Transboundary IWT Projects

Biodiversity Challenge Funds: Building and Applying Evidence

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)

Date: 17 October 2023

Contents

Authorship and acknowledgements

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Cover photograph: Wild tiger in India - Tigersintheforest

1.   Background

1.1.   Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund

The Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund was established by the UK Government in 2014 to fund projects to tackle the illegal wildlife trade (IWT) internationally and, in doing so, to contribute to poverty reduction in developing countries. Applications for funding must show that they are aligned with one or more of the following themes (formerly referred to as 'objectives'):

1. Reducing demand for IWT products;
2. Ensuring effective legal frameworks and deterrents;
3. Strengthening law enforcement;
4. Developing sustainable livelihoods to benefit people directly affected by IWT.

In the 10 years since the IWT Challenge Fund was established, it has funded 157 projects in over 60 countries.

1.2.   Review of transboundary projects

Many of the projects that have been funded by the IWT Challenge Fund included activities that were implemented in more than one country. These might be considered as "transboundary projects". According to the terms of reference for the present study, agreed by Defra, "Transboundary IWT projects are critical for protecting and managing ecosystems and addressing threats that span international borders. These projects often face significant challenges due to differences in political, social, and economic contexts between countries. Despite the efforts made to implement such projects, the success rate of transboundary projects remains limited. Therefore, there is a need to understand the factors that contribute to the success of these projects. This will help support IWT strategy work on Nigeria and Vietnam."

Consequently, a review was conducted to identify lessons learned from past projects implemented in more than one country and, in particular, which activities have proven successful or useful or unhelpful, and what have been the challenges.

A total of 47 projects have included activities conducted in multiple countries. The countries covered by these 47 projects conducted so far are the following:

Africa:
Angola (2), Benin, Botswana, Cameroon (5), Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (4), Democratic Republic of the Congo (2), Ethiopia (3), Gabon (2), Guinea, Kenya (8), Liberia (2), Malawi (7), Mali, Mozambique (7), Namibia (2), Niger, Nigeria (3), Rwanda (2), Sierra Leone (2), Somalia (2), South Africa (3), South Sudan, Uganda (7), United Republic of Tanzania (7), Zambia (9), Zimbabwe (3)

Asia: Cambodia (3), China (8), Indonesia (5), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan (2), Lao PDR (5), Malaysia (3), Myanmar (3), Singapore, Tajikistan (2), Thailand (4), Uzbekistan, Viet Nam (11), Yemen

Central and South America and the Caribbean:
Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Guatemala (2), Mexico (2), Peru

From this selection of projects, the time constraints for conducting the review dictated that only a portion of the transboundary projects could be examined. In addition, a decision was made at an early stage of the selection process to focus on Main projects because the Evidence and Extra schemes are relatively new and would therefore provide less information. Similarly, projects in IWT Challenge Fund Round 8 (i.e. starting in 2022) were excluded as these were at an early stage of implementation.

On this basis, and with consideration of ensuring a spread of geography, IWT themes and focal species, a sample of 22 projects (i.e. 46% of IWT Challenge Fund projects operating in multiple countries) was selected. Of these, 16 were completed and six were still active at the time of selection.

The selection was designed to include projects on different continents, and for a range of countries and species. It also took account of the scores of Final Reports or (for more recent projects that were still in effect) Annual Reports, to cover a range of scores, but with an emphasis on the projects with higher scores, to identify the most effective approaches. The scoring system is outlined in the reporting template as shown in the tables below.

Table 1: Annual Report scoring descriptors

Score	Description	Achievement of Outputs/Outcome	# projects in sample
1	Likely to be **completely** achieved	The Outputs/Outcome are well on the way to completion (or completed).	2
2	Likely to be **largely** achieved	There is good progress towards Outcome completion and most Outputs have been achieved, particularly the most important.	3
3	Likely to be **partly** achieved	Only partial achievement of the Outcome is likely and/or achievement of some Outputs.	1
4	Only likely to be achieved **to a very limited extent**	Outcome unlikely to be achieved but a few Outputs likely to be achieved.	0
5	**Unlikely** to be achieved	No progress on Outputs or Outcome.	0
X	**Too early** to judge	It is impossible to say whether there has been any progress towards the final achievement of Outputs or Outcome. This score should not be used unless at least one of the following criteria are met: Project is postponed because of conflict; external constraints; recruitment delays.	2

Table 2: Final Report scoring descriptors

Grade	Outcome description	# projects in sample
A++	Outcome substantially exceeded	0
A+	Outcome moderately exceeded	4
A	Outcome met expectation	3
B	Outcome moderately did not meet expectation	6
C	Outcome substantially did not meet expectation	1

For the completed projects, the review was based mainly on the reviews of the Final Reports, with some reference to those reports themselves for additional detail of some cases (except for one project, for which the Final Report was awaited). For the projects that were still active, five were reviewed on the basis of the second Annual Report, and one on the basis of the first Annual Report. The selection included: seven projects for which the Outcome met or exceeded expectations; and seven for which the Outcome 'moderately did not' or 'did not' meet expectations (see Table 1); five for which the Outcome was likely to be completely or largely achieved; one for which it was expected to be partly achieved; and two for which it was considered 'too early to judge' (see Table 2).

The present report is the result of that review.

1.3.   Defining transboundary projects

As indicated above, a project that involves activities in multiple countries could be considered as a "transboundary project". In considering how to define the term "transboundary project" for the purposes of the assignment, the first step is to clarify the reason for establishing a definition, because this will determine which projects should be covered by this term. Currently, the word "transboundary" does not appear in the IWT Challenge Fund *Guidance Notes for Applicants: Round 10 2023-2024*.

If the intention is to establish a category of projects to which certain rules or conditions will apply, it will be important to ensure that all of those intended to be captured are indeed covered.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines 'transboundary' as an adjective meaning 'that crosses a boundary or boundaries; situated on or relating to both sides of a boundary'. This could be interpreted to mean different things. For example, it could be that transboundary projects are simply projects with activities in more than one country. Or it could be interpreted strictly to mean that a project is "transboundary" if its activities are on both sides of the same boundary (i.e. the same border). This interpretation would, of course, exclude projects where the activities are carried out in separate continents (such as Africa and Asia), among others, even where active trade routes exist between these countries.

It was noted during this review that, in some projects with activities in more than one country, there was apparently little effort to connect the activities in the different countries. Whereas, in other projects, there was considerable interaction between the activities in the different countries, including meetings of their stakeholders to enhance cooperation; this is clearly easier when there is a common border. This raises the question of whether the former group should be considered as "transboundary".

As an additional consideration, from the perspective of international wildlife trade, the intention might be to describe a project as "transboundary" only if the countries in which it is implemented are part of a single wildlife supply chain. For example, if there were a chain of trade in pangolin specimens from Nigeria through Singapore to Vietnam, then a project working to address this trade in those three countries could be considered as "transboundary".

For the purposes of this review, the widest possible definition of "transboundary project" has been taken to best draw lessons from any project working across multiple projects.

2.   Results

The results of the review are presented below and are divided into two sections.

Section 2.1 lists a number of activities that appear to have contributed to the success of the project concerned or to be good practice, particularly in relation to the type of project, considering the theme that was being addressed. It should be stressed that this is not an exhaustive list but reflects the main actions that stood out from the examination of documents described above.

Section 2.2 provides information on lessons learned by the project partners during the implementation of the projects. These lessons generally relate to problems that were encountered in conducting the activities, and to ways in which things could have been done better or differently, as well as to factors to keep in mind that could hinder the effectiveness of a project. They may be of particular interest for future applicants, especially successful applicants.

2.1.   Activities that support success (good practices)

From the examination of the reports of past projects, and of the reviews conducted when those reports were submitted, a number of activities have emerged as being worthy of mention as 'good practice', contributing to the success of the transboundary projects. Even for projects that did not achieve all of their goals, some activities were nonetheless identified as helpful. It is clear that some of the activities that were conducted are of especial relevance to transboundary projects - in particular projects that are implemented in adjacent countries or in countries that are part of an IWT supply chain. However, many of the activities that have been implemented in transboundary IWT projects would be applicable to IWT projects more widely. The two subsections below highlight the activities that stood out during the review as supporting success; firstly the activities that are particularly pertinent for transboundary projects; secondly the activities that are relevant to transboundary projects but also to other projects.

2.1.1   Key characteristics of transboundary projects

2.1.1.1.   Behaviour change

Projects aimed at changing behaviour of the consumers of wildlife products understandably tend to focus on the country where the majority of consumers are based. But it is also possible to conduct activities at the international level, where the consumers are obtaining wildlife products in one country and then travelling to another.

