

Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Main & Extra: Annual 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: 30th April 2025

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IWT Challenge Fund Project Information

Scheme (Main or Extra)	Main
Project reference	IWT100
Project title	Stemming Illegal Wildlife Trade & Enhancing Community Livelihoods in Zimbabwe
Country/ies	Zimbabwe
Lead Organisation	Savé Valley Conservancy
Project partner(s)	Anti-Poaching and Tracking Specialists (ATS)
IWTCTF grant value	£ 307, 246.00
Start/end dates of project	01/04/2022 - 01/10/2025
Reporting period (e.g. April 2024-Mar 2025) and number (e.g. Annual Report 1, 2, 3)	April 2023 – March 2024 Annual Report 2
Project Leader name	Nicola Gripper
Project website/blog/social media	www.savevalleyconservancy.org https://www.facebook.com/savevalleyconservancy/
Report author(s) and date	Dumisani Ntini 29 April 2024 Contributors: CLM, ATS & Project Leader & Accountant

1. Project summary

Savé Valley Conservancy (SVC), Southeast Lowveld of Zimbabwe, is one of Africa's largest private conservancies. With 304,000 hectares, the SVC is part of the Greater Limpopo Trans Frontier Conservation Area (GLTFCA), linking biologically significant protected areas in Zimbabwe, South Africa, and Mozambique. Despite decades of economic challenges in Zimbabwe and a spike in poaching and illegal wildlife trafficking (IWT), SVC supports critical populations of rare, threatened and endangered (RTE) species such as an IUCN-listed 'Key 1' population of black rhinos and an 'Important 1' population of white rhino, the endangered wild dog, ground pangolin, lion, cheetah, elephant, etc.

The 150,000 +/- households that live in and around SVC suffer from food insecurity and high levels of poverty. SVC is in an arid region and communities rely on agriculture and livestock, which are heavily impacted from human-wildlife conflict (HWC). SVC's long-term goal is to expand community engagement in the conservancy to help them transition out of poverty and

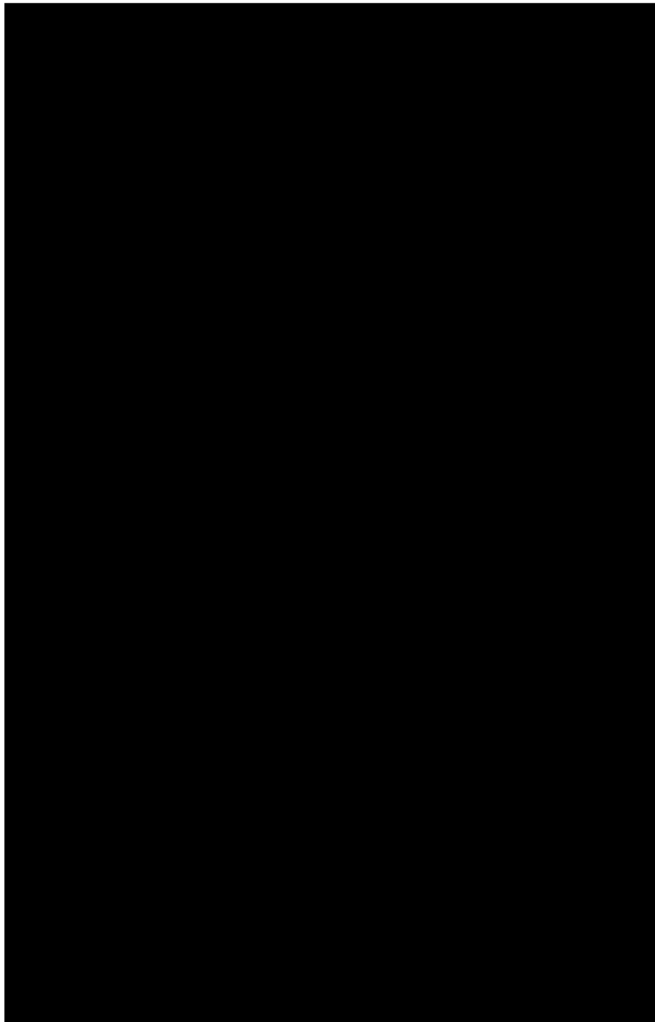
increase their resilience. SVC's income is dependent upon the wildlife, which has and continues to be under severe threat from poaching. This project aims to enhance the anti-poaching and IWT work in SVC and coordination with the GLTFCA, effectively engage communities in anti-poaching and reduce HWC.

Illegal wildlife trade is prevalent in all the districts surrounding the Savé Valley Conservancy, including Chiredzi, Chipinge, and Bikita. It is so diversified that it includes both subsistence and commercial hunting. Subsistence hunting is more common in villages inside and near SVC and is done with snares, bows, arrows, and hunting dogs, to name a few. Commercial hunting is undertaken by well-connected syndicates who target rhinos and elephants for the monetary value earned from the horns, with a ready market in Asian countries. This project addresses the pressing issues of illegal wildlife trade to prevent the extinction of impacted species. Plains wildlife is targeted for meat with subsistence hunting. The threat level is high for all of these species. By adding female community rangers to act as a layer of intelligence gathering in communities and monitoring the perimeter, we are enhancing the effectiveness of our efforts and promoting gender equality in conservation. Combined with proper fence maintenance, this would significantly reduce the threats currently faced by IWT.

The communities affected by IWT stretch from Matedzi, Mukwazi, Mkwazi, Angus, and Bikita wards 1, 25, 24, 26, 27, and 31, Mkwazine Ranch, Chipinge, Chibuwe, Chipangai, and Masapas. To assist we will run awareness campaigns highlighting the disadvantages of engaging in IWT with support from all relevant stakeholders. Additionally, we will offer opportunities to help individuals transition to sustainable livelihoods such as beekeeping, fish farming, chilli production, enabling them to earn a living and reduce poverty. The perimeter of SVC was fenced, buffering communities from wildlife incursion; however, because of lack of funding, the Conservancy has not maintained the fence, which created significant costs to the surrounding communities and animosity towards wildlife. Human-wildlife conflict has ravaged neighbouring communities with severe crop loss and livestock depredation because of the wildlife that enters the communities, and the communities have retaliated by killing the wildlife by using various methods, such as poisoning.

With this project, repairing the SVC fence with dedicated fence monitors is a crucial step. This, along with female rangers patrolling the communities, will ensure that Human-Wildlife Conflict is significantly decreased. The result will be higher crop yields for the communities and increased livestock to earn a living. The higher crop yield and increase in livestock population reassure the community that our project is not just about addressing the symptoms of the problem but also about implementing long-term solutions that will make a real difference.

Savé Valley Conservancy (SVC) is located in the Southeast Lowveld of Zimbabwe and surrounded by 3 Districts of Bikita, Chiredzi (both of which fall under Masvingo Province), and Chipinge (which falls under Manicaland Province).



2. Project stakeholders/ partners

The support and engagement from all formal partners and key stakeholders progressed well over the last year in review:

- **Anti-Poaching Tracking Specialists (ATS) and Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZPWMA)** planned, designed, and delivered female ranger training. They worked on the creation and delivery of content to the rangers to ensure that they were well-equipped with the necessary information and tools to carry out their duties successfully in the work field. Monitoring the effectiveness of rangers using Earthranger reports and making choices to move the rangers to areas in need. [Refer to Annex 26 - Female Community Ranger Training Report]
- The implementation of awareness campaigns about stopping the illegal wildlife trade in the communities surrounding SVC was a concerted effort with other stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education, the Environmental Management Agency (EMA), the Forrest Commission (FC), and Rural District Authorities (RDCs), all of which are government agencies, and Save African Rhino Foundation (SARF), Hemmersbach and TUSK. Checheche (Chipinge District) and Chiremwaremwa (Bikita District), both of which are centres of the illicit wildlife trafficking, saw the launch of successful campaigns. The fact that all of our activities are controlled or take place mostly in regions where the RDCs have the final say demonstrates how crucial our partners are to the program's success. The program's own initiatives and cooperative collaborations are responsible for its success.
- **The Rural District Councils (RDCs):** The initiative analyses Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) patterns in the Savé Valley Conservancy (SVC) and generates thorough, well-researched daily reports for councillors. These reports now assist the RDCs in planning their course of action. Giving precise information on the ground reduces expenses, saving

the RDC a lot of money because they can now respond to verified situations on time, unlike before. Female rangers now conduct awareness campaigns in communities in partnership with RDCs.

