve the local municipalities in sharing workshops, which provided them with feedback, and experiences on the relation of poverty with wildlife crime and what are feasible measures to uplift these marginalized communities. The project has demonstrated scalability of the implemented livelihood measures and its sustainability will primarily depend on the willingness of local municipalities to take ownership of project's initiatives.

The exit strategy of the project is still valid. To scale up project outcomes, local alternative cash crops production will be collected from local cooperatives, and marketed through the cooperatives. Similarly, the project sites consist of shorter trekking routes that could be combined into a one-week long trek by developing a series of community-based homestays along the route. Hence, for the project sustainability and legacy, upscaling cash crop production and further extension of Chure homestay can provide long-lasting project impact.

9. IWT Challenge Fund Identity

Promoting alternative livelihood activities, capacitated frontline staff on wildlife enforcement, wildlife conservation awareness, reduced community's dependency on bush meat hunting and tiger poaching activities itself are the outcomes of IWT Challenge Fund and its UK government sponsors. Beneficiaries of the project activities were provided information about the sources of funding and purposes of funding. Similarly, in every activity such as in training and coordination meeting project have made program banner including the emblem of IWT Challenge Fund and its UK government sponsors. The funding provided by the IWT challenges Fund is the distinct project addressing the new issues of traditional hunting communities transitioned to alternative livelihood. NTNC, work for nature and wildlife conservation is likely to be familiar with IWT Challenge Fund within Nepal. Besides conservation institutions, many local organizations are not familiar with this IWT Chchallenge Fund are now being familiar.

10. Risk Management

N/A

11. Safeguarding

Has your Safeguarding Policy been updated in the past 12 months?	No
Have any concerns been investigated in the past 12 months	Yes/No
Does your project have a Safeguarding focal point?	Yes Ms. Reetu [REDACTED]
Has the focal point attended any formal training in the last 12 months?	Yes Rising from the Root (Climate Change and Gender) organized by Power-Shift Nepal (January 2024)
What proportion (and number) of project staff have received formal training on Safeguarding?	Past: 60% Planned: 100%
Has there been any lessons learnt or challenges on Safeguarding in the past 12 months? Please ensure no sensitive data is included within responses. None.	
Please describe any community sensitisation that has taken place over the lifetime of the project; include topics covered and number of participants. Human-wildlife co-existence Poaching/IWT awareness	
Have there been any concerns around Health, Safety and Security of your staff over the lifetime of the project? If yes, please outline how this was resolved. None.	

12. Finance and administration

12.1 Project expenditure

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2023/24 Grant (£)	2023/24 Total actual IWTCF Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs (see below)				Exchange rate variation
Consultancy costs				-
Overhead Costs				
Travel and subsistence				Exchange rate variation
Operating Costs				Exchange rate variation
Capital items (see below)				-
Others (see below)				Exchange rate variation
Audit cost				-
TOTAL	67,227.00	63,297.93		

Staff employed (Name and position)	Cost (£)
Mr. Ajit Tumbahamphe	
Mr. Balkisun Tharu	
Mr. Hari Bahadur Chaudhary	
Mr. Hari Lal Tharu	
Mr. Kabi Raj Bhatt	
Mr. Kararu Tharu	
Mr. Khushiram Chaudhary	
Mr. Krishna Kumar Chand	
Mr. Laubastya Tharu	
Mr. Manoj Gautam	
Mr. Pradeshu Chaudhari Tharu	
Mr. Ramjee Babu Thapa	
Mr. Ramraj Chaudhary	
Mr. Tikaram Tharu	
Mr. Phirulal Tharu	
Mrs. Saiti Tharuni	
Ms. Debaka Shiwakoti	
Ms. Nirmala Devi Bhattarai	
Ms. Saiti Tharuni	
TOTAL	20,875.35

Capital items – description	Capital items – cost (£)
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TOTAL	
Other items – description	Other items – cost (£)
TOTAL	

12.2 Additional funds or in-kind contributions secured

Matched funding leveraged by the partners to deliver the project	Total (£)
TOTAL	

Total additional finance mobilised for new activities occurring outside of the project, building on evidence, best practices and the project	Total (£)
TOTAL	

12.3 Value for Money

The project approached to improve socio-economic improvement of target communities through community banking and homestay-based tourism employment. Both approaches have long-term continuity in their underlying concepts. Community banking is self-regenerating and grows with additional members, it can continue providing livelihood loans in long-term, and this demonstrates value for money when compared to the initial investment in establishing the cooperatives. Similarly, the initial cost of establishing homestays will far outweigh the income that the homestay operators will earn in long-term, including the potential employment opportunities that could be generated.

13. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

N/A

**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 Secretariat to publish the content of this section (please leave this line in to indicate your agreement to use any material you provide here).

Fourty homestays now operate within 3 hours walking distance from the main highway and the trekking routes of Mahabharat range can be easily accessed from these homestays. The Chure homestays offer local culture experience to tourists and have good potential to grow as a popular trekking destination in the western terai region. The story behind how the traditional hunting communities are changed into ecotourism operators could be an ideal means for its promotion. Connecting homestay-based ecotourism with the tiger conservation is an outstanding achievement that has good future prospects to strengthen the local economy and carry forward the blend of nature-based tourism and wildlife conservation in Nepal.

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)
GHUMNA JAYAU CHUR E	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dSiweHoLFkifld9LtDcKAJGM_Gg3ZQCi/view?usp=sharing	Promotion videos for Homestay Promotion		Yes
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No

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

Project summary	Progress and achievements
<p>Impact</p> <p>Sustained growth of tiger and its prey base with resilient local livelihood in Banke-Bardiya Complex</p>	<p>As per tiger nation-wide tiger census conducted by DNPWC in 2022, there are 125 tiger in Bardia NP. This is an increase of tiger numbers by 13.6% in Bardia NP. Prey-base density is BNP and adjoining forest id 90.2 per km² and prey-base density in BaNP is 32.6 per km². There is a decline in BNP's prey-base density by 7% and increase in BaNP's prey-base density by 117.3%.</p> <p>608 households are engaged in cash crop farming and 40 local are operating homestay business resulting in increase of income by 58.5%.</p>
<p>Outcome</p> <p>Hunting communities generating income from alternative livelihood, capacitated frontline staff on wildlife enforcement and increased conservation awareness results in reduced community's dependency on bush meat hunting and tiger poaching</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 608 households are engaged in cash crop farming and 40 local are operating homestay business resulting in increase of income by 58.5%. - 42.5% decline in tiger related livestock depredation. - 40% reduction in human casualties by tigers. - 50% decline in retaliatory killing of tigers.
<p>Outcome indicator 0.1</p> <p>At least 75% of ~250 households involved in hunting adopted alternative livelihood options and give up hunting and poaching by year III (baseline = 0)</p>	<p>608 households are engaged in cash crop farming and resulted in increased income. There is a subsequent reduction in poaching related cases by 93%.</p>
<p>0.2 On an average 20% increase in monthly household income of those 75% households by year III (baseline \$ 1133 in Banke, \$1086 in Bardia district and \$1086 in Surkhet district)</p>	<p>Homestay operator earn NRS87500 (\$654) and cash crop farmers earn NRS 16,450 (\$125) annually, which is increment of 58.5% in compare to baseline.</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.2</p> <p>>25% decline in human wildlife conflict cases and 50% reduce in retaliatory killings of wildlife by year III (baseline = ~450 livestock depredation per annum, ~10 human casualties per annum, ~2 tigers/leopard killing per annum)</p>	<p>As per DNPWC's annual report of fiscal year 2023/24, there were 259 cases of livestock depredation by tigers in Bardia NP – this is a decline by 42.5% of tiger related HWC cases and As per DNPWC's annual report of fiscal year 2023/24, 6 people were killed by tigers. This is a reduction by 40% in human casualties by tigers</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.3</p> <p>Wildlife poaching cases declined at least by 25 % by year III (baseline = ~4-5 per annum)</p>	<p>As per DNPWC's annual report of fiscal year 2023/24, there were 22 legal cases handled by Bardia NP, out of which 3 cases were related to poaching/IWT. This is a reduction in poaching cases by 93%.</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.4</p> <p>30% tiger population and 10% prey base increased by 2024 (Baseline = 108 tigers and prey base density of 97 and 15 per km² in BNP and BaNP, respectively in 2018)</p>	<p>As per tiger nation-wide tiger census conducted by DNPWC in 2022, there are 125 tiger in Bardia NP. This is an increase of tiger numbers by 13.6% in Bardia NP. Prey-base density is BNP and adjoining forest id 90.2 per km² and prey-base density in BaNP is 32.6 per km². There is a decline in BNP's prey-base density by 7% and increase in BaNP's prey-base density by 117.3%.</p>