One project tackled the problem of wildlife products being sold in Lao PDR, especially to Chinese tourists (IWT071). It tackled several aspects. In terms of behaviour change it conducted activities to raise awareness of wildlife crime in Lao PDR and to change behaviour in China. In China, the project worked with travel and tourism companies to make available various materials designed to affect behaviour of tourists. These included videos, leaflets, posters, stickers and billboards, as well as campaigns on social media platforms and in the press. A 'Guide to responsible tourism' was produced and made available to tourism companies. Three advocacy workshops for travellers were organised in China to make them aware of the issue and the law. Workshops were conducted to disseminate laws to tourists and the private sector. This is a good example of an activity relating specifically to travellers moving across an international border with wildlife products.

N.B.: The project delivery team of IWT071 noted that verifying the results of actions to change behaviour is a challenge. And, although there was a reduction in IWT during the period of the project, they raised doubts whether this would continue without ongoing campaigning and communications.

2.1.1.2. Building cooperation

Cooperation of the implementing organisation of a project with a variety of different bodies can facilitate the success of projects. For transboundary projects, an activity that is especially relevant is the building of cooperation between governments, organisations and people in different countries. There can be particular challenges to such cooperation if the countries concerned are in different continents, or do not share a common language, or if there are political tensions between them.

Where it is feasible, a useful tool can be to develop a bi-national (or multi-national) strategy for tackling IWT, recognising the roles of the various stakeholders. This has been done in several projects. As an example, a project focused on IWT in cheetah, working in Ethiopia, Somalia and Yemen (IWT066), assisted in producing individual national action plans and a regional action plan, on IWT in cheetah and other species, with the governments in collaboration with NGOs.

The organisation of cross-border cooperation meetings has proved helpful for information exchange. Similarly, bi-national or multi-national workshops have proved useful in bringing together stakeholders from different countries for capacity building or to discuss issues, and also builds cooperation at the level of individual persons, where language allows. In a project on cross-border trade between Zambia and Zimbabwe (IWT063), annual operations meetings of enforcement personnel were arranged to build cooperative action.

Sometimes the relationships between governments are formalised. For example, a project in Guatemala and Mexico (IWT076) led to the preparation of a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) of cooperation to tackle IWT. This was under review at the time the second Annual Report was submitted by the project.

In terms of formal MoUs, sometimes these are signed between the project lead partner and the country or countries concerned, to make binding commitments. An example is a project in central Asia (IWT089), during which the lead partner signed MoUs with ministries in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

Ideally, government agencies or departments would take the initiative to promote collaboration regarding IWT, as in the case of Kyrgyzstan, which sought the assistance of an organisation working in four countries of central Asia (IWT089) to develop a system for sharing data among relevant agencies. Under the same project, the lead partner organised regional workshops to exchange IWT knowledge, and participated in working groups in the countries and established informal 'chat' groups on Telegram and WhatsApp to facilitate the informal sharing of information. A similar approach to improving communication was taken in a project in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe (IWT094).

The value of face-to-face interaction should not be underestimated (see later commentary on project IWT013, which works in a range of African countries). Along these lines, workshops can be arranged to bring together stakeholders with mutual interests to facilitate formal and informal cooperation - as was done for investigators and prosecutors from Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia in project IWT094.

In this sense, a project on IWT in tiger in six Mekong countries (IWT104) supported the UNODC by hosting a workshop for law enforcement officers from Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam, but also arranged meetings with financial institutions (banks, United for Wildlife Financial task forces, financial intelligence units, etc.) to provide information collected, as well as to make contacts and to obtain any useful information to guide project implementation. This project also drew attention to the value of engaging with embassy personnel in the project countries.

The development of formal mechanisms and alliances to promote collaboration has also proved successful and is likely to have a long-term effect. A project focused on IWT in cheetah, in Ethiopia, Somalia and Yemen (IWT066), supported the establishment of national, regional and cross-border networks for the law enforcement agencies in these countries, creating a Wildlife Trafficking Task Force and a Wildlife Crime Coordination Task Force.

The value of cooperation with the private sector should be kept in mind. A project focused on IWT by tourists returning to China from Lao PDR (project IWT071) organised a Responsible Tourism Forum - an event of 60 representatives of tourist companies, together with conservation experts, to raise awareness of the issues, bringing tourist companies together. A follow up event brought together global leaders from China's tourism industry, who pledged their commitment to tackling IWT by signing the Tourism Industry's Illegal Wildlife Trade Convention created by the World Tourism Federation and China Wildlife Conservation Association.

Several projects have found that collaboration can also be built between NGOs in different countries, and has in some cases improved cross-border collaboration. In a project in Guatemala and Mexico for example (IWT076), a MoU on cross-border collaboration was agreed between NGOs. Along these lines, a project in Belize and Guatemala (IWT014) noted the role that can be played by national NGOs in fostering cooperation between countries, at government and NGO levels.

For building relationships, it can be useful to take advantage of international meetings (such as meetings of the Conference of the Parties to CITES). This was a conclusion of a project on forensics in southern Africa (IWT013). Similarly, partners on a project focused on tiger in the Mekong countries (IWT104) participated in official CITES meetings, as well as the CITES Big Cats Working Group.

2.1.1.3. Capacity building
Capacity building is one of the most common activities in the IWT Challenge Fund projects. Nearly all projects involve capacity building in one form or another, especially in the form of training and mentoring. Capacity building can have short-term and long term-effects, depending on the circumstances, and on the beneficiaries. In cases where a project focused on capacity building in a number of countries, an important consideration is that the participants from different countries may have different levels of existing capacity. This is of course of particular relevance if the participants from different countries are participating in the same capacity-building exercise (rather than having separate exercises for each country - which requires planning according to the needs of each country and agency).

When the citizens of the area covered by a project speak more than one language, it is an obvious advantage to develop training materials in the languages concerned. This has been done in several projects including a project in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan (IWT089), which developed modules in four languages.

2.1.1.4. Cybercrime
Online platforms, by their nature, transcend national boundaries and are therefore of particular relevance for transboundary projects. The problem of IWT through the internet requires specially-designed approaches, taking account of who are the stakeholders in the supply chain, who provides the online platforms, and who is responsible for enforcement.

A project to address online trade, focused on China, Vietnam, Cameroon and Tanzania (IWT042), met all expectations, taking a collaborative, industry-led approach to achieve cooperation of different parts of the private sector, together with law enforcement. This required joint collaboration and training of online IT

specialists together with representatives of courier and logistics companies to fully understand the nature of IWT through e-commerce platforms and social media, and the role of logistics companies. Standard Operating Procedures were developed with social media & e-commerce operators. A complementary activity was to provide training for Customs from China with agents from the other countries specifically on IWT resulting from online sales. A key achievement was the development of a strategy to tackle wildlife cybercrime, disseminated to all stakeholders. Indications were a successful reduction of IWT online at the time (2019) as well as improved collaboration between Customs in China and Vietnam.

Along similar lines, in a project in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore (project IWT079), focused on cybercrime, software was developed to identify online IWT for the law enforcement agencies. This was being tested at the time of submission of the second Annual Report. The project learned that tackling IWT online trade requires multiagency collaboration, with ministries of environment, trade, and communication, as well as the national agencies dealing with cybercrime, the Attorney General's office and the police. They noted that tackling online wildlife activities also required attention to videos of wildlife being tortured to gain monetary benefits from the advertisements and viewer numbers, which were also considered a threat to wildlife.

2.1.1.5. Law-enforcement action

The enforcement of law is generally the responsibility of a range of governmental agencies, including those responsible for parks, Customs, police, environment ministries, and others. When broadly interpreted, it also includes prosecutors and the judiciary. Projects that focus on law enforcement (or on legislation) face a particular challenge because the countries that are covered may have different legal systems.

In cases where there is a common border between the countries where a project is being implemented, there is scope for a collaboration to control the movement across the border. In a project in Guatemala and Mexico (project IWT076), joint patrols were organised along the shared border.

Some projects have introduced or strengthened the use of sniffer dogs, to work with police and Customs, for example in a cross-border project in Zambia and Zimbabwe (IWT063), as well as in central Asia (IWT089). In the latter case, events to discuss and promote the use were not only conducted at the national level, in Kazakhstan, but also through a regional workshop, which was attended by representatives from the Custom services of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Georgia, and the Czech Republic. The aim was to exchange experiences in working with service sniffer dogs among the Customs services of these countries.
N.B.: The project partners of the African project, however, stressed the challenge of maintaining the health of specialised dog breeds in a bush environment and noted that the use of local dogs should be investigated in any future project.