- The **ZPWMA** now uses ranger-collected data for provincial reports. The rangers assist with campaigns that would otherwise fall into the hands of the overworked and underfunded ZPWMA. The IWT100 Project organises coordinated campaigns, and ZPWMA benefits from their involvement in many of these meetings. These include community, district, and national activities in which IWT-funded Rangers and the Community Liaison Manager take part.
- **Forestry Commission (FC)**: For information and intelligence on illegal logging, charcoal production, deforestation, and afforestation initiatives, the FC now depends on the IWT funded rangers [Refer to Annex 5 - Stakeholder_Government - Forest Commission Zimbabwe]. Protecting habitat is one of the rangers' main responsibilities during their regular patrols. They protect the grasslands, trees, and other natural areas surrounding the SVC. Additionally, the FC collaborates closely with the CLM on conservancy-related activities. In the final quarter of 2024, the African Wildlife Conservation Fund (AWCF), FC, and IWT CLM had several meetings in the Save Valley Conservancy.
- **Environmental Management Agency (EMA)**: In order to address fires both inside and outside the conservancy, we have worked with the agency. By sharing information about stream bank cultivation, such as in the Turgwi River, EMA and the IWT100 Project team collaborate closely. We work together on a few campaigns as well. We were able to oversee two of these partnership programmes in the first quarter of the year 2025.
- **Ministry of Education**: Nine environmental clubs have been formed in Mkwase, Nyangambe, Chibwe, and Mtema because of the IWT100 Project. Additionally, we collaborate with the conservancy's current environmental clubs. In partnership with the TUSK PACE Project, we are also considering starting or attracting three groups that will all focus on environmental protection and use resources like pamphlets, booklets, and flash drives. [See Annex 29 - SVC-PACE Strategy Document]
- **British Embassy Zimbabwe**: In a major event for the IWT100 Project, we were able to host the British Embassy team, which included Jo Abbott (Development Director & Deputy Ambassador British Embassy Harare) and Norman Tinarwo (Climate Adviser British Embassy Harare), at the Save Valley Conservancy. Through this partnership, the project's work was presented to a global audience. The Rangers', SVC's, and CLM's morale was greatly raised, demonstrating the program's capacity to interact with stakeholders around the world and its effect on morale. [See Annex 6 - British Embassy Zimbabwe SVC Visit_July]
- The results are the product of the combined efforts of all stakeholders. Stakeholders such as ATS have emphasised the program's trade tools through rigorous training regimens. SARF and Hummersbach are heavily involved in our rhino protection programmes, with TUSK supporting all our ranger programmes, regarding their welfare and insurance. The RDCs have created an enabling atmosphere for rangers and CLM to carry out their tasks in the various communities. ZPWMA, EMA, and the FC give statutes and standards for our activities, highlighting the value of our collaboration. The IWT100 Project has provided a model for how the community may eradicate poverty by promoting biodiversity.

3. Project progress

3.1 Progress in carrying out project Activities

Contributing to Output 1 as per the attached log frame, the following activity has been achieved:

1.2 CLM to identify six priority community areas in consultation with community, project partners and other stakeholders – completed successfully and reported on.

1.3 CLM to arrange the recruitment and training session for 20 female community rangers – After the successful initial training, a second training session was conducted in December 2024, by ATS in partnership with ZPWMA, which focussed mainly on use of Earthranger software. This was successfully conducted with a 100% attendance. This same training session offered the rangers first-aid training to equip them for emergencies as they conduct their work on a day-to-

day basis. Refer to Annex 26 - Female Community Rangers Training Report 2024-25 and Annex – 7 Female Ranger First Aid Training Certificate.

The project also hired four more fence monitors to repair sections of the SVC fence in the Matendere and Mapari districts. We now have twelve fence monitors who are doing an excellent job of ensuring that the fence remains fixed and in good shape, allowing fewer species to invade our bordering neighbourhoods and cause HWC events. The community's continued acceptance of the female rangers and the fence monitors' contributions demonstrates how much they value the changes the monitors have brought to their livelihoods. Refer to Annex 9 - Stakeholder - Chief Budzi Bikita District.

1.4 The CLM was to design the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the community rangers in consultation with the Special Species Protection Unit – This was completed and reported on.

1.5 Stakeholders were to identify key stretches of existing fence line where repair work would help mitigate HWC – The CLM, in collaboration with ATS, SVC Members, RDCs, and Traditional Leaders, effectively identified other areas that require immediate attention. This is specifically in the South, where a large number of people were settled as per government directive and have encroached on more parts of the reserve. Most areas no longer have fences, and this is where we are now experiencing a high number of HWC incidences. Currently, SVC is working with the Ministry of Lands and Rural District Councils to fix this issue. The most impacted areas include Nyangambe, Mkwasine, Levanga, and Humani. Refer to Annex 8 - Visit by Ministry of Lands Officers in SVC Meeting Minutes

1.6 CLM was also to organise bi-annual HWC trainings in target communities identified in 1.2 – The CLM-planned HWC trainings were successfully carried out in May and August 2024. The training has not been completed and is still ongoing, as this is now the daily responsibility of every ranger and fence monitor in the project's last year. This was determined since the rangers now have the entire trust of the communities and have become a beacon of hope for their communities, as well as role models and sources of inspiration for many women, especially girls. Refer to the Annex 10 - HWC Training Report and Annex 11 – HWC Training Manual.

1.7 CLM to establish HWC baselines in target communities identified in 1.2 through consultation with community, project partners and other stakeholders – This was completed successfully and reported on.

1.8 CLM to determine and develop six different mitigation measures through consultation with community, project partners and other stakeholders – The CLM spearheaded the activity, which ZPWMA, RDCs, ATS, in conducting HWC training on mitigation measures as identified to be effective and less costly to use. According to Annex 12 - HWC Mitigation Measures, the project team is encouraging communities to implement these measures because they have proven effective in reducing HWC in many areas: predator-proof kraals to protect livestock from lions and hyenas, beekeeping to keep elephants at bay, crop field fencing to keep elephants, hippos, eland and baboons away from crops, and the use of solar lights and noise deterrents (such as vuvuzelas (horns)) to keep lions at bay. Adopting these has resulted in a large drop in HWC incidences, paired with SVC fence repairs to prevent animals from entering the community areas, and female ranger patrols telling SSPU and ZPWMA to respond immediately for assistance. [Annex 31 - Predator Proof Kraal], Annex 33 - Mitigation Measure-Using foil as reflectors

Contributing to Output 2, and referring to the Annex 2 - Log Frame, The Centralised Anti-Poaching Unit (APU) for the entire SVC, led by ATS, is taking shape and now has 123 rangers, with a target of 214. To date, two sections of the envisaged five sections across SVC have been setup as North and South. The 50 recruited new rangers completed their training successfully and have been deployed (refer to Annex 13 - APU Training Report). The APU setup has ensured a significant increase in boots on the ground, resulting in improved species protection.

2.1 Run recruitment and selection process for SSPU and ranch rangers drawing candidates from the SVC surrounding communities. This process is still ongoing, since we

have yet to meet our target of 214 rangers. The recruitment process has proven to be both thorough and competitive.

2.2 Successful applicants from the recruitment and selection process proceed to a basic ranger training course. The initial 50 selected, and the next lot to be selected at an identified time.

2.3 Employment of suitable candidates from Activity 2.2 by the SSPU and SVC and equip candidates with necessary uniform, kit, and equipment. The 50 trained rangers have just received their uniforms, kit and equipment to enable effective operations on the ground.

2.4 SSPU to co-ordinate deployments with rhino monitoring plan determined by the SVC rhino co-ordinator. This process will be on-going until the desired number of rangers is achieved.

2.5 Purchase good quality rhino monitoring cameras so accurate and safe verification of rhino is possible. SVC continues to keep up with evolving technology, which has resulted in the procurement of high-quality cameras to assure the recording of high-quality images. The Garmin Inreach Messenger has been adopted for usage with our rangers to guarantee effective monitoring and tracking of our rangers in real time, with pin-point precision.

2.6 Determine a reporting system from the ranch and community rangers that will be collated by central SSPU admin. The systems are being upgraded to align with the APU reporting structure.

2.7 ATS to conduct annual SSPU and ranch rangers training. North and south training course to be arranged with rangers split into manageable groups. Training to refresh on basic techniques as well as update rangers on new innovations. The training for North and South units has been initiated and to continue throughout this year, until the APU is fully fledged.

2.9 Ensure old and faulty ranger equipment replaced regularly for safety of rangers. To guarantee successful operations and monitoring, new ranger equipment is always purchased to replace old, defective, or outdated equipment.

2.8 Equip community rangers with uniform and equipment i.e. radios for communication. This activity has been ongoing as we have had to fix a malfunctioning phone, acquire chargers, and replace a lost phone with a new one (Rugged Blackview BV8900). New uniforms were also purchased to ensure that the rangers maintained the same appearance as their male counterparts in the APU. The rangers have been using their phones to upload reports and images to the Earth Ranger app. The maps, Annex 14 - Intel Map 2024-25 and Annex 15 – HWC Types, were created using the rangers' supplied reports.

Contributing to Output 3, the following activities were in focus:

3.1 Arrange quarterly coordination meetings with GLTFCA partners and ensure meetings are minuted – GLTFCA coordination meetings and security information sharing have been taking place, albeit without an official record to show as minutes, because these are highly sensitive issues, and information is not shared outside of these meetings to ensure information integrity preservation and avoid risks of information leakage, which would be counterproductive to keeping a lid on critical species security.

3.2 Continued provision of good communication systems (radio/mobile/satellite) to promote and encourage sharing of intelligence, poaching etc information between SVC, GLTFCA and other stakeholders. This is on-going between the SVC and its GLTFCA partners.

3.2 Progress towards project Outputs

Output 1: Human-Wildlife Conflict Reduction

Baseline Condition: They were high levels of human-wildlife conflict in the six adjacent community areas the project is in focus, resulting in crop loss and livestock predation, which also caused the

neighbouring communities to resort to retaliatory killings of the many species that were involved in livestock predation, especially lions.

Change Recorded to Date:

- 12 HWC trainings were held in the surrounding communities in May and August as planned with 500 community members (300 women, 200 men).
- 50KM of HWC SVC mitigation fence is continually being repaired.
- The 20 community female rangers who were employed, trained and deployed and patrolling the fence and the communities surrounding the SVC.
- Baselines established in six priority community areas.
- Six cost effective mitigation measures developed and are being implemented.
- Increased quality and verified HWC incident reporting enabled by the female rangers

Evidence: Annex 10 - HWC Training Report and Annex 16 - Attendance Register; Annex 17 - Fence Repair Photos; Annex 12 - HWC Mitigation Measures; Annex 27 - IWT100 IWT & HWC Baseline Report 2024; and Annex 15 – HWC Types, Annex 18 - HWC Map Species.

Progress towards Output Indicators: The Standard Indicators IWTCF-C05 and IWTCF-B01 are being used to measure progress for this output, as detailed in Annex 3.

