

Darwin Initiative Main & Extra Annual Report

To be completed with reference to the "Project Reporting Information Note":

(<https://www.darwininitiative.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

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

Darwin Initiative Project Information

Scheme (Main or Extra)	Main
Project reference	30-012
Project title	A Community Approach to Waterbird Resource Management, Chia Lagoon
Country/ies	Malawi
Lead Organisation	Birdlife International
Project partner(s)	1) Wildlife and Environmental Society of Malawi 2) Malawi University of Science and Technology
Darwin Initiative grant value	£471,784
Start/end dates of project	June 2023- March 2026
Reporting period (e.g. Apr 2024 – Mar 2025) and number (e.g. Annual Report 1, 2, 3)	April 2024- March 2025 Annual report 2
Project Leader name	Alex Ngari
Project website/blog/social media	https://wesm.mw/ https://twitter.com/BirdLifeAfrica/status/1783607382922121435 https://www.facebook.com/birdlifeafrica
Report author(s) and date	Alex Ngari, Chifundo Dalireni and Liz Auton

1. Project summary

The project is working with communities at Chia Lagoon in Malawi to better manage and restore this vital lagoon ecosystem, reverse declines in vulnerable and declining bird species and improve livelihoods. The project is establishing community-based sustainable hunting groups to better manage waterbirds – a currently unregulated and unsustainable source of food. The project is establishing bird sanctuaries, restoring habitats, and providing biodiversity data for monitoring and the site's assessment as a Key Biodiversity Area. Supplemental, sustainable livelihood opportunities are being supported.

Local communities at Chia rely on natural resources for subsistence, with 70% at or below the poverty line. Most families are involved in fishing, hunting or farming for subsistence and sale. The project is working with nine villages; Mtanga 2, Bwanakaya, Makuzi, Chiopela, Chongole, Chizongwe, Ngalauka, Chipala and Chikawe, but approaches can be scaled up. These villages have an estimated population of 14,000 people. The Project site, Chia Lagoon, is located in Nkhosakota District of Malawi, Africa.

Dwindling fish resources due to overfishing and population growth is driving increase in waterfowl hunting to unsustainable levels. Local Beach Village Committee members indicate that alongside bird hunters, fishermen often catch birds to supplement food at home.

Unregulated bird hunting makes estimation of birds taken difficult. However, a comparison with surveys from the larger Lake Chilwa suggests around 30,000-50,000 birds per year. The project is establishing a monitoring and management system to better understand bird hunting pressures. Agricultural expansion, invasive species, wood cutting and pollution compound threats to the site, negatively impacting food security, driving more unsustainable activities and undermining tourism benefits. Invasive alien species (IAS) such as water hyacinth, prosopis and water cabbage reduce ecosystem value of the lagoon. The riparian area is also infested by alien eucalyptus that are known to be 'water-demanding'.

Chia Lagoon supports a rich variety of bird species although anecdotal reports suggest these are declining. The site has no protection or designation as, for example, a Key Biodiversity Area (KBA), despite its importance for both waterbirds and threatened fish species. This makes it harder to finance and implement management measures. The project is conducting a KBA assessment, putting in place monitoring protocols and making recommendations for the future. Limited livelihood options, and lack of training and finance, drive unsustainable resource use. The area has an established tourism sector with fishing and birding trips although these suffer due to degradation of bird habitat. However, there is limited benefit sharing with local communities.

2. Project stakeholders/ partners

Birdlife International is working with national partners; the Wildlife and Environment Society of Malawi (WESM), MicroLoan Foundation (MLF) and Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST) for the effective implementation of the project. The partners were identified at the project development stage so as to bring the relevant capacities to the project. A Project Steering Committee (PSC) consisting of WESM, BirdLife and MUST was set up and meets once per year.

At district level, the project conducts quarterly meetings with district sectoral heads to discuss project progress, seek technical advice, share lessons learnt, challenges and also plan for the following quarterly activities. Discussing project progress and activities at the district level helps to integrate the project work into district developmental plans. District government officers have consequently supported implementation of project activities in Nkhotakota.

3. Project progress

Project activities were carried out as planned despite occurrence of drought and floods in some part of project area. Stakeholder meetings at all levels from national, district as well as community were conducted including participation at international forum such as Birdlife Council for Africa Partnerships in Senegal. The project has been embraced fully at all levels because of its clear and unique objectives. The project continues to get extensive media coverage in print, radio and television as well as social media platforms. (See annex 4.1: on media articles).

During the reporting period, a rapid assessment was done to track progress made on project implementation. Findings will help not only with improved project implementation but also add to the district and national knowledge base for Chia Lagoon. Findings suggest improvement in the biodiversity including increase in birds population occurring at the site (See annex 4.2: Birds Monitoring draft report)

Chia Bird Hunting Association has been established with draft constitution in place; trainings of the association on Governance & Accountability have been held (See Annex 4.3: Association governance training report). Hunting club representatives have been conducting bird census with support from MUST in order to observe changes in birds sightings at different times of the year. Association members were part of an exchange visit to Lake Chilwa where they learnt from their counterparts who have vast experience, of over 10 years, in implementation of hunting management, bird census and record keeping. Local leaders also interacted with their fellow chiefs during the exchange visit. The hunters have been trained in regulating hunting by applying protocols and on business management. Furthermore, during the reporting period Micro Loan

Foundation (MLF) trained 78 women and disbursed loans of over MK8million (£3,479) benefitting at least 50 of them. The loans were disbursed after trainings in financial management.