Good collaboration with law enforcement authorities is critical to ensure their involvement. In a project focused on cheetah trade in Ethiopia, Somalia and Yemen (IWT066), each of these countries established national network or unit with a specific focus on tackling wildlife trafficking. And Ethiopia and Somalia set up a subregional network between them to strengthen cross-border collaboration.

In a project in Guatemala and Mexico (IWT076) a binational network of enforcement officers was established, using WhatsApp as a communication tool, to tackle cross-border IWT between these countries. And annual "field exchanges" were organised between law enforcement "protection personnel".

2.1.2. Characteristics of transboundary projects also applicable to other projects

2.1.2.1. Anti-poaching

By definition, any commerce using animals taken from the wild illegally (i.e. poached) is IWT. A number of projects include activities specifically to tackle poaching directly.

In cases where the aim is to reduce poaching, the action of conducting or increasing patrols can have this effect. This was noted in a project in Belize and Guatemala (project IWT014), where patrolling was accompanied by the introduction of the SMART system (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool), together with prioritisation of poaching hotspots and ranger training. These activities were reportedly successful in reducing poaching of monitored macaw nests for three seasons.

N.B.: Support for ranger patrols, can provide security for local communities as well as for wildlife, as is noted in the Annual Report of project IWT084 in Nigeria and Cameroon.

2.1.2.2. Behaviour change and public awareness

There appear to be relatively few projects aimed specifically at changing behaviour of the consumers of wildlife products. However, activities to raise public awareness of IWT and its effects are common to many projects and have the potential to contribute to influencing behaviour. But some activities are conducted specifically to affect consumer behaviour, either at the national level, where wildlife is removed from the wild for local consumption, or at the international level, where the consumers are in a different country. An example of the latter is provided in section 2.1.1 above.

A project in Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (IWT054), focusing on the bushmeat trade, took time to better understand the nature of the trade as a basis for developing a strategy for influencing behaviour, as well as for law enforcement. The same project stressed the need for behaviour-change activities to be adapted to the local context; and used a local agency for developing materials to raise awareness.

Public awareness activities conducted in transboundary projects have included the following elements, which are equally relevant to all IWT Challenge Fund projects with a public awareness element: public service announcements; billboard advertising; advertising in magazines & newspapers; press conferences; the use of well-known personalities to attract attention to the issues; collaboration with television stations (including BBC & CCTV) to gain their support; establishment of campaigns on social media, including the possibility to pledge support. (See, for example, projects IWT025, IWT014, IWT071, IWT076, IWT094 and others).
N.B.: However, these activities have not always been successful and, in a pangolin-focused project where they were applied in Vietnam (IWT025) there was no evidence of an impact on willingness to buy pangolin products.

These activities have in some cases been linked with surveys of public attitudes. Such surveys, if conducted before undertaking public awareness actions, provide the basis for deciding how to design the action. If planned and timed correctly, surveys provide the basis for measuring the success, and determining the best approaches for any further action. (See, for example, IWT025, IWT071.)

2.1.2.3. Building cooperation

As is clear from the section on *Partnerships and Cooperating Organisations*, cooperation of the implementing organisation of a project with a variety of different bodies can be vital for the success of projects. These may be governmental bodies, non-governmental organisations, private sector companies, or local communities. The question of which bodies to cooperate with depends on many factors: the type of project (and theme); the need for input; the responsibilities, expertise, experience and influence of the bodies in the country; etc. (See also the

section on law enforcement action below for examples of improved cooperation between law enforcement personnel.)

As part of a project on cybercrime in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore (project IWT079), a MoU was prepared to secure government collaboration in Indonesia with the private sector and with an e-commerce association. This was still to be finalised at the time of submission of the second Annual Report. And, in Malaysia, the National Parks Department and the Police were in discussions with online shopping platforms to raise awareness of the issue. Two had agreed to stop selling snares.

It is important to share data and findings, formally and informally with government and partners and to provide updates of progress. A lesson learned from a project in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore (IWT079) was that a strong strategic relationship with government was essential, and maintaining informal communication was just as important as maintaining formal communication. (See projects IWT076 and IWT079.)

N.B.: However, some projects have found that government engagement can be a barrier to progress (see for example project IWT054).

It can be useful for the project partners to meet with high-level government officials to secure cooperation and support for the project, as in the case of a project in Guatemala and Mexico (IWT076).

In an example of cooperation building in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (IWT037), personnel from community-based conservancies were brought together in a meeting to exchange information and to forge the basis for further communication.

In a project in central and southern Africa (IWT024), it was noted that too much information on poaching remained in the reserves, but that information sharing between protected areas was critical. The project established an effective, formal communication network between the ten protected areas to exchange information. This was considered to be one of the factors that have "a game-changing impact in reducing poaching".

In some cases, cooperation is needed specifically with the private sector. A project in China, Vietnam, Cameroon and Tanzania, to tackle online IWT through e-commerce and social media (IWT042), owed its success partly to a good collaboration with the platform providers and with courier and logistics companies which have a vital role in delivering items that are bought online.

2.1.2.4. Capacity building

In projects with a focus on capacity building as a key activity, the capacity building itself seems to be mostly focused at the national level, rather than being used as a tool for establishing or improving collaboration between countries. The key characteristics are generally relevant not only to transboundary projects but also more broadly in IWT Challenge Fund projects.

One example where capacity building has been conducted on anti-poaching enforcement, and on investigating and disrupting trafficking networks was in a project focused on psittacines in Belize and Guatemala (IWT014). This is reported to have had positive results in increasing the number of searches and arrests.

Capacity building needs to be adapted to the specific objectives of the project. A project on financial aspects of IWT in East Africa (IWT021) included capacity building in Uganda focused on strengthening law enforcement by focusing training on how to use anti-money-laundering (AML) laws to support wildlife crime prosecution, with some immediate results.

It may be necessary or preferable to restructure the original plans of a training activity in order to meet the needs of the country and the participants, to achieve the best results. As an example, in the same project in East Africa (IWT021) Tanzania had not planned for residential training workshops, but this is what participants wanted and the project was flexible and accommodated this need and adjusted the training timelines.

The same project in East Africa (IWT021) found that a multi-agency, cross-sector approach to training helped to build trust and understanding among the agencies and participants. In this high-scoring project (exceeding expectations) the training involved a variety of agencies whose responsibilities were linked to wildlife conservation, enforcement and compliance.

Similarly, this approach was taken in a project on IWT in Nigeria and Cameroon (IWT084), but focusing on Nigeria, fostering improved interagency cooperation and building the capacity of Customs, National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency and the police.

One project on counter-poaching training for several countries of central and southern Africa (IWT024) found that it was best to have more than one trainer available, to allow trainings to be conducted concurrently in different areas.

A project in Ethiopia, Malawi and Uganda (IWT058) stressed the need to be proactive in adapting the working style where necessary (e.g. in response to changes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic), for example by putting training videos and tools online for remote training, while having in-country experts where possible.

One lesson learned about preparing a training session, in a project in central and southern Africa (IWT024), is that the targeted participants should be assessed beforehand to ensure that they qualify for the training.

One way to raise the level of importance or credibility for training is to organise it in collaboration with an existing formal training mechanism. In a project on financial aspects of IWT in Bolivia and Peru (IWT092), all training was organised through the School of Prosecutors.

N.B.: One lesson learned, from a project in central Asia (IWT089) was that the organisation of training sessions can take a long time, also to get the necessary permissions, to prepare, send out invitations and get agreement of participations, etc. The project's lead partner consequently allowed three months for the preparations before a training session.

N.B.: An unsuccessful project (in the sense that it was scored as "did not meet expectations" in the review of the Final Report) covering seven countries in Africa and Asia (IWT030), developed and distributed a multi-language online training tool, including footage and training materials on a range of enforcement techniques. This was produced for personnel across the law enforcement chain with some national endorsements. The success was dependent on who viewed the tool and the film online. Although it was expected that, over time, enforcement agencies that viewed the film and incorporated it into their national training would improve their methods to reduce poaching and illegal ivory trade, at the end of the project, there was no evidence of the adoption of the training techniques, nor a decrease in poaching, nor increased revenue for wildlife-based tourism.