Output 2: Community Ranger Response Unit and Special Species Protection Unit

Baseline Condition: There was a limited capacity of rangers on the ground to cover the greater area on the SVC borders and dealing directly with the communities and the lack of adequate equipment for the SSPU.

Change Recorded to Date:

- 20 female rangers were deployed and now operational under ATS and SVC coordination.
- To date two successful trainings held for the female rangers with 100% participation.
- Rangers fully equipped with rugged Blackview BV8900 smartphones, enabled with cameras, and GPS units, loaded with the Earthranger application, and uniforms provided.
- There has been a marked increase in intel gathering and arrests made of many bushmeat poaching syndicates.
- Verification of individual rhinos through patrolling at 95% annually.

Evidence: Annex 10 - HWC Training Report and Annex 16 – Attendance Register; Annex 14 - Intel Report 2024-25; Annex 19 - Police Report Wildlife Crime Report.

Progress towards Output Indicators: The Standard Indicators IWTCF-B09 is being used to support the measuring of progress for this output, as detailed in Annex 3.

Output 3: Coordinated Ranger Units and Management Teams

Baseline Condition: There was a limited coordination and information-sharing between GLFTCA partners.

Change Recorded to Date:

- Quarterly coordination meetings held between GLFTCA partners.
- Joint responses to IWT and poaching incidents mapped and updated quarterly.
- Security intelligence information-sharing between ATS and the GLFTCA partners ongoing.

Evidence: None as the information is highly classified.

Based on current development, the project will complete its objectives by its end. The project has achieved great progress in reducing human-wildlife conflict, increasing the capability of community ranger response teams, and enhancing coordination among GLFTCA partners. With sustained implementation and monitoring, the initiative is well positioned to meet its objectives and have a long-term impact on conservation efforts.

3.3 Progress towards the project Outcome

The project outcome focuses on improving capacity and patrol coverage of community rangers to reduce poaching and IWT, increase the black rhino population, and mitigate human-wildlife conflict (HWC).

Outcome Indicator 0.1: Community Ranger Deployment

Baseline Condition: Limited community ranger presence and patrol coverage.

Progress to Date: 20 community rangers effectively deployed across 2,500 km² of SVC.

Evidence: Annex 20 - Ranger Patrol Reports, Annex 32 - Female Ranger with ZPWMA on PAC.

Outcome Indicator 0.2: Species Population Numbers

Baseline Condition: Declining species population numbers, especially the plains game compared to figures of 10 years ago.

Progress to Date: Aerial Survey Report for 2024 indicates a considerable growth in species population. For the rhino population which has constant monitoring by the SSPU, it indicates an 8% average increase of the black and white rhino in 2024.

Evidence: Annex 21- Aerial Survey Report_Extract_2024, Annex 34 - White Rhino Population.

Outcome Indicator 0.3: Reduction in Retaliatory Wildlife Killing

Baseline Condition: High levels of retaliatory wildlife killing due to HWC, especially lions.

Progress to Date: Reduction in reported retaliatory killings since ranger deployment and fence monitors mending the fence.

Evidence: Annex 15- HWC Types.

Outcome Indicator 0.4: Reduction in HWC Incidents

Baseline Condition: High levels of HWC incidents in community areas.

Progress to Date: Reduction in reported HWC incidents as more and more communities implement the mitigation measures, and fence monitors repair the fence.

Evidence: Annex 15- HWC Types, Annex 18 – HWC Map Species.

The indicators are adequate for measuring the intended outcome, as they directly relate to the project's objectives. However, additional indicators, such as economic benefits to local communities, could provide further insight into the project's impact going forward.

Based on current progress, the project is likely to achieve its outcome by the end of funding. The deployment of community rangers and implementation of mitigation measures have shown positive results. Continued monitoring and evaluation will be essential to ensure the project stays on track.

To ensure the project's success, we will continue to monitor and evaluate progress towards outcome indicators; refine mitigation measures based on feedback from communities and rangers; enhance community engagement and education to promote coexistence with wildlife and explore additional indicators to capture economic benefits to local communities.

By following this plan, we are confident that the project will achieve its intended outcome and contribute to the long-term conservation of our species population and reduction of HWC.

3.4 Monitoring of assumptions

Outcome Assumptions:

Assumption 1: Continued collaboration and support from ZPWMA, Government of Zimbabwe, and ZRP

Status: Still holds true. Regular meetings and joint activities with ZPWMA, Government of Zimbabwe, and ZRP is on-going.

Evidence: Annex 8 - Visit by Ministry of Lands Officers in SVC_Meeting Minutes.

Assumption 2: Continued collaboration from local communities

Status: Still holds true. Local communities are still involved and supportive, with the Community Liaison Manager working relentlessly to ensure ongoing positive contact with our communities. The hiring of the CLM has been a game changer for the SVC, and it is a post that will last forever due to its critical role as a link between communities and stakeholders.

Evidence: Annex 9 - Stakeholder - Chief Budzi Bikita District.

Output Assumptions:

Assumption 1: Continued engagement with GLFTCA partners

Status: Still holds true. Regular coordination meetings and joint activities.

Evidence: Correspondence.

Assumption 2: Women want to be employed to patrol the fence

Status: Still holds true. Women have expressed interest and been hired as community rangers and fence monitors, and they are now reshaping their neighbourhoods, serving as a beacon of hope and inspiration to many.

Assumption 3: Coordination between SVC, ZPWMA, and ZRP continues to work effectively

Status: Still holds true. Regular coordination meetings and joint activities on-going.

Evidence: Annex 28 - Coordinated effort with our stakeholders - ZR Police, ZPWMA & RDC

Assumption 4: GLFTCA partners willing to share intelligence and information on IWT and poaching

Status: Still holds true. Partners continue to share intelligence and information.

Assumption 5: FPIC received by the communities for HWC mitigation measures.

Status: Still holds true. Communities are still fully involved in developing HWC mitigation methods that would benefit them to reduce livestock and crop loss, ultimately leading to improved livelihoods.

Assumption 6: GLFTCA partners willing to coordinate on poaching and IWT incidences

Status: Still holds true. Partners continue to coordinate on incidents.

The project continues to nurture and manage these assumptions through, regular meetings and communication with stakeholders; community engagement and feedback mechanisms; joint activities and coordination with partners, and monitoring and evaluation of assumption validity. By actively managing these assumptions, the project minimises risks and ensures continued progress towards its objectives.

3.5 Impact: achievement of positive impact on illegal wildlife trade and multidimensional poverty reduction

The project is contributing to a higher-level impact on IWT by:

- Reducing poaching and habitat destruction, through community-based conservation and ranger patrols.
- Strengthening law enforcement by collaborating with authorities to prosecute IWT cases. This has ensured wildlife crimes are prosecuted with stringent sentences to deter would be poachers. This is now true for cases being tried under Bikita District as the judiciary was enlightened on the value of wildlife by our appointed court representative to monitor and attend all SVC wildlife cases.
- Promoting sustainable livelihoods by supporting alternative income sources for communities.

Evidence: There has been a reduction in poaching incidents and successful arrests made of many poaching syndicates; an increased community engagement and support for conservation, which has resulted in Devure Ward 25 applying to be part of the SVC [Refer to Annex 22 - Bikita RDC Letter on Ward 25] and benefit from the wildlife economy; improved livelihoods through sustainable agriculture and eco-tourism.

The project is contributing to a higher-level impact on human development and wellbeing by:

- Improving livelihoods: Through sustainable agriculture, eco-tourism, and employment opportunities.
- Enhancing community resilience: By reducing human-wildlife conflict and promoting coexistence.
- Supporting education and awareness: Educating communities about conservation and sustainable practices.

Evidence: There is now increased income and improved livelihoods for community members, reduced human-wildlife conflict incidents and improved community safety, and improved education and awareness among communities.

The project is contributing to multidimensional poverty reduction by addressing:

- Income poverty: Through sustainable livelihoods and employment opportunities.
- Human development: Through education and awareness programs.
- Social exclusion: By promoting community engagement and participation.

Evidence: Increased income and improved livelihoods; improved education and awareness, and enhanced community participation and social cohesion. [Annex 23 - Checheche IWT Awareness March 2024]

The project is making a significant contribution to tackling IWT and supporting multidimensional poverty reduction, ultimately contributing to a higher-level impact on conservation and human wellbeing.

4. Thematic focus

The project is still contributing to all the themes as indicated for each.

1. **Reducing demand for IWT products** - This is made feasible by awareness campaigns staged in illicit wildlife trafficking hotspot areas to ensure a shift in mindset, instil the value of wildlife in people, and provide alternative sources of income through participation in sustainable projects. ZPWMA, our stakeholders, are using these opportunities to educate the public about the hazards of poaching and the necessity of wildlife conservation. Similarly, the Zimbabwe Republic Police warn individuals of the full wrath of the law if they are caught poaching.
2. **Ensuring effective legal frameworks and deterrents** – We have hired a legal representative that represents SVC in all court cases involving poaching and illicit wildlife trade. She has also been involved in teaching the judiciary on the worth of our wildlife and advocating for harsher penalties for violators to deter poaching and illicit wildlife trading. There has been a noticeable impact, with heavier penalties now being imposed to criminals, particularly in the Bikita District and Masvingo Courts. These changes are now being implemented at the Chiredzi Court.
3. **Strengthening law enforcement** - This has occurred because of the project's hiring of 20 female community rangers, who have increased boots on the ground. Of note is their capacity and ability to gather intel in the communities regarding poaching gangs, a function that they have performed admirably and has resulted in the arrest of several gangs based on their actionable intelligence. The SVC is also currently establishing a Centralised Anti-Poaching Unit that will cover the entire SVC. We already have a total of

123 rangers, with over 50 rangers recruited this year being reviewed to ensure poaching is reduced.