Output 1	
Increased community stewardship in conservation through diversified alternative livelihood opportunities	
Output indicator 1.1 130 households belonging to poor marginalized and hunting communities adopted alternative livelihood by year III (baseline = 0)	608 households belonging to poor marginalized and hunting communities adopted ginger and turmeric farming as alternative cash crops despite traditional farming practices.
Output indicator 1.2. 50 households (at least 50% women-led and IWT affected households) are generating income from homestay tourism (baseline = 0)	A total of 40 households belonging to poor marginalized and hunting communities' households is involved in homestay business as means of alternative livelihood. Out of this, eight are managed by women.
Output indicator 1.3 80 local youths and girls of poor and marginalized households capacitated as licensed nature guides and at least 70% of them are engaged in eco-tourism by year III (baseline=0)	28 participants received nature guide training (20 M; 8 F).
Output indicator 1.4 260 households supported with predator proof corals (60 households in year 2, 200 households in year 3) household (baseline = 0 households in 2020)	A total of 355 households had received predator proof coral house support have save their goat from the predator will increased opportunity in goat farming practices.
Output indicator 1.3 Predator proof coral supported households have livestock depredation reduced by 100% (baseline = ~450 livestock depredation per annum)	As per DNPWC's annual report of fiscal year 2023/24, there were 259 cases of livestock depredation by tigers in Bardia NP – this is a decline by 42.5% of tiger related HWC cases.
Output indicator 1.5 At least 150 women members of marginalised poor community have access to credits from cooperatives to establish microenterprises as alternative livelihood option by year III (100 women in year 2, 50 women in year 3) (baseline=0 in 2020)	351 women representing 16 women cooperative, belonging to marginalized poor community residing close to forest boundary had access to credits from cooperatives to establish microenterprises alternative livelihood option. Seed money support to the 16 cooperatives were provided for the women's alternative income generation sources. Out of the 351 women, 325 have already received livelihood loans.
Output 2. Awareness of community towards IWT increased and hunting/poaching decreased	
Output indicator 2.1	A total of 15,849 people were reached with awareness raising activities, this amounts to reaching 97% of the target population.

<p>About 60% of local population living around the poaching hotspots becoming familiar to the legal aspects of tiger and prey base poaching and resulting consequences by year III (baseline = 20% of the populations have some idea)</p>	
<p>Output indicator 2.2 Illegal activities related to wildlife reduced by at least 50% by year III (baseline = ~ 300 cases per year)</p>	<p>As per DNPWC's annual report of fiscal year 2023/24, there were 22 legal cases handled by Bardia NP, out of which 3 cases were related to poaching/IWT. This is a reduction in poaching cases by 93%.</p>
<p>Output indicator 2.3 50 schools reached and at least 6000 students sensitized on tiger conservation and IWT</p>	<p>2,510 students were taught on poaching/IWT and tiger conservation. <i>[The project had originally targeted reaching 50 schools to conduct awareness classes, reaching at least 6,000 students, however, it was later known that there are only 15 schools altogether and the number of students in these schools does not reach this target of 6,000. Therefore, despite our best intentions, this target was not possible to fulfil.]</i></p>
<p>Output 3. Enhanced capacity of frontline park staff to handle IWT</p>	
<p>Output indicator 3.1 90 frontline park enforcement staff are competent to handle wildlife crime cases by year III (baseline = none of the staff have received IWT related training out of recently deployed/recruit 310 staff)</p>	<p>70 frontline staff were provided training on wildlife crime control by this project. Additional 60 frontline staff were provided similar training through Combat Wildlife Trafficking in Nepal project (NTNC SINLEC21GR3324, funded by US Department of States).</p>
<p>Output indicator 3.2 4 RRTs functional and responding to HWC incidents in HWC prone areas (baseline = 0) 3.3 IWT database created and maintained in both parks (baseline = 0)</p>	<p>3 community-level RRTs and 2 park RRTs were supported by this project, equipping and mobilizing them.</p>
<p>Output indicator 3.2 Inter-agency coordination and collaboration strengthened resulting in well communicated wildlife crime control in the complex</p>	<p>13 WCCB coordination meetings were organized.</p>