N.B.: A project in the Horn of Africa (IWT066) learned that classroom training is not enough by itself; it has to be reinforced through practical training and mentorship. Many participants in simple training sessions had poor scores when tested subsequently. The same project concluded that capacity-building efforts are likely to be more successful if they make use of existing institutions, to avoid the need to build new organisations.

2.1.2.5. Community-based conservation

Many projects undertake activities to promote conservation in communities that live in close proximity to wildlife, where poaching for IWT is taking place, sometimes by the members of the community themselves.

A project in Nigeria and Cameroon (IWT084) notes that local communities are key partners to tackle IWT, and included the activity of training and developing a community informant network.

Building community awareness of the importance of wildlife as resource and for livelihood alternatives was a key activity for a cheetah-focused project in Ethiopia and Somalia (IWT066). At the same time, the project benefited from visits to communities to collect information from them regarding cheetah sightings and illegal wildlife trade.

Successes in reducing the poaching through collaboration with communities have been achieved through various means, including:

- provision or encouragement of alternative livelihoods (see above);
- meetings with the community members to improve awareness of IWT (IWT066);
- strengthening of community-based conservancies, including training of guides, introduction of patrols, provision of camera traps (IWT037).

N.B.: Project IWT037, in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, identified the need to take account of technical and language capacity of communities, requiring that these be assessed in advance of conducting community activities.

N.B.: A lesson learned in project IWT066, in Ethiopia, Somalia and Yemen, was that communities are more likely to engage in activities for strengthening governance, wildlife management, and supporting enforcement if conservation measures are part of a set of tangible development benefits, such as improved grazing lands, forests, water, health, nutrition and livelihoods.

2.1.2.6. Law-enforcement action

Because the enforcement of law is a national-level responsibility, divided between a range of governmental bodies, there are naturally IWT project activities that are relevant not only to transboundary projects but more widely.

In a project in central and southern Africa (IWT024), it was concluded that a variety of actions contributed to a reduction in illegal wildlife trade, notably: an increase in the number of poaching incidents disrupted and poachers arrested; an increase in the number of illegal wildlife trading operations disturbed and traders arrested; and a reduction in crime in the communities around the targeted protected areas.

A project on bushmeat in Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (IWT054) noted that the recruitment of a criminologist expert as a lead investigator, working with a wildlife expert, provided cross-fertilisation of ideas and experience, and improved data sharing.

The introduction of SMART software among protection patrols in Mexico and Guatemala (IWT076) to improve the collection and spatial analysis of data on threats, biodiversity, and patrolling effort, led to considerable reductions in timber and wildlife poaching; the SMART software was introduced through two workshops in each country.

In some projects, direct technical assistance is provided to authorities in their law enforcement work. The most notable example is in a project on financial aspects of IWT, in Bolivia and Peru (IWT092), in which technical

assistance was provided to prosecutors, together with "operational criminal analysis products". A similar approach was taken in a project in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe (IWT094), with direct support to prosecutors in pre-trial meetings.

2.1.2.7. Legislation (& policy)

Legislation provides the basis for law enforcement, and determines what is legal and illegal, the penalties, and the powers of enforcement authorities to take action. As with activities to improve law enforcement, projects that focus on improving legislation and policies to deal with IWT face a particular challenge that countries have a variety of legal systems; and if a project operates in several countries, there needs to be a good understanding of the system and practices in each country.

A project on the trade in cheetah in Ethiopia, Somalia and Yemen (IWT066) - as with other similar projects focused on improving the legislation (e.g. IWT094) - started by conducting an examination and analysis of the relevant legislation in these three countries. This enabled the identification of gaps and the preparation of recommendations to fill the gaps.

Another example is the project on tiger IWT in Mekong countries (IWT104), which, in its second Annual Report noted the review of the laws of Lao PDR and Thailand, for provision to the government bodies concerned. That project also seeks to change government policies relating to the keeping and breeding of tigers in captivity.

2.1.2.8. Market surveys / investigation

Surveys of what is on sale in public markets provide a basis for determining what are the species and volumes being offered, and perhaps where they are coming from. This can be helpful in establishing the origins of specimens on sale or the previous link in the supply chain, which may guide the design of actions to respond.

As an example, market surveys have been used in successful transboundary projects in China and Vietnam. (See for example IWT025 and IWT071).

N.B.: Surveys at the end of a project serve to measure the effectiveness of any activities to tackle IWT but, as campaigns or legal measures can take time to have any impact, there is not always sufficient leeway available within the time-frame of projects to get a good indicator of effectiveness.

2.1.2.9. Partnerships and Cooperating Organisations

This section is specifically about the cooperation between the partners of IWT Challenge Fund projects and other organisations or bodies. For the IWT Challenge Fund, the notion of "Partners" has a particular significance. The "Lead Partner" administers the IWT Challenge Fund grant and accepts the conditions for receiving the grant, and is responsible for the delivery of the project. Other designated "Partners" have a formal governance role and a formal relationship with the project, that may involve staff costs and budget responsibilities. This should be considered separately from cooperating organisations or agencies. However, in order to achieve their goals, projects also need to cooperate or collaborate with organisations or companies that are not partners, as well as with government departments or agencies.

For example, in a project in Guatemala and Mexico (IWT076), it was noted that the increase in patrols to prevent poaching resulted from locally driven government agency cooperation.

In the case of projects addressing livelihoods, there is a need to build close collaboration with communities, for example through village meetings, as was done in a project in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (IWT037).

The partners of a project in Belize and Guatemala (IWT014) have drawn attention to the importance of good partnerships and of cooperation with government agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), noting that their involvement can expand the capacity of the project to achieve tangible results.

A lesson learned from a project in seven countries of southern Africa (IWT013) was that in-country partnerships added real value and that it is helpful to coordinate and to partner with other organisations in the project country whenever possible, to achieve collaboration or avoid duplication. Although relevant to transboundary projects, this point is of course pertinent for all IWT Challenge Fund projects.

N.B.: However, in spite of the general need for cooperation, in a project on bushmeat trade in Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (IWT054), it was clear from Final Report that government engagement was a barrier to progress, especially regarding enhancement of law enforcement.

2.1.2.10. *Preparatory work*
A number of projects start by conducting work to ensure that there is a good understanding of the requirements of the countries concerned. This may involve a situation analysis and the conduct of surveys, also to establish baselines. (See also the sections on '*Legislation*'.)

As an example, a project to address cybercrime, focused on Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore (IWT079), started by conducting a situation analysis and a needs assessment for the three countries.

In the same way, a project in four countries in central Asia (IWT089) undertook to identify trade hotspots and routes, and to improve understanding of key traded species. And an analysis was completed of key regional IWT hotspots and routes in Uzbekistan.

One project in central and southern Africa (IWT024) noted that a fact-finding mission to the seven countries concerned lay the groundwork for the project. (This would, of course, ideally be done before the submission of an application for funding, if possible.)

Similarly, a project on tiger trafficking in six countries along the Mekong (IWT104) collated information from all possible sources on incidents of tiger-related crime, including routes, people involved, prices, government affiliations, connections with other crimes, other species involved, etc. Data were also collected by conducting physical inspections of tiger farms, also to see whether the CITES recommendations were complied with. The data collected were provided to national and international law enforcement agencies.

2.1.2.11. *Sustainable Livelihoods*
There are many ways to address the objective of developing sustainable livelihoods. These are generally approached in terms of providing alternative livelihoods, or improving the management of existing livelihoods, or simply as providing livelihoods in order to avoid remove the incentive for people in rural communities (or living in proximity to wildlife) to become involved in poaching and IWT. The activities of course must be adapted to the particular circumstances of the persons concerned, which means taking account of: their capacity; the natural environment in which they live; any relevant laws and regulations; the economic ecosystem and the local, national or international demand for any products of their labours and the effort required for marketing; and any other factors that may influence the choice of livelihoods. Projects to improve livelihoods, as an alternative to involvement in IWT, are often focused on single countries, but some are implemented in multiple countries, as indicated below. Such projects would be considered as transboundary in nature in particular if there was an intention to market products outside of the country in which they were produced.

Moreover, there may be a transboundary element when the project involves the promotion of tourism or of trophy hunting.

Some projects that are addressing sustainable livelihoods note that livelihoods are threatened by human-wildlife conflict, which then leads to the killing of wildlife to eliminate the problem. For example:

- In a project in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (IWT037), one issue was the poaching (as 'revenge' killing) of snow leopards that were killing domestic livestock. This was reduced through the construction of corrals and through the introduction of a community-based conservation programme.
- In a project in Zambia and Zimbabwe (IWT063), electric-tape fencing was used to keep hippopotami away, and chilli fences were used to keep elephants at bay. A chilli workshop was conducted, and an income was derived from the chilli as a cash crop.