4. **Developing sustainable livelihoods to benefit people directly affected by IWT** – The project has committed to improving communities' livelihoods by providing alternative sustainable projects in which they can participate, such as beekeeping and chilli production, all of which are also used as HWC mitigation measures to assist communities in protecting their crops from destruction by elephants, buffalo, and other animals.

Notable achievements in this year are the stiffer sentences now being accorded to perpetrators of poaching and illegal wildlife trade. [Annex 19 - Police Report Wildlife Crime]

5. Impact on species in focus

There has been considerable impact on the species growth in numbers for Wild Dogs, Cheetahs, Rhinos, Lion, plains game, and Elephants, as reflected in the 2024 Aerial Survey Report [Annex 21 - Aerial Survey Report_Extract_2024, Annex 34 - White Rhino Population], which shows growth in the last 2 years for most of the species in focus. Though the report does not show good numbers for the black and white rhino, the monitoring conducted by our Special Species Protection Unit indicates that there has been an 8 % growth in numbers for both over the last year 2024. This certainly can be attributed to the rangers increased visibility on the ground, which has contributed significantly to the drop in poaching incidents and the resultant change in mindset due to the IWT campaigns, the HWC training, and the Sustainable Training being offered to the communities surrounding the SVC.

Comparing figures based on last year's aerial game count, which was done in September 2024 and the figures for 2023 contained in the 2024 report, there is indication of a significant improvement in our species population, and this because of the project interventions and other programmes complimenting the IWT100 Project, namely the AWCF Fence Guardian Project and the USAID Ecodit Verifier Programme. All these projects are working in collaboration with SVC efforts of setting up a Centralised Anti-Poaching Unit, which is taking shape and now with 123 rangers on the ground divided into North and South sections.

6. Project support for multidimensional poverty reduction

The project is contributing to poverty reduction in the SVC's neighbouring communities, both directly and indirectly. Directly, by improving the livelihoods of those directly employed by the project, female community rangers and fence monitors, who now enjoy improved security and, with increased household income, have uplifted their families with a guaranteed flow of income, ensuring that their children attend school and have access to education, which will lead to a better life for them in the future as they complete their education. Indirectly, as those directly involved in the project expend their revenue to assist other people's projects, this project has resulted in enhanced money circulation in communities. The project has also provided individuals directly employed the ability to establish other sustainable projects, resulting in an even greater flow of money that helps their families, extended relatives, and the community as a whole. Overall, lower HWC in the surrounding villages ensures enhanced crop fields and increased livestock numbers, which serve as a source of revenue that can be sold to initiate other projects they choose. Reduced HWC ensures that communities' economy grow, resulting in better livelihoods and lower poverty rates.

The project's benefits are aligned with the requirements of the communities, since it strives to lower HWC, which results in increased crop yields and animal numbers, resulting in higher revenue and poverty reduction. It's a win-win situation because the SVC will ensure the increase of its species population while reducing the number of species killed through Problem Animal Control (PAC) and retaliatory kills.

Long-term, the project has already had a significant impact on poverty reduction by educating communities about the value of wildlife and the role it plays in biodiversity and ecosystem services, as evidenced by communities now wanting to participate in the wildlife economy and

join the SVC as community conservancies, as well as seeding some of their land to increase the SVC capacity to ensure species population growth. Currently, we have Devure Ward 25 in Bikita District who have come up and are willing to seed portions of their land to become part of the SVC.

This is now taking shape because of a shift in people's attitudes about the value of wildlife, as well as their eyes being opened to the reality that it may help them improve their livelihoods and alleviate poverty in their communities. As a result, the economies of these participating villages are certain to improve significantly in the coming years as the financial rewards of participating in hunting quotas increase.

The Devure Ward 25 Project in itself has been a notable achievement in the year under review.

7. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

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.	
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	X

The IWT100 project took a deliberate approach to consider the GESI context in its design and implementation. Our assessment indicates that the project meets the "Empowering" level, as it not only addresses basic needs and vulnerabilities of women and marginalised groups but also increases equal access to resources, and capabilities.

The project considered the GESI context in the following ways:

1. The project worked with traditional leaders and stakeholders to recognise the importance of empowering women and promoting their rights.
2. The project challenged traditional attitudes and customs by employing women as community rangers and fence monitors, promoting a shift in societal norms.
3. The project addressed stressors and vulnerabilities faced by women and marginalised groups, such as poverty and lack of opportunities.
4. The project has promoted a more equitable division of labour and responsibilities, empowering women to take on active roles.
5. The project has ensured meaningful participation and inclusion of women and marginalised groups in decision-making processes.
6. The project has increased access to assets and services for women and marginalised groups, such as employment opportunities and training.

The project has taken specific steps to ensure social inclusion and meaningful participation for all engaged in the project, including:

- *Inclusive selection process*: The project prioritised underprivileged families, widows, and those without parents in the selection of female community rangers and fence monitors.
- *Capacity building*: The project is continuously providing training and capacity-building opportunities for women and marginalised groups.
- *Community engagement*: The project is engaging with local communities and stakeholders to promote awareness and understanding of the importance of empowering women and marginalised groups.

The project recognises that various social identities, such as ethnicity, age, class, gender, and disability, intersect and inform how individuals or groups may be able to participate in certain contexts. The project has taken steps to address these intersectionalities, such as:

1. *Culturally sensitive approach*: The project has worked with traditional leaders and stakeholders to ensure a culturally sensitive approach.

2. *Inclusive decision-making*: The project has promoted inclusive decision-making processes that take into account the needs and perspectives of diverse groups.

In the past 12 months, the project has learned the importance that continuous community engagement is crucial to promoting awareness and understanding of the project's objectives and outcomes and recognised the need to address power dynamics and promote inclusive decision-making processes to ensure that all stakeholders are able to participate meaningfully.

The project has faced challenges, such as, resistance to change, as some community members have resisted the idea of women taking on active roles, requiring ongoing awareness, education efforts, and creative solutions to address the needs of women and marginalised groups.

Overall, the IWT100 project has made significant strides in promoting GESI and empowering women and marginalised groups. By continuing to address the challenges and lessons learned, the project can further enhance its impact and promote sustainable change.

8. Monitoring and evaluation

Our monitoring and evaluation in this project have vastly improved over the last year because we now use technology in the form of an Earthranger system that receives daily reports from our rangers in the field, allowing us to see what work has been completed in a day, week and month. With this system, we have the ability and capacity to generate a variety of report forms to assess the influence of our rangers on the project. The rangers' daily activities and outputs contribute to the project's goal of implementing efficient human-animal conflict mitigation methods to reduce poaching and wildlife crime while maintaining species population increase, at the same time improving community livelihoods. The records [Annex 15 - HWC Types, Annex 18 - HWC Map Species, Annex 24 - HWC Reporting Methods] demonstrate the influence our rangers have on the ground in reporting HWC incidences, which are then swiftly addressed, resulting in a reduction in these occurrences compared to the prior year before the female community rangers were deployed. Their daily reports allow us to examine each ranger's performance and efficacy. This approach has allowed us to shift two rangers to new locations that needed attention owing to the volume of occurrences that were coming in.

To ensure that the project is progressing well and achieving its objectives, the Central Office Administration team continues to visit the conservancy on a regular basis to check on activities that would have been performed to ensure that they meet project standards and lead to the project's completion. In addition to the CLM submitting weekly plans, we now have female community rangers submitting weekly plans, so we know what they want to do for the week and can guide them accordingly.

Our primary indicators of success are Earthranger reports [Annex 14 - Intel Map 2024 – 25, Annex 15 - HWC Types, Annex 18 - HWC Map Species], reports indicating our collaboration with the many stakeholders involved in this project, species growth over the year as per the aerial survey report 2024 [Annex 21 - Aerial Survey Report_Extract_2024, Annex 35 - Rhino Ops Report 2024_Extract], and quality HWC incident reports.

Our M&E plan has not changed over the year, and partners do share in the M&E function. Information is exchanged in the form of reports. [Annex 37 - IWT100 Project Status Report 2024-25_Jan25]

9. Lessons learnt

What worked well:

- Our use of the Earthranger application has proven to be an effective tool for rangers to collect, analyse, monitor, evaluate, and report on data. We are now developing a database of information that will be critical for reducing HWC and combating illegal wildlife trading.
- Implementing a collaborative approach with neighbouring communities has resulted in increased community ownership of solutions, particularly for HWC mitigation measures.
- Our inclusive ranger recruitment approach involving all stakeholders in the value chain, has resulted in a well-supported and efficient process.
- The First Aid Training provided to the female rangers has not only helped the rangers but also the community as a whole because the rangers are now first responders to medical emergencies, which has helped the project gain the trust of the community and make them see the value of their wives, mothers, sisters, and children participating in the project. The value will grow even further as the rangers may now impart their knowledge to others.
- Empowering communities with conservation information has significantly changed perspectives of conservation. This is now being reinforced by the formation of many wildlife conservation clubs in schools to ensure the same message reaches every elder in the community and this will be more effective coming from a family member, rather than a stranger. These clubs will raise a generation that understands the value of wildlife and will have capacity to preserve our crucial habitat and its biodiversity.
- The employment of female rangers and fence monitors and the influence they have on families and the community at large, is proving to be the panacea to the shift in mindset change and how the communities now view wildlife, which has caused them to see the benefits and now want to be part of the wildlife economy.
- Feedback should be a continual process rather than an isolated event since it is essential for realigning processes and procedures to ensure project success.

What didn't work well:

We observed that communities have varied expectations, and it is critical to understand these before implementing any solution to guarantee that it is well received and effective. The concept of ladies wearing trousers did not sit well with other groups, who saw it as taboo, and the initiative, through the CLM, had to work relentlessly with traditions to affect mentality change with some male figures in these communities. Finally, we posted a win for the project.