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

Project Summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
<p>Impact: Sustained growth of tiger and its prey base with resilient local livelihood in Banke-Bardia complex</p>			
<p>Outcome: Hunting communities generating income from alternative livelihood, capacitated frontline staff on wildlife enforcement and increased conservation awareness results in reduced community's dependency on bush meat hunting and tiger poaching</p>	<p>0.1 At least 75% of ~250 households involved in hunting adopted alternative livelihood options and give up hunting and poaching by year III (baseline = 0)</p> <p>0.2 On an average 20% increase in monthly household income of those 75% households by year III (baseline \$ 1133 in Banke, \$1086 in Bardia district and \$1086 in Surkhet district)</p> <p>0.3 >25% decline in human wildlife conflict cases and 50% reduce in retaliatory killings of wildlife by year III (baseline = ~450 livestock depredation per annum, ~10 human casualties per annum, ~2 tigers/leopard killing per annum)</p> <p>0.4 Wildlife poaching cases declined at least by 25 % by year III (baseline = ~45 per annum)</p> <p>0.4 30% tiger population and 10% prey base increased by 2024 (Baseline = 108 tigers and prey base density of 97 and 15 per km² in BNP and BaNP, respectively in 2018)</p>	<p>0.1 Baseline socio-economic report and M&E report (year 1, 2 and 3)</p> <p>0.2 Socio-economic survey report (year 3)</p> <p>0.2 HWC assessment and national park's annual reports (year 1, 2 and 3)</p> <p>0.3 National park's annual reports; WCCB annual report (year 1, 2 and 3)</p> <p>0.4 Tiger and prey base monitoring report of Banke-Bardia complex (year 3)</p>	<p>Country remains committed to increasing its tiger and other wildlife populations</p> <p>Covid 19 pandemic will not further worsen the community engagement, livelihood and society</p>
<p>Outputs: 1. Increased community stewardship in conservation through diversified alternative livelihood opportunities</p>	<p>1.1 130 households belonging to poor marginalized and hunting communities adopted alternative livelihood by year III (baseline = 0)</p>	<p>1.1 Half-yearly progress reports, M&E reports (year 3) Year 1 - 30 households Year 2 – 60 households Year 3 – 40 households</p>	<p>Tourism industry will revive by mid-2021 passing the current stage of COVID-19 pandemic</p>

	<p>1.2 50 households (at least 50% women-led and IWT affected households) are generating income from homestay tourism (baseline = 0)</p> <p>1.3 80 local youths and girls of poor and marginalised households capacitated as licensed nature guides and at least 70% of them are engaged in eco-tourism by year III (baseline=0)</p> <p>1.4(a) 260 households supported with predator proof corals (60 households in year 2, 200 households in year 3) household (baseline = 0 households in 2020)</p> <p>1.4(b) Predator proof coral supported households have livestock depredation reduced by 100% (baseline = ~450 livestock depredation per annum)</p> <p>1.5 At least 150 women members of marginalised poor community have access to credits from cooperatives to establish microenterprises as alternative livelihood option by year III (100 women in year 2, 50 women in year 3) (baseline=0 in 2020)</p>	<p>1.2 Half-yearly progress reports, M&E reports (year 1, 2 and 3) Year 2 – 25 households Year 3 – 25 households</p> <p>1.3 Half-yearly progress reports, M&E reports (half-yearly progress reports) (year 1, 2 and 3) Year 2 – 40 beneficiaries Year 3 – 40 beneficiaries</p> <p>1.4 (a.b) Half-yearly progress reports, M&E reports, HWC report in yearly basis (year 2 and 3)</p> <p>1.5 Local cooperative profiles, half-yearly progress reports, M&E reports (year 2 and 3)</p>	<p>Local municipalities/line agencies will also collaborate with project interventions</p>
<p>2. Awareness of community towards IWT increased and hunting/poaching decreased</p>	<p>2.1 About 60% of local population living around the poaching hotspots becoming familiar to the legal aspects of tiger and prey base poaching and resulting consequences by year III</p>	<p>2.1 Before and after training assessment report, project progress reports, M&E reports Half-yearly progress reports, M&E reports (year 3)</p>	<p>Local communities show willingness to change attitudes and participate in project activities</p>

	<p>(baseline = 20% of the populations have some idea)</p> <p>2.2 Illegal activities related to wildlife reduced by at least 50% by year III (baseline = ~ 300 cases per year)</p> <p>2.3 50 schools reached and at least 6000 students sensitized on tiger conservation and IWT</p>	<p>2.2 Park records (year 1, 2 and 3)</p> <p>2.3 Half-yearly progress reports, M&E reports (year 2 and 3)</p>	
<p>3. Enhanced capacity of frontline park staff to handle IWT</p>	<p>3.1 90 frontline park enforcement staff are competent to handle wildlife crime cases by year III (baseline = none of the staff have received IWT related training out of recently deployed/recruit 310 staff)</p> <p>3.2 4 RRTs functional and responding to HWC incidents in HWC prone areas (baseline = 0)</p> <p>3.3 IWT database created and maintained in both parks (baseline = 0)</p> <p>3.4 Inter-agency coordination and collaboration strengthened resulting in well communicated wildlife crime control in the complex</p>	<p>3.1 Parks reports indicating effective prosecution, project report and M&E report (year 3)</p> <p>3.2 Parks and RRT periodic records (year 1, 2 and 3)</p> <p>3.3 Two database software and wildlife crime data (year 1, 2 and 3)</p> <p>3.3 Meeting minutes and workshop reports (year 1, 2 and 3)</p>	<p>Park retains the trained staff during project period</p>
<p>Activities (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>Output 1: Increased community stewardship in conservation through diversified alternative livelihood opportunities</p> <p>1.1 Baseline socio-economic survey: Baseline socioeconomic survey involving socio-economist and local GESI champions</p> <p>1.2 Home stay management support: 50 households</p> <p>1.3 Capacity enhancement training on eco-tourism: Two homestay management (50 participants) and 2 events of Nature Guide (50 participants)</p>			