A project in Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (IWT054) promoted the farming and hunting of crocodiles as a sustainable alternative livelihood.

In Guatemala and Mexico (IWT076), a livelihoods assessment of the selected rural communities was conducted to determine needs and possibilities. With appropriate training, a series of different livelihoods were introduced, including apiculture, poultry ranching, reforestation, and non-timber forest product harvesting (including 'xate' palm fronds, breadnut and allspice fruits). The continued monitoring of arrests for poaching indicated that none of the beneficiary households were involved. Considerable additional investment was obtained by the project to boost the support to livelihoods.

N.B.: A project in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (IWT037) found that it was important to have a variety of solutions available to generate income as circumstances can change. This was the case when the introduction of a hunting ban eliminated the possibility to introduce sustainable trophy hunting as an alternative livelihood.

2.1.2.12. Tools
Some projects provide materials to the governments or organisations in the countries where they conduct their activities. This may be equipment, software, training material, or something else. When it is left in the country, it can contribute to the long-term impact of the project.

As an example, a project in Ethiopia, Malawi and Uganda (IWT058) introduced an excellent computerised system, based on electronic 'tablets', for the management of government stockpiles of ivory and other wildlife products. Following a full inventory, this tool and the 'tablets' were left behind in the project countries for continued use.

Along similar lines, in a project in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore (project IWT079) focused on cybercrime, software was developed to identify online IWT for the law enforcement agencies. This was being tested at the time of submission of the second Annual report.

A project focused mainly on Malawi (IWT094), with collaboration in Zambia and Zimbabwe, updated a database with IWT court-case data for government and regional partners. This is a useful tool on background for prosecutors and the judiciary in examining new IWT cases. (However, it is not clear how this will continue to be maintained.) This project provided a number of legislative tools for the use of investigators, prosecutors and the judiciary: *Mutual Legal Assistance guidelines*; *Model Charges including Expert Witness Testimony guidance and Sentencing Submissions guidance*; *Wildlife Legislation Handbook*; *Wildlife Crime Information System*; *Application*

for Handling Pangolin Exhibits in Malawi; *Criminal Procedure Guide*; *Court Case Data Analysis Report, Court Case Reporter*.

In a project in Zambia and Zimbabwe (IWT063), a boat was purchased and provided to facilitate river crossings at the border. And in a project in Nigeria and Cameroon (IWT084) field equipment was purchased for park rangers.

An important tool for improving capacity to deal with IWT is the Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit, created by the partners of ICCWC[1]. Countries can request the formal launch of the toolkit by ICCWC, which involves a visit of experts to review the systems in place and to identify what improvements need to be made. A project focused on cheetah in Ethiopia and Somalia (IWT066) laid the groundwork for these countries to request the launch of the toolkit.

## 2.2.	Pitfalls & Lessons learned regarding planning and implementation

This section provides information on lessons learned by the partners of transboundary projects, during the planning and implementation. Most of these lessons are relevant not only for transboundary projects but are applicable to a wide range of other IWT Challenge Fund projects.

Assumptions
The logframe in the application for an IWT Challenge Fund grant requires an indication of the assumptions relating to each of the expected Outcomes and Outputs of the proposed project. Many projects have reported on assumptions that turned out to be invalid. It is important to be prepared for this.

- One example experienced in project IWT013 (in eight countries of central and southern Africa) was that, contrary to expectations, some of the governments did not engage with the project.
- In project IWT066 (Ethiopia, Somalia and Yemen), it was noted that some assumptions relating to security, sharing of information, and other factors turned out to be invalid.

Bad behaviour
It may be rare that a project experiences bad behaviour from those involved, either as part of the team or in a cooperating organisation or agency. But it is important to respond appropriately if it happens.

A project in Zambia and Zimbabwe (IWT063) reported the need to respond to discreditable behaviour. There was a tribunal, and members of a Rapid Response Unit were demoted to rangers. Training was introduced on integrity and ethics, and a policy of zero tolerance of misconduct was introduced.

Costs
The budgets for projects are limited and it is wise to look for efficiencies. A lesson learned in project IWT013 is that costs can be minimised by planning project meetings to coincide with other larger events - such as CITES meetings.

Court cases
Some lessons have been learned in relation to the activities in a number of projects requiring attendance in court or participation in court hearings.

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[1] ICCWC is the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime, comprising an alliance of the CITES Secretariat, Interpol, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, World Bank and World Customs Organization.

- Adjournments of cases by the court or defence on the day of a hearing is an issue if witnesses and prosecutors have to travel unnecessarily (IWT094, southern Africa).
- If there is a legal adviser in a project, supporting prosecutors, but they cannot be present in court, they need to be accessible to provide support (e.g. via WhatsApp, SMS or phone), in order to avoid delays in court.

Flexibility

There are several possible factors that can disrupt the planned activities of a project. One example is the occurrence of an event, such as the COVID pandemic. Another possible factor would be that an assumption in the planning turns out to be invalid. Several projects have reported that, as a result of unexpected problems arising during implementation, it became clear that there would be a greater chance of success if the approach was in some way different from the original plan. This could be in terms of: needs identified; how funds should be used; the timing and location of activities; the structure or timing of a training session (to meet the needs of the trainees); who should be trained; or any aspect of implementation. There is therefore a need for flexibility in implementing projects, noting that important changes should be checked with the IWT Challenge Fund administrators.

One example is provided by a project in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (IWT037). A hunting ban was introduced by Kyrgyzstan, which stopped a core component of the project, to support livelihoods with an income from legal trophy hunting; and in Tajikistan, the office of the project lead partner was forced to close. The project plan had to be revised in response to these developments.

All projects operating during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic were affected in some way by the responses to the pandemic. A number reported that training sessions or meetings were delayed or prevented. And proposed activities had to be reconsidered. Projects that were operating in multiple countries also faced the challenge of adapting to different regulatory responses in the different countries, and at different times. Some reported that COVID restrictions limited their achievements (e.g. IWT054). Several noted the need to adapt the way of working and to be flexible, such as arranging virtual meetings instead of face-to-face meetings (e.g. projects IWT058, IWT071, IWT076, etc.).

Gender

It is a principle of the IWT Challenge Fund that all projects "must consider how they will contribute to promoting equality between persons of different gender and social characteristics with activities expected to deliver equitable net benefits for all". Attempts to ensure gender equity, or simply good involvement of women, however, sometimes face challenges. One of these challenges that is notable in transboundary projects is that attitudes to gender equality and gender roles vary widely, often heavily influenced by cultural norms. Consequently, projects that are operating in several countries may need to take account of a variety of different cultural norms and the need for different approaches to gender equity.

A project in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (IWT037), reported that gender equity was not achieved, because of "social conservatism".

Government cooperation

For many projects, government cooperation is essential, especially if there is a focus on government policy, legislation, legal frameworks or law enforcement, and on training of government personnel. However, there are sometimes challenges to ensure the appropriate or necessary level of cooperation. Because transboundary projects are operating in several countries, they may face a challenge of having to adapt to the differences in the national contexts, structures, laws and legal systems.

An ivory-focused project in Ethiopia, Malawi and Uganda (IWT058) noted that each country is indeed different - in particular regarding roles and responsibilities of the government departments involved. They stressed the importance of a strong focal point to work with. Having the right nominated focal person in the country is key for promoting 'ownership' of the project in the country, and buy-in, which ensures longevity.

One project in central and southern Africa (IWT013) reported challenges in getting government departments to respond to communications and requests.

Authorities are not always willing to cooperate. In a pangolin-focused project in Vietnam (IWT025), the Customs authorities were unwilling to participate in a detector-dog programme. This cooperation had not been agreed in advance of the project starting.

Another problem that has arisen to affect cooperation with government departments is unexpected changes of personnel, which can be for many possible reasons. This issue can equally affect relations with any organisation or company, and hampered an IWT project on cheetah in the Horn of Africa (IWT066).

Internet signals
In many countries, the internet signal is still not strong, and there is sometimes only limited coverage. It is important to check and plan for these limitations in designing the activities of a project and not to assume a good connection.

An ivory-focused project in seven countries of Africa and Asia (IWT030) was less successful because it did not conduct an advance scoping and so did not take account of the limited connectivity and access to social media in many countries.