Recommendations for Others:

1. Adopt participatory approaches, as they foster community ownership and inclusive decision-making.
2. Empower local communities by providing access to conservation information and promote mindset change.
3. Leverage latest technologies and utilize effective tools like Earthranger for data collection and analysis.
4. Prioritise feedback by establishing continuous feedback mechanisms to ensure project adaptability.

What we have learned we will ensure we build into the project and future plans by

- Continuous monitoring and evaluation: Regular assessment and adaptation.
- Capacity building: Ongoing training and support for rangers and community members.
- Community engagement: Sustained community involvement and participation.

- Knowledge sharing: Disseminate lessons learned to inform future projects and stakeholders.

By integrating these lessons learned, our project can further enhance its impact, promote sustainable conservation practices, and support community development. Fortunately, there is nothing that warrants a change in the plan for the coming year as a result of this learning.

10. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)

Part of last year's Annual Report review comments were responded to in the Half-Year Report. With regard to the other comments, we will use this section to respond to the rest of the points raised in the last Annual Report as detailed below.

Comment 1:

Our project prioritises good communication and collaboration to create and maintain strong relationships with partner ATS and other stakeholders, such as the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority and Rural District Councils. Our key strategies include regular meetings with partners and stakeholders to ensure open discussions about project updates and addressing concerns; effective information sharing on project activities, achievements, and challenges; collaborative planning and decision making to foster a sense of ownership and shared responsibility; and well-established channels of communication for feedback and concerns, which allows us to address issues quickly.

This has resulted in solid partnerships based on trust, cooperation, and mutual understanding between our partners and stakeholders, as well as successful issue resolution and collaboration. As the project progresses and enters its final year, we hope for continued engagement through regular meetings and updates; improved communication by experimenting with new communication channels and strategies as technology advances; and, finally, regular feedback from our stakeholders to ensure project relevance and effectiveness.

Comment 2:

We have reworded our Outcome statement to ensure that it embraces exactly what the project is aimed to achieve, and we hope that this is better understood. A change request will be submitted.

"Improved capacity and patrol coverage of community rangers leads to reduction in poaching and IWT, and stabilisation of the rhino population; and mitigation measures lead to a reduction in HWC."

Comment 3:

The selection process for the ranger training program was designed to identify individuals who would effectively support the project's objectives and benefit the community. Key considerations included:

1. *Community Representation:* Ensured representation from various community groups, including vulnerable households.
2. *Skills and Experience:* Identified individuals with relevant skills, experience, or interest in wildlife conservation and community development.
3. *Local Knowledge:* Prioritised individuals with in-depth knowledge of the local environment and wildlife.

Selection Criteria:

1. We conducted vulnerability assessments to identify households most in need of support, and this was done with the help of traditional leaders (Village Heads and Chiefs)

2. The traditional leaders nominated individuals they believed would benefit from the training and effectively contribute to community development.
3. Conducted interviews and assessments to evaluate applicants' suitability for the program.

Supported Vulnerable Households:

- Prioritised selection of individuals from vulnerable households, including those affected by human-wildlife conflict.
- Ensured the selection process was inclusive, considering factors like age, gender, and socio-economic status. Though this was gender sensitive in the sense that we decided to choose only females because they had been overlooked as only men were being employed as rangers within the SVC and we decided to take a transformative approach and empower women and give them the opportunity to transform livelihoods.
- Focused on building capacities of selected individuals to support their households and communities.

ATS and ZPWMA provided effective training, enabled participants to contribute to community development and wildlife conservation, and finally the project enhanced community benefits through the deployment of the trained rangers.

Comment 4:

This comment was addressed in the Half-Year Report of 2024-25

Comment 5:

To ensure the long-term impact of our project, we have developed a comprehensive exit strategy that prioritises sustainability. The number of the employed female community rangers and fence monitors will be maintained in Year 1 after the project, and hope to increase the numbers starting year 2 to ensure that all affected areas are effectively covered. The money for salaries, uniforms and equipment replacement will be raised initially via fund raising by participating in the annual TUSK Wildlife Ranger Challenge, which we already have been engaged in the last 3 years. The money raised via this platform will also ensure that the rangers are covered under an insurance scheme, which also covers the current SVC Rangers to ensure that they are well catered for in case of emergencies whilst carrying out their duties in the field. We will maintain and grow strong partnerships with local organisations and government agencies to ensure continued support. The monitoring and evaluation of the project will improve as we embrace more functionality in the Earthranger system, and as we adopt other technologies to ensure seamless monitoring and evaluation of activities by all our rangers.

We will continue to engage with our communities and advocate for their participation in project activities, to ensure that they increase their knowledge in the value of wildlife and engage in the wildlife economy.

11. Risk Management

This year, our project has made significant adaptations to address emerging risks and challenges. We adjusted our community engagement approaches to better address concerns and needs of local communities. The project implemented additional measures to mitigate risks associated with human-wildlife conflict, such as improved livestock management practices, and incorporated flexibility in project implementation to respond to changing circumstances and community needs. [Annex 30 - IWT100 2023-Biodiversity-Challenge-Funds-Risk-Register]

We incorporated feedback from stakeholders, including communities and partners, to inform project adaptations, and applied lessons learned from project implementation to refine and improve project design. This has resulted in our enhanced ability to manage risks and respond to emerging challenges, strengthen community engagement and participation in project activities, and improved project effectiveness through adaptive management and responsive design.

12. Scalability and durability

Project stakeholders, including potential adopters, have learned about the project through various channels, which include, our outreach programme with local communities, via meetings, workshops, and awareness campaigns; our participation in relevant seminars and conferences; dissemination of our project reports and briefs to stakeholders, and finally, through our utilisation of social media channels and our website, sharing our project success stories and our engagement with different stakeholders.

The project has garnered significant interest and enthusiasm from potential adopters, as evidenced by the overwhelmingly positive feedback from the community leadership, and various stakeholders (Refer to Annex 5 - Stakeholder_Government - Forest Commission Zimbabwe, Annex 9 - Stakeholder - Chief Budzi Bikita District). There is a growing demand for project replication and scaling from community leaders, government representatives and government agencies, as potential quantifiable economic benefits start to show, such as increased income and improved crop yields, and positive social and environmental impacts, including improved community cohesion and biodiversity conservation.

The project has demonstrated effectiveness in addressing human-wildlife conflict and improving livelihoods, with emphasis on sustainable practices and community-led initiatives.

We've aligned incentives for key organisations through, clear demonstrated benefits, such as improved livelihoods, reduced human-wildlife conflict, and enhanced biodiversity conservation; provided capacity-building opportunities; fostered collaborative partnerships with various key stakeholders, promoting shared ownership and responsibility; offered recognition and visibility for organisations' contributions, enhancing their reputation, and emphasized sustainable impact, ensuring long-term benefits for organisations and communities.

We have ensured alignment of our project goals with government policies and priorities, and strengthened government agencies', especially ZPWMA's capacity to manage and conserve natural resources. The project has empowered local government organisations (RDC's) to engage with local communities, and fostered community ownership and decision-making regarding conservation aspects, and provided training and capacity-building opportunities for communities.

The project has leveraged government policies and contributed to policy changes through, engaged with government agencies to inform policy decisions. The recent participation and involvement of SVC in the Parks Draft Bill cannot go unnoticed as we ensured that the bill correctly contained statutes that would favour the growth of the wildlife economy. This entailed conducting research and providing evidence to support policy changes and development, collaborating with government stakeholders to implement policy changes. The SVC will maintain engagement with government agencies and develop policy briefs to inform decision-making, as well as provide capacity-building opportunities for government stakeholders.

The SVC and the project's impact is enhancing governance and management of natural resources and supporting sustainable development and conservation efforts.

The project has demonstrated changes in:

- Attitudes: Shift in community attitudes towards wildlife conservation and habitat protection, and this has resulted in Devure Ward 25 of Bikita District deciding to join the wildlife economy by ceding part of their land to expand the SVC and enjoy financial benefits going forward (Refer to Annex 22 - Bikita RDC Letter on Ward 25).
- Social Norms: Changes in social norms, with communities embracing conservation practices.
- Knowledge: Increased knowledge and understanding of conservation practices among community members.
- Values: Shift in values, with communities valuing wildlife and natural resources.
- Behaviours: Changes in behaviours, with communities adopting sustainable practices.

Evidence: The project will conduct surveys and interviews to assess and confirm changes in attitudes, knowledge, and behaviours in the third quarter of this final year as the project draws to a close.

Worth noting is the communities' increased participation in conservation efforts with the realisation of improved livelihoods and well-being among community members, as a result of reduced human-wildlife conflict and improved coexistence.

Referring to our original exit plan, the three main steps proposed for ensuring outputs, outcomes and impacts of the project are durable after the project ends were as follows:

1. EU funding was secured by the SVC to address community related settlement issues 5 years ago. In January 2020, the Government of Zimbabwe agreed to the offer. Then EU unilaterally redirected the funding to food security. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] SVC awaits EDF funding for a further opportunity commencing 2021.
2. USAID has signed with SVC for a \$5 million grant over five years entitled resilience Anchors, allowing additional capacity for community work. The Savé Valley Conservation Trust was signed by members on November 6th, 2020. The Trust will be mandated for funding the community development strategy, including new fencing.
3. Mike Watungwa will continue to be employed by the Trust.

This original exit strategy provided for the project has been unfortunately overtaken by events. The proposed EU funding is no longer available, USAID is officially closing in July 2025, and the only step still holding true is the Community Liaison Manager position, though Mike Watungwa didn't come on-board and was replaced by Dingani Masuku.