- 1.4 Improved livestock corral support: For 260 households affected by livestock depredation by tiger and leopard
- 1.5 Promotion of high value and wildlife non-palatable cash crops: Benefitting 130 households
- 1.6 Support for women's cooperatives for innovative livelihood activity: 150 women initiate innovative livelihood activities

Output 2: Awareness of community towards IWT increased and hunting/poaching decreased

- 2.1 IWT training manual developed
- 2.2 ToT on IWT: 20 local level IWT trainers produced through ToT
- 2.3 Community trainings on IWT: 100 events of community level IWT trainings for 4000 participants
- 2.4 Production of IWT sensitization booklet: 3000 copies produced and distributed to IWT affected areas
- 2.5 School programmes on tiger conservation: Conducted in 50 schools reaching 6,000 students

Output 3: Enhanced capacity of frontline park staff to handle IWT

- 3.1 Law enforcement training: Three trainings on IWT control for 90 frontline park staff
- 3.2 Establishment of Rapid Response Teams (RRT): 4 RRTs formed and institutionalized in Banke-Bardia complex
- 3.3 IWT database establishment: IWT database established in Banke and Bardia National Parks
- 3.4 Wildlife Crime Control Bureaus (WCCB) meetings: Six meetings in the project area during three years.
- 3.5 Organise regional workshop on IWT/project learning: A regional workshop covering province 5, 6 and 7 organized (50 participants)

Annex 3 Standard Indicators

Table 1 Project Standard Indicators

IWTCF Indicator number	Name of indicator	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total achieved	Total planned
IWTCFA01	Number of people who received training in sustainable livelihood skills	People	9 women,31 Man	21	19		40	50
IWTCFA05	Number of credit and savings groups established	Number	351 women	11	16	13	16	150
IWTCFA04	% cooperatives established that are functioning at project end (at least a year after establishment)	Number	351 women				100%	150
IWTCFB01	Number of people trained in law enforcement skills.	Number		19	25		44	
IWTCFB23	Number of databases established that are used for law enforcement.	Number	None	2	2	2	2	2
IWTCFC05	Number of people reached with behaviour change messaging (i.e. audience).	Event	15849 (5354 M,10495 F)	9230	6619	None	15849	2112
IWTCFC02	Number and type of IWT behaviour change materials produced / Number and type of IWT behaviour change materials distributed	Number	2	150 copies printed and distributed	150 copies printed and distributed		300	300
IWTCF-D22	Number of Media related activities	Number	None	2 Media(Nag arik & Kantipur)		2 Media(Kan tipur, Kathmand u Post)	4	4

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)
Former hunters now active in wildlife conservation	National Daily	Dipendra Baduwal & Manoj Paudel Tuesday, July 2, 2024	Male	Nepali	The Kathmandu Post, Kathmandu	https://kathmandupost.com/karnali-province/2023/12/10/former-hunters-now-active-in-wildlife-conservation
Adorable Rajkada	National Daily	Manoj Paudel December 18,2023	Male	Nepali	Kantipur Post, Kathmandu	https://kantipurTV.com/tourism/2023/12/18/1702876965.html
School level Wildlife conservation Awareness materials	Awareness materials	NTNC-BCP,2023	NA	NEPAL	NTNC- BCP,Bardiya	

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 correct template (checking fund, type of report (i.e. Annual or Final), and year) and deleted the blue guidance text before submission?	
Is the report less than 10MB? If so, please email to BCF-Reports@niras.com putting the project number in the Subject line.	
Is your report more than 10MB? If so, please discuss with BCF-Reports@niras.com about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line. All supporting material should be submitted in a way that can be accessed and downloaded as one complete package.	
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, do these meet the outlined requirements (see section 14)?	
Have you included means of verification? You should not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors?	
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	