Language & Translation
When countries covered don't share the same languages for communication, it is more of a challenge for them to collaborate. But even within a country there can be language challenges:

- A project in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (IWT037) learned that it is necessary to take account of technical and language capacity of communities and to assess them in advance.
- Project IWT030, working in seven countries of Africa and Asia, learned that translation can take time, especially when there are many technical terms. Although there are now electronic tools to provide translations, these need to be checked. They might not be so readily available for providing interpretation of the spoken word in film.

Learning from past projects
Project partners learn from experience about problems and best practices in specific countries or with specific stakeholders, and about problems facing specific species. The information gathered in the reports of projects is a valuable source of information. But the knowledge held by past projects is also an important resource that could be available to others.

Project IWT104 suggests that, ideally, the means for projects to share experience or information relevant to particular species or countries might assist in future, so that project partners could reach out directly to other projects where there was complementarity.

Monitoring and evaluation
When projects are arranging their project schedules, it appears that they might not always allow sufficient time

for monitoring and evaluation. And this is more of a challenge for transboundary projects - with the need to liaise with multiple people in different countries - than for projects focused on a single country.

Project IWT104 believes that some aspects of monitoring and evaluation require additional research and collation of information, which adds time pressures on project delivery. They suggest that, where budgets allow, it would be preferable to include additional time for that research or otherwise to reduce the indicators and means of verification required.

Partners' needs
A key element of all applications for funding from the IWT Challenge Fund is an indication of the partners in the project. Projects also have cooperative arrangements with other bodies that are not officially designated as partners but whose cooperation is important for the project. However, it appears that the roles and expectations might not always be clear.

A project in Bolivia and Peru (IWT092) suggests that, for planning any future projects, initial meetings should be held with stakeholders and partners to determine weaknesses and interests, in order to tailor the logframe to the specific needs of partner agencies, and their capabilities.

Personnel
A lesson relevant to all IWT Challenge Fund projects is that, sometimes, the workload derived from managing a project can require amendments to the personnel needed.

In project IWT092, in Bolivia and Peru, the workload derived from some cases required additional administrative and enforcement support, so it was necessary to restructure and hire new team members.

Politics & Relations between countries
The challenges and success of transboundary projects that are trying to promote cooperation between different countries can be affected by the relationships between the governments of those countries.

A project in Belize and Guatemala (IWT014) reported that tensions in relations between governments were a challenge that prevented cooperative activities and agreement on an MoU.

Along the same lines, a project in Somalia and Yemen (IWT066) reported that unanticipated conflicts in those countries disrupted project activities. This was another case showing the need for flexibility.

A project in Bolivia and Peru (IWT092) learned that beneficiaries of a project may be influenced by political or other types of interests, which can delay achievement of project goals as agreed with the donor.

Surveys
Projects often include a survey at the start, in order to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the issues, and to establish baselines.

A lesson learned in a project in Belize and Guatemala (IWT014) was the importance of allowing enough time between baseline and final surveys to ensure the best results - to give time for the influence of project activities to take effect.

A lesson learned in a project on pangolins in Vietnam (IWT025) was that, when surveys are conducted at different times, for example before and after an action to tackle IWT, the methodology for the two surveys must be consistent to avoid incomparable results.

Time

IWT Challenge Fund projects operate within a limited time, and with a limited budget, in order to achieve important goals to reduce IWT, and to show that this is being achieved. There is therefore considerable pressure on project partners to perform effectively. However, sometimes it is difficult or impossible to achieve all of the desired aims within the time allocated in the original plan. Several projects concluded that it is important not to underestimate how long it takes to develop partnerships, to develop good relationships with government departments, to agree on MoU, etc. (And it is best to do this before the project starts.) For transboundary projects, it can be even more time-consuming to be dealing with a range of governments, administrations, geopolitical contexts, legal systems, communities, cultures and languages. This needs to be taken into account in the planning, to build in scope for some flexibility in the timing in case this proves to be needed.

Several projects concluded that the original plan was too ambitious (see e.g. projects IWT013, IWT104).

A project in central Africa (IWT054) struggled to achieve its aims within the time allocated and concluded that an important lesson is to ensure that timescales are achievable, especially where dependent on others.

A project in central and southern Africa (IWT013) failed to achieve the expected Outcome within the lifetime of the project. They concluded that it is important to ensure that project logframes, Outputs, Outcome and associated indicators are realistic and achievable within the timeframe of the project. Where this is found not to be the case, it is important for projects to revisit them and amend them to reflect the realities of project implementation.

Unintended Impact

It is important to consider the potential impact of actions on private business interests who can influence project progress, and to build a relationship with them.

An example of this became evident in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, in a project that planned to introduce sustainable trophy hunting in conservancies as an additional means of income (IWT037). The project partners identified retaliation from hunting concessions as a business response that generated political opposition to the plan.

3. Discussion and Recommendations

This review has highlighted a number of activities that were carried out in transboundary projects under the IWT Challenge Fund that contributed to their success. It has also highlighted a number of issues that need to be kept in mind in planning and implementing projects, related to lessons learned and what can go wrong. The list of helpful activities is not exhaustive, in particular because the main (but not only) source of data was the reviews of Final Reports, and those reports themselves list many other activities. But the reviews frequently identify the activities that have been particularly productive or helpful.

In IWT Challenge Fund transboundary projects, in general, the activities are to a large extent focused at the national level within each of the countries covered by the project, in order to ensure that the national bodies are well aware of the IWT and how it functions, and have the knowledge and resources to address it. There are also, usually, significant efforts to encourage and support cross-border cooperation, in order to achieve collaboration in tackling trade between the countries concerned. But some projects appear to lack this element of connecting the countries concerned, although it would seem an obvious goal, especially where the countries are on the route of an illegal wildlife supply chain.

As many of the activities conducted in transboundary projects are focused on improving capacity to address illegal wildlife trade at the national level, it is unsurprising that many of the activities that have been highlighted in this review would be helpful in projects that focus on one country only. Nevertheless, there are some activities and lessons that are specific to transboundary projects.

The Final and Annual reports of transboundary projects contain useful information on the lessons learned during the implementation, and key lessons are highlighted above (or as *nota bene* in the list of good practices in section 2.1).

However, a number general issues emerged from the review of information about previous transboundary projects. Some of these could be considered in terms of the organisation and administration of the IWT Challenge Fund in relation to transboundary projects, or to projects in general.

The following two subsections provide a discussion and recommendations regarding those factors that are specific to 'Transboundary projects' and 'General issues' that emerged in relation to the functioning of IWT Challenge Fund projects more generally.

These points are presented for consideration in terms of how to support transboundary projects - and single-country projects where applicable - and how to advise on approaches for future projects, for designing applications, for planning and implementing work and for reporting. Some of the points may seem obvious, but should nonetheless be noted.

3.1. Transboundary projects

3.1.1. Activities that support success (good practices)

Section 2.1 above lists a large number of activities that have been conducted in multi-country projects, and that evidently contributed to the success of the project. Many of these activities have been conducted at the national level and are known to be conducted also in single-country projects. For some of them, there is also a *nota bene* (N.B.) to indicate a lesson learned from the activity, such as a note of caution, or an indication that the approach has not been successful in every case.

The activities that are clearly of special relevance to transboundary projects are those where there is an effort to support cooperation or collaboration between different countries. These are, in particular, related to: joint meetings; joint training sessions; communications networks; establishment of alliances; and memoranda of understanding. It is important to note that these activities have not been only for government personnel or departments but also for civil society organisations and, in some cases, the private sector.

• Having identified these activities, it would be useful to explore the best way to bring them to the attention of successful applicants for funding in the future, so that they can benefit from the experience of others regarding what has worked well.
• One way to do this would be in documentation provided by NIRAS to the successful applicants when they are informed that their application has been approved. An alternative would be for NIRAS personnel to discuss, with those who are approved, their specific plan and schedule of activities, in order to provide guidance on the basis of the past experience.
• It could also be considered whether the guidance for applicants should include some information on past successes, so that applications being prepared can already include appropriate proposals in the methodology, logframe or elsewhere.

• It might further be considered whether a more thorough review of past projects would be beneficial, to compile a comprehensive list of activities from past projects on the basis of Annual and Final Reports (not on Final Report Reviews, which were the primary source for the current review, with some supplement from reports). This could, for example, be organised by theme, to indicate the main activities to support any specific theme.