The project's new exit strategy will leverage the TUSK Wildlife Ranger Challenge to raise funding to enable that the project's durability of desired outputs, outcomes and impacts, ensuring that the project has a sustained legacy. Additionally, efforts are currently being made to source other donor funding to assist the process. Refer to Annex xx – Tusk Grant 2025

13. IWT Challenge Fund identity

The SVC continues to publicise the IWT Challenge Fund throughout the project, as we strive to make the IWT Challenge Fund Logo and the UK Development Logo visible and inform people that the project was made possible by their funding to curtail IWT, reduce HWC, and improve people's livelihoods. In the two IWT awareness campaign held this year at Checheche and Chiremwaremwa, we also had t-shirts emblazoned with the IWT and UK Development emblems and the theme 'Stopping Illegal Wildlife Trade in our Communities begins with ME.' The t-shirts distributed to all campaign participants, ensures the message will continue to be shared if the t-shirts are worn repeatedly in the coming years (Refer to Annex xx photo of awareness campaign). We continue to display the IWT and UK Development logos throughout planned campaigns and trainings, including two branded banners with the IWT and UK Development emblems, indicating that the initiative the UK Government sponsors IWT100 through the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund. These banners grace all project-related meetings, workshops, training, and presentations. [Annex 39 - IWT100 Newsletter March 2025]

Our SVC website (www.savevalleyconservancy.org) reflects the IWT Challenge Fund Logo and displays a brief write-up about this important project for SVC. The CLM's vehicle and clothing displays the IWT and UK Fund logos.

The UK government's contribution to our project's work is recognised and appreciated daily due to its influence and the changes, it has brought about, particularly in SVC and our adjacent communities. We also highlight the project regularly on our social media platforms. Please refer to reports from the SVC Chairman, and two stakeholders, on how they have benefited from this project. [Annex 25 - Chairman Letter of Appreciation for the IWT100 Project, Annex 5 -

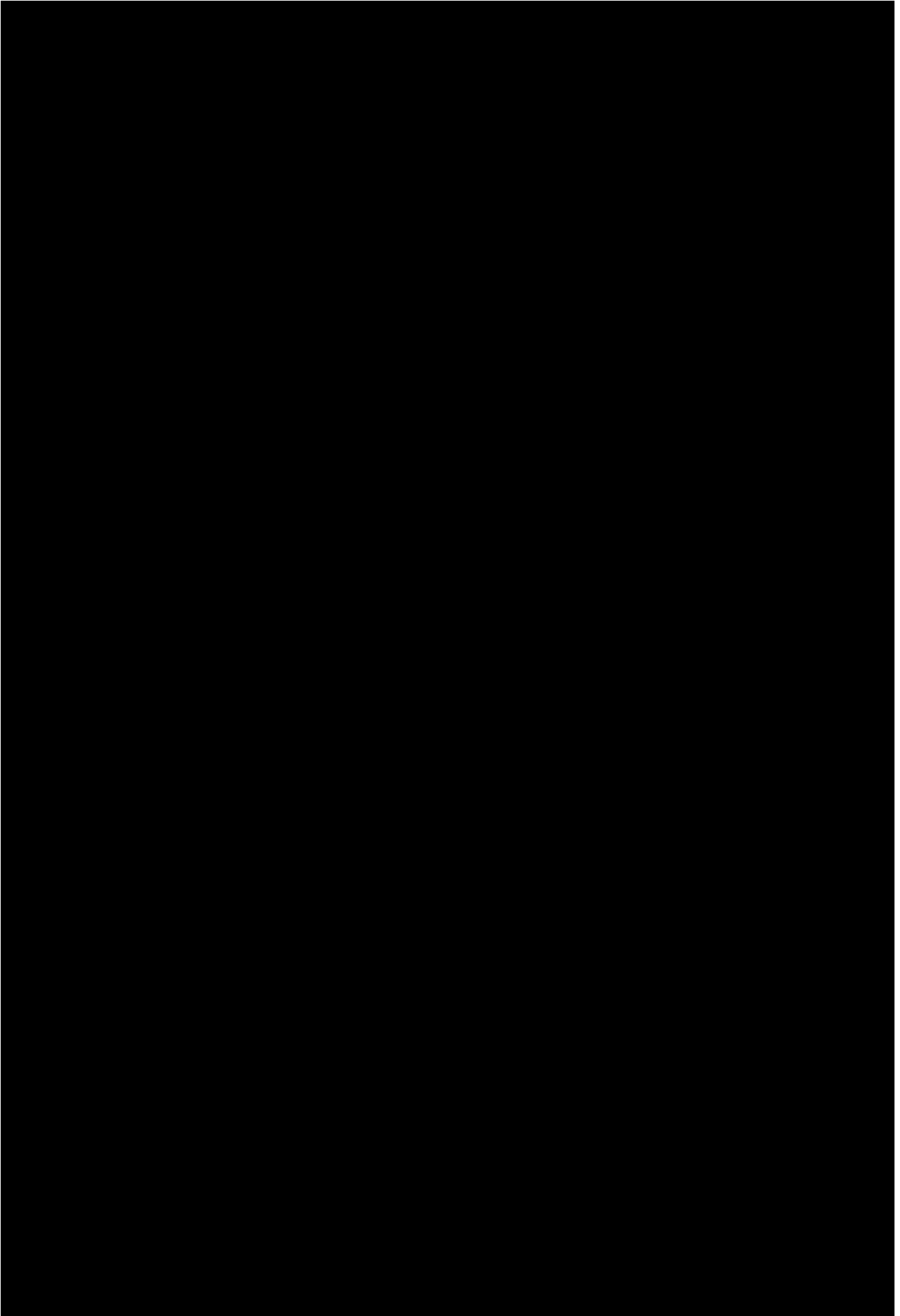
Stakeholder_Government - Forest Commision Zimbabwe, Annex 9 - Stakeholder - Chief Budzi Bikita District].

The IWT Challenge Fund funding is a distinct project with a clear identity. However, it is part of a larger programme because other organisations, such as USAID, were running a similar project with Fence Guardians and Community Verifiers who have a similar mandate to the Female Community Rangers programme.

As the project progresses and we continue to connect with the numerous stakeholders, especially the Minister of Environment, they will better understand the IWT Challenge Fund, particularly the schools and communities who are already benefiting from it.

Our social media sites have been linked to the IWT Challenge Fund / Biodiversity Challenge Fund.

14. Safeguarding



15. Project expenditure

Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (April 2024-March 2025)

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2024/25 Grant (£)	2024/25 Total actual IWT 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)				
TOTAL	105,528.00	82,528.00		

The variances in the budget have been discussed with NIRAS and a resolution was reached at.

Table 2: Project mobilised or matched funding during the reporting period (1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025)

	Secured to date	Expected by end of project	Sources
Matched funding leveraged by the partners to deliver the project (£)			
Total additional finance mobilised for new activities occurring outside of the project, building on evidence, best practices and the project (£)			

16. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

None

17. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements or progress of your project so far (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).

The female community Ranger role is very challenging both physically and mentally. The community Ranger must play an ambassadorial role to species that sometimes destroy the community's livelihood. The tasks widen the gap between the Ranger and the rest of the

community, leaving the Ranger to absorb all the community members' frustrations, disappointments, and stresses. It then requires an individual with a strong aptitude for dealing with challenging situations unflinchingly.

Despite the barriers, Ranger Melord Tirivavi faces the perception that the wild is an enemy that does not add value to her community. Yet, she stands firm in her position daily, a testament to her resilience and determination to conserve. It is her job to change a stubborn culture, and while she may not be able to alter it completely, she is determined to influence her community to have compassion and learn to live in harmony with nature. Her unwavering commitment to this cause is truly inspiring.

The Chibuwe community, under Chief Musikavanhu, is one of the oldest irrigation projects established in the 1960s. The agro-based area faces many setbacks. These include loss of livelihoods, livestock, crops, food stocks, and infrastructure damage blamed on climate change but primarily based on wildlife as an immediately visible cause. Despite the challenges, Ranger Melord's initiatives have begun to make a difference. Her awareness campaigns, cleanup campaigns, antipoaching initiatives, tree planting mobilizations, and wildlife clubs are slowly but surely changing the community's culture and attitudes, offering hope for a more harmonious future.

Her adaptation to ever-changing strategies and mitigation methods has significantly improved the safety of crops and animals in her community. She does not shy away from confronting farmers who have lost crops or animals; she collects reports and documents on every incident to analyze how best to mitigate them, ensuring the community's safety. You would find her buried deep in the irrigation plots, teaching the farmers about making chilli bombs, planting chilli, practising beekeeping, noise deterrence, and light deterrence mitigation measures, which are also on her list of lessons taught to the Chibuwe community.