3.1 Progress in carrying out project Activities

Activity 1.1.1 Awareness raising and engagement activities to identify community members interested in participating in the waterbird management.

One major awareness meeting was held at Nkhanga village on 26th July through football and netball games from surrounding community teams. The event attracted an estimated 1000 community members including local leaders, development partners within Chia area. This was part of the awareness raising activity with messages focusing on dangers of encroachments in sensitive ecological areas, illegal fishing and bird hunting communicated. In addition, the communities were informed on the potential of Chia lagoon as a key tourism area, hence the need to maintain its ecological integrity.

Activity 1.1.2 Engagement of District and local government, existing village structures (Beach Associations), hunters and women in the setup of local Sustainable Bird Hunting Clubs, following Lake Chilwa model

Two meetings were held on 19th July and 17th December 2024 with Nkhotakota district key stakeholders to share project updates including micro lending trainings, hunters' association formation, revolving fund establishment, wet season biodiversity assessment by MUST; 25 (10 women and 15 men) participants attended. The project was applauded for conducting the assessments whose findings informs the district future planning and the district socio economic profile which is under review.

Activity 1.2.1 Exchange visits with Lake Chilwa Hunting Clubs are provided for inspiration and capacity development. Training and support for the establishment of the Chia Lagoon Sustainable Hunting Clubs is provided.

After the establishment of the Chia Bird Hunters Association, the executive committee members were trained in governance, accountability and financial management. The training took place from 24-25 October 2024 where 20 association executive members and 2 local leaders attended (See annex 4.3: Association Governance Training Report).

Activity 1.4.1 Participatory process to agree what sustainable hunting means, define a code of conduct, hunting protocols and enforcement mechanisms of individual Sustainable Bird Hunting Clubs and an overarching Sustainable Bird Hunting Association.

WESM facilitated the development of code of conduct and hunting protocols for 18 hunting clubs. The newly established hunter's association consolidated the protocols and code of conduct from clubs and shared with WESM for further processing. Since October the project is conducting monthly monitoring where 6 local hunters have been trained in bird identification and monitoring techniques.

Activity 1.5.1 Chia Lagoon Bird Hunting Associations in operation, including monitoring of adherence to agreed bylaws

A bird hunters' association was established on 11 June 2024; an executive committee from member clubs is in place. A draft constitution has been developed, and registration of the association is underway. The local leaders appreciated coordinated effort to better manage Chia waterbird resources. Since October, monthly monitoring of birds has been instituted.

Activity 2.1.1 Participatory process for identifying and mapping bird sanctuaries (MUST) (for breeding birds, threatened species), agreeing protection measures, providing signage and any minor structures, as needed and implementing a communications plan (WESM).

Through hunting clubs, protection measures for the birds' sanctuaries have been agreed upon by association. The project further conducted delineation of bird sanctuaries, and 5 large sanctuaries have been marked with sub sanctuaries (See Annex 4.4 KBA and Sanctuaries map). A communication plan is in place and is being implemented.

Activity 2.2.1 Participatory process to plan restoration. Work with community to undertaken restoration actions (set up tree nurseries, seedling purchase, planting and care, sustainable harvesting, invasives removal, monitoring)

13,597 tree seedlings in nurseries were raised and planted to cover 18.39 hectares in March 2025. Trees seedlings were distributed to all hunting clubs and village natural resources committees as well as to schools. One sensitization meeting was conducted on common invasive species in and around Chia lagoon, a plan to start removing them was developed.

Activity 2.3.1 Awareness raising publications/broadcasts, social media and events will be held focused on the community.

Awareness meetings held through football and netball matches where at least 1000 people attended; this opportunity was used to disseminate messages concerning protection of birds and biodiversity in and around Chia lagoon as well as dangers of encroaching Chia. The event was publicised through radios, television & Facebook (See annex 4.1: Media articles)

Activity 2.4.2 Ongoing Waterbird monitoring protocol will be designed and implemented. Training provided for community participation.

Six volunteer local hunters were trained on waterbird identification and monitoring by MUST. The training aimed at improving the knowledge and skills of local hunters on birds monitoring to observe trends. The aim of the continuous monitoring over a five months period was two-fold: 1. To understand seasonal bird diversity changes in the lagoon, understanding movements of migrants and estimate population of the different species 2. To provide an opportunity for community members to learn about the bird species in the lagoon and the ecosystem value. (See annex 4.2: Birds Monitoring Draft Report)

Activity 2.4.3 User friendly Bird ID guides will be designed and distributed e.g. to WESM branches, Chia Lagoon Hunting Clubs/Beach Associations/Natural Resource Committees, Schools, Wildlife Clubs and tourism lodges

The bird identification (ID) guides have been designed in consultations with local communities and birds' experts especially on local names of birds found at Chia. (See annex 4.5: Bird ID draft guidebook). This guidebook has been used since October 2024 in strengthening the capacity of communities on birds identification and monitoring including within the sanctuaries.