3.1.2.   Pitfalls and lessons learned

Section 2.2 above provides helpful information from transboundary projects regarding the problems that they have encountered in the implementation of their projects. Some of these problems are very specific to transboundary projects. For example, tensions between governments have been a barrier to cooperation. And the need to provide training or materials in several languages is a factor that is especially relevant when the countries covered by a project use different languages. Ideally, the information on these lessons learned from implementation of past projects would be shared with successful applicants of new projects, so that they can be prepared and, if possible, avoid the same difficulties, and so have a greater chance of success.

As one of the lessons-learned indicates, it would also be ideal if projects could be informed of the contact details of the appropriate person responsible for a previous project in the same country or dealing with the same species, so that they can avoid duplication and benefit from the previous experience, to ensure that the funds of the UK Government are used as efficiently and effectively as possible.

•   It might be useful to compile a comprehensive (but summarised) list of lessons learned from previous IWT Challenge Fund projects, on the basis of the Annual and Final Reports.
•   It would be beneficial to explore ways in which successful applicants for funding can be made aware of any potential problems in planned activities, to the extent possible, and to find the best way to offer the possibility to make contact with previous project executants who have worked in the same country or with the same species to share experiences.

3.1.3.   Contribution to the themes

An impression gained from this review is that relatively few transboundary projects focus on demand reduction and alternative livelihoods. Perhaps it is to be expected that projects aimed at promoting cooperation between countries are focused more on the movement between them. But, as many activities are at the national level, even in transboundary projects, it might be helpful to ask project executants, when writing their Annual and Final Reports, to consider ways in which their activities might have contributed to all themes of the IWT Challenge Fund.

It might be useful to ask that projects include, in their reports, a statement of ways in which the project has contributed to all four themes of the IWT Challenge Fund. This information might be helpful for Defra in its public statements about the achievements of the Fund.

3.1.4.   Coverage

The 47 transboundary projects conducted so far have conducted activities in 28 countries in Africa, 14 countries in Asia, and 7 countries in Central and South America and the Caribbean. (See section 1.2 above.) The number of projects that have operated in each country varies from one to eleven, with eight countries having been the subject of seven or more projects. Seven projects have included activities in more than one continent. There were notably no transboundary projects that included activities in Europe, North America or Oceania, presumably because of the absence or limited number of developing countries.

- It may be worth considering these proportions, with a view to encouraging the submission of proposals relating to less well represented regions - noting that the usual criteria will be taken into account in the consideration of all applications.
- For the countries that have already been the subject of many projects, it might be useful to review the full range of projects that have been conducted in each one, to have an overview of all the work that has been conducted in each country. This might assist in identifying whether there has been a duplication of effort, what has worked well, what country-specific problems have been encountered, what the priorities are, and whether the funds are spent in the best way. However, this approach might be considered for all projects funded by the IWT Challenge Fund, and not only for transboundary projects.

3.2.   General issues

3.2.1.   Funding from other sources

For some of the projects, it is evident that additional funding was obtained from different sources to cover complementary activities. There could be sensitivities about some funding sources and the link to IWT Challenge Fund projects, in particular if they are used for purposes or activities that might not have been considered acceptable when the project was first reviewed (such as the purchase of firearms).

In addition to asking for the sources and amounts of additional funding, it may be useful to specify the uses of any additional funding that is used to support IWT Challenge Fund projects, so that this is clear for Defra and NIRAS.

3.2.2.   Lessons learned

The Annual and Final Reports of projects include a section on lessons learned. This is potentially very useful, as a basis for providing guidance for future project implementation. Two observations regarding this section were noted in the present review. The first is that, although a lot of good information is provided in this section, in some cases it is rather brief. The second observation is that the information provided on lessons learned often focuses on how to make improvements in the activities of the project if it were continued or repeated. But it would be useful also to include more general lessons about what activities work or have an impact and what is not effective.

- In the guidance on reporting for projects, it may be useful to request that the section on lessons learned be designed to provide guidance for any future projects that are operating in relation to the same theme, or the same species or the same country or countries.
- This implies, of course, that the guide for successful applicants will provide a way to access information on lessons learned from previous projects that is relevant to the theme, species or country/ies of their own project.

3.2.3.   Reporting

During the examination of the Annual and Final Reports of the projects, it was noted that, in some cases, there was a frustrating lack of clarity regarding some of the activities that were carried out. For example, when training was conducted, it is important to know not only the subject of the training but who was trained and how many people. It is also useful to know if there was a follow-up to determine the effects of the training. Similarly, when it is reported that a meeting was held, the report should indicate not only the purpose of the meeting but who participated. It may be helpful to provide this guidance to projects.

Annex 1: Key Project Information of Sampled Projects

Ref	Title	Lead Partner	IWT Challenge Fund Grant	Country(ies)	Project Summary
IWT013	African Wildlife Forensics Network – capacity and coordination for law enforcement	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)	£248,500.00	Botswana, Gabon, Zambia, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Mali, Angola, Zimbabwe	This project aims to address the disparity between arrests and convictions in the prosecution of IWT-related crimes in the eight African target countries through the establishment of a wildlife forensic network. This project will support the development of a laboratory network, whereby countries with core DNA forensic laboratories will service satellite units in neighbouring countries.
IWT014	Bi-national Collaboration to Eradicate Wildlife Trafficking in Belize and Guatemala	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)	£389,912.00	Guatemala, Belize	This project will work in the Chiquibul National Park in Belize, and the Maya Mountains-Chiquibul Biosphere Reserve in Guatemala. The project aims to improve enforcement and improve intelligence and prosecution of wildlife traffickers and to improve cross-border and cross-sector coordination on wildlife trafficking. The project will also aim to improve livelihoods in rural communities along wildlife trafficking routes and Increase awareness about the impacts of wildlife.
IWT025	Saving Pangolins by Reducing Demand in Vietnam and China	WildAid	£195,600.00	Vietnam, China	This project will dissuade Vietnamese and Chinese consumers from purchasing pangolin products by debunking the false medicinal value of their scales and making the consumption of pangolin meat socially unacceptable, and also build capacity for more effective enforcement of trade bans.

Ref	Title	Lead Partner	IWT Challenge Fund Grant	Country(ies)	Project Summary
IWT021	Following the Money: Disrupting Wildlife-Linked Illicit Financial Flows in Kenya/Tanzania/Uganda	Royal United Services Institute (RUSI)	£158,984.00	Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda	This project addresses capacity in source countries to investigate illicit financial flows (IFFs) underpinning the illegal wildlife trade. This project aims to build capacity in Kenya and Tanzania to detect and prosecute wildlife-linked money-laundering. It does so by piloting a new approach: a strategic threat- and needs-assessment around wildlife-linked IFFs followed by tailored multi-agency and cross-border training, bridging law-enforcement, banking, wildlife, justice and customs authorities.
IWT024	Counter-Poaching Training Programme for Sub-Saharan Africa	Tusk Trust	£421,275.00	South Africa, Zambia, Mozambique, Chad, Republic of Congo, Malawi, Rwanda	This project aims to reduce poaching of rhino and elephant within specific protected areas in sub-Saharan Africa, by significantly improving parks' law enforcement capacity. Training will be provided to rangers in proven tracking tactics. Additional training in information gathering and analysis - and the establishment of an information network between protected areas - will improve coordination of national and international efforts to disrupt illegal wildlife trade.
IWT030	Combating illegal ivory trade: training film to aid enforcement officers	Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA)	£134,746.00	Cameroon, Zambia, Thailand, Uganda, Kenya, Vietnam, Malawi	This project aims to produce a film and supplementary material to encourage more effective enforcement activities applicable throughout the ivory trade chain to better detect, disrupt and prevent elephant poaching and ivory trafficking. The film will share best practice related to a strong criminal justice response to address poaching and illegal ivory trade and will be produced and distributed in collaboration with key stakeholders

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					such as World Customs Organisation, INTERPOL, the CITES Secretariat, and national enforcement agencies.
IWT042	Combatting Global Wildlife Cybercrime: Building on Success in China	TRAFFIC International	£363,863.00	China, Tanzania, Vietnam, Cameroon	This project will contribute to reducing poaching and risks to security and livelihoods for local communities by equipping social media/e-commerce/ courier/ logistics companies and law enforcement agencies with tools to break links between illegal wildlife buyers and sellers, and through increasing enforcement and industry capacity in China, Vietnam, Cameroon and Tanzania.
IWT046	Enhancing Enforcement to End Tiger Trade in South East Asia	Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA)	£302,193.00	Laos, Vietnam, Thailand, China	The project will map transnational criminal networks and leverage the growing international engagement with government agencies in Lao PDR and neighbouring countries, mobilising an effective enforcement response against trafficking and selling wild and captive bred tiger parts and products in and through Lao PDR. The project will generate information to facilitate intelligence-led enforcement, disseminate it to national and regional law enforcement agencies and key international influencers. Public reports of findings will further galvanise awareness and action.