Ranger Melord's dedication to improving her community has not gone unnoticed. Her hard work and decision to study wildlife law—a first for our rangers—earned her the Ranger of the Month title. We are proud to recognize her achievements. [Annex 38 - Female Community Ranger Melord Tirivavi Video]

Image, Video or Graphic Information:

File Type (Image / Video / Graphic)	File Name or File Location	Caption including description, country and credit	Social media accounts and websites to be tagged (leave blank if none)	Consent of subjects received (delete as necessary)
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No
				Yes / No

Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against logframe for Financial Year 2024-2025

Project summary	Progress and Achievements April 2024 - March 2025	Actions required/planned for next period
<p>Impact</p> <p>An increased protection of all target species (Wild Dogs, Cheetahs, Rhinos, Lion, Ground Pangolin and Elephants) in the short term and a positive growth rate of all species in the long term.</p>	<p>Community-based approaches to tackling illegal wildlife trade (IWT) and Human-wildlife conflict (HWC) have shown promising results. The deployment of the community female rangers who have shown effectiveness in intelligence gathering has made significant strides in reducing IWT and complimented by the fence monitors. Poaching has shown a dramatic reduction of at least 30% in the year measured through indicators like animal carcasses found, snares recovered, and arrests made. The aerial game count results and camera trap images, indicate a reported increase in target species population of about 20%. In the process habitat protection has somewhat improved with improved coverage by the community rangers which has seen several charcoal production syndicates being busted, and the adoption of sustainable forest management practices. The project's interventions have resulted in the communities increasing their income because of a reduction in HWC incidents, particularly regarding crop loss and livestock predation. The project has ensured alternative livelihoods by taking steps to encourage sustainable forest management via community-based forest management initiatives which promote sustainable livelihoods and reduce deforestation, and this has even resulted in the Devure community of Ward 25 initiating to join SVC by ceding part of their land to engage in the wildlife community. The promotion of community-based eco-tourism enterprises (cultural activities, traditional foods, weaving, etc.) to provide alternative income sources, reducing reliance on poaching and thereby bringing positive changes in the communities impacted by IWT. However, robust monitoring and evaluation will continue to be engaged to measure the effectiveness of these interventions in the final project year.</p>	
<p>Outcome</p> <p>Improved capacity and patrol coverage of community rangers leads to reduction in poaching and IWT and increasing the species population, including the black rhino population; and mitigation measures lead to a reduction in HWC throughout the duration of the project from the second quarter after employment of the rangers.</p>		

Reduction of livestock and crop loss leading to improved livelihoods.		
<p>Outcome indicator 0.1</p> <p>0.1 20 community rangers effectively deployed across 2,500 km² of SVC.</p>	<p>Female Rangers went through their second training phase after they had been deployed, which also included first aid training. Evidence provided in section 3.3 and as per Annex 26 - Female Community Rangers Training Report 2024-25. Standard Indicators IWTCF-B06, IWTCF-B10, IWTCF-B14, IWTCF-B18, and IWTCF-C09 as indicated in Annex 3, are being used to assist in measuring the outcomes.</p>	<p>The next training phase to take place in July (21 – 25)</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.2</p> <p>0.2 Black rhino population numbers increased for the duration of this project. Target IUCN 2% per annum.</p>	<p>The species numbers have increased by at least 7% in the year 2024 as the major poaching syndicates have successfully been infiltrated and immobilised. This has come by securing of our borders with more boots on the ground, the repairing of the fence, and education offered people on the importance of wildlife.</p> <p>Evidence provided in Annex 34 - White Rhino Population</p>	<p>Improved patrols from the rangers using Earth Ranger software for effective reporting and monitoring.</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.3</p> <p>0.3 Reduction in retaliatory wildlife killing from HWC once the new rangers have been recruited in the first quarter.</p>	<p>The HWC trainings and the constant education of communities by the rangers, has resulted in a marked decrease in retaliatory killing of wildlife, destroying their crops and livestock, as opposed to killing the communities have been taught to immediately report incidents of wildlife in their area and that wildlife belongs to the country and is also theirs. This reflects a change in the community's mindset. This is measured by the HWC reports from the rangers as generated by Earth Ranger and the Standard Indicators IWTCF-B01 in Annex 3.</p>	<p>HWC training on-going by the rangers as part of their daily work.</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.4</p>	<p>The constant repair of the SVC fence by the Fence Monitors, improved monitoring and reporting by the Female Rangers on problem animals in the communities, and timely response</p>	<p>Continued and improved HWC training on-going by the</p>

0.4 Reduction in HWC incidents from baselines in each community area after the first quarter when the new rangers are employed.	by the SSPU, RDC and ZimParks have shown a marked improvement in reducing the amount of HWC incidents. The standard indicators IWTCF-C05 and IWTCF-B01 in Annex 3 are being used to track the progress of this outcome indicator. Evidence provided in Annex 27 - IWT100 IWT & HWC Baseline Report 2024.	community rangers in their daily work.
Output 1 Human Wildlife Conflict reduced in a minimum of six adjacent community areas through training and development of mitigation measures. Reduction of conflicts from livestock and crop loss leading to improved livelihoods in the communities adjacent to the Conservancy. Employed community rangers will earn salaries improving livelihoods of their families. Short term employment for community members during fence repair helps improve livelihoods.		
Output indicator 1.1 1.1 Twelve HWC trainings held in the adjacent communities with 20 people in each training, 50% men and women in each training.	The HWC's initial rounds of training were successfully conducted in May and August 2024, as planned. Problem species have been identified as hyena, elephant, lion, and buffalo, and communities are being encouraged to adopt the proposed mitigation measures, which have been working well for some of the areas. Some areas still need work as they have been slow to respond to these, which the rangers are now being involved in assisting the communities to implement the measures, to ensure less crop loss, livestock predation or even human injury. Evidence is provided in section 3.2 and Annex 10 - HWC Training Report and Annex 11 - HWC Training Manual. Standard Indicators IWTCF-C05, IWTCF-B01 in Annex 3 is being used to monitor progress of this outcome indicator.	The rangers now have the mandate to constantly educate their communities on HWC aspects as they carry out their day-to-day work.
Output indicator 1.2 1.2 50KM of HWC mitigation fence repaired.	The Fence Monitors have been doing a sterling job in ensuring that the fence is properly repaired in any area that will have been destroyed, mostly by the species. The problem area notably has been Savuli as the electric wire has been effective at some point due to issues with the solar system supplying power to the fence, but this has since been attended to. The condition of our fence, notably in the North has seen reduced HWC incidents compared to the South. Continued HWC training by the rangers will ensure change of	Continued repair of fence to cover other areas bordering Nyangambe, Hammond, Humani, ARDA, and Senuko ranches.

	mindsets on how community members view wildlife and its importance. Significant progress has been made, and the focus now moves on the South side of the SVC boundary.	
<p>Output indicator 1.3</p> <p>1.3 20 women (community rangers) employed to patrol the fence, starting in year 1 of this grant commencing in the first quarter.</p>	<p>The Female Rangers effective deployment has been a game changer to the SVC as seen by the intelligence been gathered by the rangers which has greatly assisted in the arrests of the bushmeat poaching syndicates in the year under review. They continue the patrolling of the boundary, which is constantly being attended to by the Fence Monitors, where they would have been breaches, has seen a reduction in HWC and IWT, resulting in an increase of our species' population. Evidence provided in section 3.2 and as per Annex 14 - Intel Map 2024 - 25 and Annex 15 - HWC Types. Standard Indicators IWTCF-B06, IWTCF-B10, IWTCF-B14, IWTCF-B18, IWTCF-C09, and IWTCF-D26 as indicated in Annex 3, are being used to assist in measuring the outcomes.</p>	<p>The next training phase to take place in July (21 – 25)</p>
<p>Output indicator 1.4</p> <p>1.4 Baselines established in six priority community areas.</p>	<p>Progress was achieved in determining the level of HWC reports dealt with in the SVC, and baselines were established for comparison. The Standard Indicator IWTCF-B01 is being used to track progress on reports.</p>	
<p>Output indicator 1.5</p> <p>1.5 Six mitigation measures developed in six different community areas, in addition to the fence (1.2).</p>	<p>After successful consultations with the communities and other stakeholders, mitigation measures were developed to assist the six communities with to ensure a reduction in HWC in addition to the fence. Refer to Annex 12 - HWC Mitigation Measures 2025 and detailed in section 3.2. Standard Indicator IWTCF-B01 is being used to monitor progress with this.</p>	<p>Communities will continually be retrained on these mitigation measures by the rangers</p>

Output 2 Community ranger response unit and Special Species Protection Unit trained on key skills, deployed and equipped with proper equipment. Coverage expanded and operational across 2,500 km ² of SVC.		
Output indicator 2.1. 2.1 20 rangers operational under ATS and SVC coordination.	The Female Community Rangers are progressing well in their areas of deployment and reporting directly to ATS, using the Earthranger software installed on their Blackview BV8900 smartphones for data collection and reporting. Refer to Annex 36 - Earthranger Ranger Field Report.	Advanced use of Earthranger to be included in the next training in July (21-25)
Output indicator 2.2. 2.2 Three trainings by ATS, one per year, for the 20 rangers held, with 95% participation, and engagement from GLFTCA partners where appropriate.	The second training phase was conducted successfully as detailed in section 3.2 as evidenced in Annex 26 - Female Community Rangers Training Report 2024-25	The next training planned for July (21 – 25)
Output indicator 2.3. 2.3 Community and SSPU rangers provided cameras and GPS units for rhino monitoring, and tents, motorbikes and raincoats for patrols.	The rangers continue to receive training on the effective use of their gadgets used for reporting and monitoring, the BV8900 Blackview phones, to ensure proper use. New sets of uniforms were supplied to the rangers to ensure they continue to look smart and presentable.	
Output indicator 2.4. 2.4 Number of poaching and IWT arrests by community ranger units, SSPU, ZPWMA and ZRP increased from current level.	The female rangers' intelligence gathering has resulted in the arresting of several poaching syndicates as evidenced in Annex 14 - Intel Map 2024 - 25, and Annex 19 - Police Report Wildlife Crime. They have done tremendous work and have brought in a new perspective in the intelligence gathering.	Training to be offered on evidence handling as they get equipped more and more to ensure success in combating IWT.
Output indicator 2.5. 2.5 Verification of individual rhinos in the field through patrolling at 95% annually.	The use of Earthranger has made significant improvement in the monitoring and reporting of rhino within the SVC. Refer to Annex 35 - Rhino Ops Report 2024_Extract	
Output 3. Coordinated ranger units and management teams within the GLFTCA collaborating effectively and sharing information to reduce poaching and IWT.		

Potential for increase in community safari hunting quotas in the GLFTCA improving rural livelihoods.		
Output indicator 3.1. 3.1 Quarterly coordination meetings between GLFTCA partners.	This has been on-going under ATS's purview.	
Output indicator 3.2. 3.2 Number of joint responses to IWT and poaching incidences mapped and updated every quarter.	No responses recorded, but sharing of intelligence information.	
Output indicator 3.3. 3.3 Number of occurrences of information-sharing between project partners on an ongoing basis.	This is progressing via monthly reports and meetings. See Annex 37 - IWT100 Project Status Report 2024-25_Jan25 for evidence.	