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IWT037	Conservation and Community Resilience: IWT Alternatives in Snow Leopard Range	Panthera	£310,000.00	Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan	The project aims to build capacity of conservancies to recover and monitor snow leopard prey numbers; predator-proof livestock corrals to reduce herders' economic losses and eliminate snow leopard retaliatory killings; and build anti-trafficking capacity by expanding canine teams for wildlife law enforcement in border areas.
IWT061	Wildlife in Indonesia, Loss, Damage, & Sanctions (WILDS)	University of Lancaster	£297,238.00	Indonesia; Cambodia; Vietnam; Mexico; Brazil; Angola; Kenya; Argentina	This project will challenge impunity among IWT Perpetrators. IWT affects society in many ways: damaging livelihoods, destroying wildlife and requiring increased public spending to tackle it. However the scale of these impacts—on the public and private citizens—is rarely reflected in the sanctions perpetrators receive. There is uncertainty over how to identify, measure and account for the actual scale of IWT harm, and how this affects the application of the law. Working in Indonesia, this project aims to identify innovative and novel ways of quantifying IWT harm and strengthening sanctions.

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IWT104	Enhancing enforcement to reduce tiger trafficking in the Mekong	Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA)	£550,000.00	Thailand; Laos; Vietnam; Myanmar; China	The project aims to reduce the direct killing of tigers by ensuring law enforcement agencies and the private sector have the information required to combat the criminality and corruption involved in the tiger trade between Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam and China. Information from research and analysis on the criminal networks, the flow of commodities and finances will be shared with relevant stakeholders including those responsible for enforcement, financial investigations, strengthening legal frameworks and demand reduction activities for tigers.
IWT054	Tackling Central Africa's illegal urban wild meat demand	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)	£349,030.00	Democratic Republic of Congo; Republic of Congo	This project will reduce wildlife trafficking of wild meat. Wildlife trafficking to cities to meet non-essential demand for wild meat poses a major threat to many Central African species such as pangolins, crocodiles and apes. This project will tackle this by working with enforcement agencies to strengthen crime prevention techniques, and also by working to raise awareness of the problem and reduce demand.
IWT058	Securing Africa's ivory: Developing gold-standard stockpile management systems	Stop Ivory	£270,014.00	Uganda, Malawi, Ethiopia	This project in partnership with national government will in put a robust ivory management system. Seized ivory is held in storerooms that can be vulnerable to corruption and theft. A robust management system stops seized ivory products from returning to the illegal supply chain. In partnership with national governments this project will develop, trial and put into practice storeroom Guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures.

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IWT063	Combatting cross-border illegal wildlife trade in the Lower Zambezi, Zambia	Conservation Lower Zambezi	£335,683.00	Zambia; Zimbabwe	In response to a surge in trans-border wildlife crime and trafficking through the LZAMU, CLZ, in partnership with DNPW and WCP, aims to disrupt IWT through a number of strategic and cohesive projects building enforcement capacity, strengthening investigations, supporting effective law enforcement and increasing the engagement of community stakeholders. Strong collaboration and essential capacity building will enable the relevant authorities to take down middle-higher tier criminal actors that are using the Lower Zambezi as a transit route for wildlife products.
IWT066	Legal Intelligence for Cheetah Illicit Trade (LICIT)	Cheetah Conservation Fund	£394,750.00	Yemen; Ethiopia; Somalia	Combating cheetah and gazelle trafficking in Ethiopia, Somalia and Yemen is hindered by incomplete understanding of existing laws by enforcers, prosecutors and judges. LICIT will increase awareness of wildlife laws among stakeholders along trade routes and support inter-regional collaboration to counter wildlife trafficking by: identifying stakeholders, enforcement and cooperation barriers, and existing tools; researching legislation to identify gaps and commonalities and developing adaptive tools to increase access; Training-of-Trainers in target countries; and establishing stakeholders' support networks for cross-border cooperation.

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IWT071	Reducing demand for wildlife products among Chinese nationals in Laos	TRAFFIC International	£352,650.00	Laos; China	This project will reduce threats to wild species and rural livelihoods posed by growing demand for wildlife products, by expanding use of successful approaches to demand reduction. The aim is to identify, engage and dissuade Chinese nationals from purchasing illegal wildlife products in Lao PDR. Behaviour change messaging will be developed and distributed through influential channels. Collaborations with governments and businesses will be implemented through responsible travel/investment-themed bilateral meetings, advocacy workshops, and formation of cross-sectoral alliances combatting illegal wildlife trade.

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IWT076	Cross-Border Coordination to Reduce IWT in the Guatemala-Mexico Green Corridor	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)	£399,703.00	Guatemala; Mexico	Increased poaching of valuable hardwood species and fauna is impacting Guatemala's Maya Biosphere Reserve, the Calakmul Biosphere Reserve and Balamku State Reserve in Mexico. Poaching is controlled by powerful Mexican syndicates, penetrating the Green Corridor between Guatemala and Mexico. In response, the project will: 1) strengthen patrolling/law enforcement in frontier protected areas; 2) increase awareness about IWT; 3) propel effective legal frameworks; 4)advance sustainable livelihoods in Guatemalan and Mexican communities; and 5) consolidate a binational network for long-term collaboration.
IWT079	Dismantling wildlife trafficking cybercrime networks in Southeast Asia	Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology (DICE), University of Kent (UoK)	£360,348.00	Indonesia; Malaysia; Singapore	To address the high volume of transnational online wildlife trafficking in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, this project will: 1. Develop and test an enhanced set of tools to identify, monitor and report online IWT 2. Train government, civil society and private sector partners in these tools 3. Implement a multi-agency approach using these tools to significantly disrupt online IWT transactions 4. Monitor, evaluate and disseminate project results and

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					incorporate lessons learned into an ongoing improvement of the law enforcement response.
IWT084	Tackling Illegal Wildlife Trade in the Nigeria-Cameroon Green Corridor	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)	£430,000.00	Nigeria; Cameroon	This project will provide protection for a Nigeria-Cameroon transboundary Green Corridor for elephants, pangolins and chimpanzees. It will focus on where protection is weakest in Nigeria, and gather IWT intelligence around two key sites in Nigeria on criminal networks trading wildlife across the international border in Cameroon. Working with government and local communities, we will reduce IWT and improve regional security with improved transboundary inter-agency cooperation and capacity building.
IWT089	Building effective responses to illegal wildlife trade across Central Asia	Fauna and Flora International (FFI)	£556,998.00	Kyrgyzstan; Tajikistan; Uzbekistan; Kazakhstan	In Central Asia, wildlife is smuggled across vast international borders, but law enforcement agencies lack sufficient data, resources and trained personnel to mount an effective response. This project will combat IWT in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan by identifying trade hotspots/routes and strengthening capacity to intercept wildlife products (training >150 frontline officers, rolling-out of sniffer dogs) in these

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					strategic locations. By engaging with key decision-makers, we will promote greater, more coordinated action against IWT at a national and transboundary level.
IWT092	Disrupting the financing of Andean IWT networks through asset recovery	Basel Institute on Governance (International Centre for Asset Recovery)	£423,861.00	Bolivia; Peru	This project aims to disrupt IWT networks in Bolivia and Peru by embedding financial investigation and asset recovery into IWT enforcement practice, building on the successful application of asset recovery techniques to combat organised crime and corruption in Latin America. Activities: 1. Mentor environmental crime prosecutors to use a follow-the-money approach. 2. Galvanise peer-based training for specialised prosecutors and investigators. 3. Facilitate cross-border and public-private information flows to disrupt trans-national environmental criminals.
IWT094	Ensuring the deterrent enforcement of counter IWT legislation in Malawi	Lilongwe Wildlife Trust	£464,110.00	Malawi; Zambia; Zimbabwe	Wildlife trafficking in Malawi will be reduced through securing effective and fair wildlife crime prosecutions. We will conduct courtroom monitoring, private prosecutions, support open judicial dialogue and case law reviews. We have proven these activities to be effective in securing appropriate, deterrent sentences. Our work will help drive transparency in judicial processes, reduce corruption and deliver on-the-job mentoring. Collaborating with Zambian and

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					Zimbabwean partners will enable regional analysis of court outcomes and promote shared learning in effective wildlife crime prosecutions.