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
Impact: An increased protection of all target species (Wild Dogs, Cheetahs, Rhinos, Lion, Ground Pangolin and Elephants) in the short term and a positive growth rate of all species in the long term.			
Outcome: Improved capacity and patrol coverage of community rangers leads to reduction in poaching and IWT and increasing the black rhino population; and mitigation measures lead to a reduction in HWC throughout the duration of the project from the second quarter after employment of the rangers. Reduction of livestock and crop loss leading to improved livelihoods	0.120 community rangers effectively deployed across 2,500 km ² of SVC. 0.2 Species population numbers increased for the duration of this project. 0.3 Reduction in retaliatory wildlife killing from HWC once the new rangers have been recruited in the first quarter. 0.4 Reduction in HWC incidents from baselines in each community area after	E.g. Patrol records, CyberTracker reports. 0.2 Species population number reports generated after every 12 months. 0.3 Patrol records, CyberTracker reports updated every month. 0.4 HWC records updated every month.	Continued collaboration and support from ZPWMA, the Government of Zimbabwe and ZRP. Continued collaboration from the local communities. Continued engagement with GLFTCA partners.

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
	the first quarter when the new rangers are employed.		
Output 1 Human Wildlife Conflict reduced in a minimum of six adjacent community areas through training and development of mitigation measures. Reduction of conflicts from livestock and crop loss leading to improved livelihoods in the communities adjacent to the Conservancy. Employed community rangers will earn salaries improving livelihoods of their families. Short term employment for community members during fence repair helps improve livelihoods.	1.1 Twelve HWC trainings held in the adjacent communities with 20 people in each training, 50% men and women in each training. 1.2 50KM of HWC mitigation fence repaired. 1.3 20 women (community rangers) employed to patrol the fence, starting in year 1 of this grant commencing in the first quarter. 1.4 Baselines established in six priority community areas. 1.5 Six mitigation measures developed in six different community areas, in addition to the fence (1.2).	1.1 Training reports, including gender split. 1.1 Fence construction reports. E.g Employment contracts in the first quarter and patrol reports every month. 1.4 HWC baseline established in the second quarter. 1.5 Report on HWC mitigation measures and record of HWC incidents updated every month.	Women want to be employed to patrol the fence. FPIC received by the communities for HWC mitigation measures.
Output 2 Community ranger response unit and Special Species Protection Unit trained on key skills, deployed and equipped with proper equipment. Coverage expanded and operational across 2,500 km ² of SVC.	2.1 20 rangers operational under ATS and SVC coordination. 2.2 Three trainings by ATS, one per year, for the 20 rangers held, with 95% participation, and engagement from GLFTCA partners where appropriate. 2.3 Community and SSPU rangers provided cameras and GPS units for rhino monitoring, and tents, motorbikes and raincoats for patrols.	2.1 CyberTracker / SMART patrol data to be mapped every month starting in the second quarter. 2.2 Training reports attendance sheets and photographs 2.3 Equipment inventory and handover reports.	Coordination between SVC, ZPWMA and ZRP continues to work effectively.

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
	<p>2.4 Number of poaching and IWT arrests by community ranger units, SSPU, ZPWMA and ZRP increased from current level.</p> <p>2.5 Verification of individual rhinos in the field through patrolling at 95% annually.</p>	<p>2.4 Police reports and filings with ZRP / ZPWMA.</p> <p>2.5 Rhino monitoring report, photos and GPS recordings updated every month.</p>	
<p>Output 3 Coordinated ranger units and management teams within the GLFTCA collaborating effectively and sharing information to reduce poaching and IWT. Potential for increase in community safari hunting quotas in the GLFTCA improving rural livelihoods.</p>	<p>3.1 Quarterly coordination meetings between GLFTCA partners.</p> <p>3.2 Number of joint responses to IWT and poaching incidences mapped and updated every quarter.</p> <p>3.3 Number of occurrences of information-sharing between project partners on an ongoing basis.</p>	<p>3.1 Minutes from GLFTCA partner meetings.</p> <p>3.2 Patrol reports from joint response to IWT and poaching incidences.</p> <p>3.3 Records from information sharing.</p>	<p>GLFTCA partners willing to share intelligence and information on IWT and poaching.</p> <p>GLFTCA partners willing to coordinate on poaching and IWT incidences.</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>1.1 Sign employment contract with Community Liaison Manager (CLM) and purchase vehicle and office equipment for his role</p> <p>1.2 CLM to identify six priority community areas in consultation with community, project partners and other stakeholders.</p> <p>1.3 CLM to organise recruitment and training course to select 20 female community rangers.</p> <p>1.4 CLM to design the TOR for community rangers in consultation with the SSPU.</p> <p>1.5 Stakeholders to identify key stretches of existing fence line where repair work would help mitigate HWC.</p> <p>1.6 CLM to organise bi-annual HWC trainings in target communities identified in 1.2.</p> <p>1.7 CLM to establish HWC baselines in target communities identified in 1.2 through consultation with community, project partners and other stakeholders.</p> <p>1.8 CLM to determine and develop six different mitigation measures through consultation with community, project partners and other stakeholders.</p> <p>2.1 Run recruitment and selection process for SSPU and ranch rangers drawing candidates from the SVC surrounding communities.</p> <p>2.2 Successful applicants from the recruitment and selection process proceed to a basic ranger training course.</p> <p>2.3 Employment of suitable candidates from Activity 2.2 by the SSPU and SVC and equip candidates with necessary uniform, kit, and equipment.</p> <p>2.4 SSPU to co-ordinate deployments with rhino monitoring plan determined by the SVC rhino co-ordinator.</p> <p>2.5 Purchase good quality rhino monitoring cameras so accurate and safe verification of rhino is possible.</p> <p>2.6 Determine a reporting system from the ranch and community rangers that will be collated by central SSPU admin.</p> <p>2.7 ATS to conduct annual SSPU and ranch rangers training. North and south training course to be arranged with rangers split into manageable groups. Training to refresh on basic techniques as well as update rangers on new innovations.</p> <p>2.8 Equip community rangers with uniform and equipment i.e. radios for communication.</p> <p>2.9 Ensure old and faulty ranger equipment replaced regularly for safety of rangers.</p>			

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
3.1	Arrange quarterly coordination meetings with GLTFCA partners and ensure meetings are minuted.		
3.2	Continued provision of good communication systems (radio/mobile/satellite) to promote and encourage sharing of intelligence, poaching etc information between SVC, GLFTCA and other stakeholders.		

Annex 3 Standard Indicators

Table 1 Project Standard Indicators

Please see the Standard Indicator guidance for more information on how to report in this section, including appropriate disaggregation.

IWTCF Indicator number	Name of indicator	If this links directly to a project indicator(s), please note the indicator number here	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
IWTCF- A01	Number of people who received training in sustainable livelihood skills.		People	Gender; Male & Female Age Group; 15 - 45 Local Communities, Bee keeping, Chilli production & Fish Farming		550			1200
IWTCF-B10	Number of arrests (linked to wildlife crime) facilitated by the project		Number	Poaching, trafficking etc.	38			35	18
IWTCF-B14	Number of individuals successfully prosecuted for wildlife crimes.		Number	Poaching / IWT	19			19	60
IWTCF-C09	Number of markets trading in IWT products closed.		Number	Local		3		3	6
IWTCF-D26	Number of new and enhanced tools/approaches developed for tackling IWT.		Number	Tools/approaches. Local Communities.					6
IWTCF- A02	Number of people reporting they are applying new capabilities (skills and knowledge) 6 (or more) months after training.		People	Gender; Age Group; Local Communities,		30		30	18

IWTCF Indicator number	Name of indicator	If this links directly to a project indicator(s), please note the indicator number here	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
				Bee keeping, Chilli production & Fish Farming					
IWTCF- B06	Number of criminal networks/trade routes mapped/identified.		Number		4	1		5	6
IWTCF-B09	Duration or frequency of patrols by law enforcement rangers supported through the project.		Duration (hours or days)8						
IWTCF-B18	Number of intelligence reports fed into management decisions on species protection		Outline the details on the law and regulations			129			12
IWTCF-C03	Number of communication channels carrying campaign message.		Number	Radio, television, internet, social media, print media, campaigns	1	4		5	6
IWTCF-C04	Number of partners with influence on target audience that have distributed campaign message(s).		Number of partners	Nationals, public sector, civil society, private sector.		4		4	6
IWTCF-C05	Number of people reached with behaviour change messaging (i.e. audience).		Number	Indigenous Peoples, Local Communities,	1000	7000		8000	15,000
IWTCF-D02	Number of individuals benefitting from training (i.e. broader households of individual directly trained)		People/ Number trained	Gender; Age Group; Local Communities, Bee keeping, Chilli production & Fish Farming					

IWTCF Indicator number	Name of indicator	If this links directly to a project indicator(s), please note the indicator number here	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Total to date	Total planned during the project
IWTCF-D27	Number of partnerships established		Number	Type of partnership;	6			6	10
IWTCF-B01	Number of people trained in HWC aspects.		Number	Gender; Age Group; Indigenous Peoples, Local Communities,		1500		1500	1200

Table 2 Publications

Title	Type (e.g. journals, best practice manual, blog post, online videos, podcasts, 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)

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, scheme, type of report (i.e. Annual or Final), and year) and deleted the blue guidance text before submission?	Yes
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 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 BCF-Reports@niras.com about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the subject line.	Yes
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.	Yes
Have you provided an updated risk register? 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 encourage to develop a risk register.	Yes
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, do these meet the outlined requirements (see section 17)?	
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	Yes
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	Yes
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	