Activity 3.2.2 Micro lending mechanism is in operation, coupled with training for beneficiaries.

With Micro-Loan Foundation (MLF), three women groups were established and 78 participants trained on financial management and enterprise selection prior to receiving loans. A total of MK9million (£3911) has been disbursed after the trainings. Consultations with key stakeholders on establishing a men-friendly community revolving fund were completed are assessment of enterprise proposal is being done so that fund could be disburse (see annex 4.6: Guidelines for Revolving Fund). Men are not fully benefiting from the existing loaning initiatives. In addition, 30 village loans and savings groups were formed, and training was conducted in March 2025. 15 community facilitators were also trained to provide immediate support to groups within their communities.

Activity 3.3.1 Avitourism is promoted through marketing and outreach to tourism businesses, bird guide training and installation of physical facilities

Tourism promotion meetings were held with managers of lodges and tourist centers in Nkhotakota to publicize Chia bird-watching activity. They welcomed the additional interesting activity for their guests' package. The participants suggested to be availed with promotional leaflets/posters to be accessed by their guests. Bird guide has been developed and printed; 20 life jackets have been purchased, 5 boats repaired and in use while consultations on the designs and appropriate site of a birdwatching tower are almost completed.

Activity 3.3.3 Provide practical support or small investments in avitourism/wildlife tourism infrastructure (e.g. boat repairs, safety equipment, signage)

Boat operators and owners were engaged, five boats were repaired; Signage has been designed but awaiting completion of delineation of bird sanctuaries by MUST. 20 life jackets were purchased for use by the boat operators.

Activity 4.2.1 Dissemination of project information and emerging results at national level through articles/broadcasts, briefings and meetings

WESM promoted project activities through media houses including: Zodiak & Nkhotakota community radios, display of project publications and project posters at national event on Wetlands and Wildlife Days held on 2nd August 2024. Participants including Minister of Tourism and Wildlife acknowledged the project and WESM interventions in Chia Lagoon. The event was attended by at least 4000 people.

3.2 Progress towards project Outputs

Indicator 1.1: 100 community members/hunters (20% women) are aware and interested in sustainably managing the waterbirds.

180 community members (51 Women 129 Men) are currently active in 18 bird hunting clubs (with 10 members in each club). So far monthly waterbirds monitoring has been conducted since October 2024 as a way of supporting sustainable management of waterbirds.

Indicator 1.2: 75 club members are inspired and gain capacity in sustainable hunting practices and enforcement protocols including through exchange visit with Lake Chilwa communities

The knowledge in sustainable hunting practices and enforcement of protocols gained through this trip was shared to 200 community members who reported to have been inspired and gained capacity in sustainable hunting practices and enforcement protocols from the 30 participants who participated in the exchange visit with Lake Chilwa communities. This was revealed during assessment study conducted in March 2025, (See annex 4.7: M & E assessment report)

Indicator 1.3 The level of bird hunting is known (extent, which species, methods), guiding management and informing monitoring.

Data on hunting collected through questionnaire administered in the community; preliminary list of hunted birds developed, and hunting methods identified. An assessment with 150 respondents (72 Men 78 Women) was done and indicated the following species as most hunted; Dove, Weaver (*Ploceus baglafech*, *cucullatus*), Heron, Bulbul, Cisticola. Hunting methods: trapping (e.g.netting), bow & arrow and shotgun. The bird monitoring initiated will help to track hunting (Annex 4.2: Birds Monitoring draft Report).

Indicator 1.4 A code of conduct for the local Clubs and Chia Lagoon level Association is agreed upon and 10 Hunting Clubs are formally established (150 members)

A bird hunters association was formed in June 2024 and 13 hunters (chair persons from the bird hunting clubs) were elected into the association committee and 5 hunters were elected into the association executive committee. In total the association has 17 men and 1 woman.

Indicator 1.5: 90% of Association members adhere to sustainable hunting bylaws / use best practices.

56% of association members reported yes when asked if they follow the sustainable hunting practices outlined in the code of conduct. Evidence provided in annex 4.7: M&E Assessment Survey Report (March 2025).

Indicator 2.1: Nesting birds are better protected through the establishment of 5 bird sanctuaries.

15 Bird sanctuaries covering 1500 hectares were identified and currently under protection. A new map has been developed showing 5 main sanctuaries with sub-sanctuaries (see annex 4.4: KBA and Birds Sanctuaries). Furthermore, fisheries department has provided Chia fish species data to inform KBA assessment of the site.

Indicator 2.2: 9 areas of lagoon habitat are restored or under natural regeneration (approx. 75 ha) (through invasives removal in lagoon and 5km radius and through tree planting and natural regeneration due to alternative timber lots)

13,597 tree seedlings in 4 nursery centers were raised and planted to cover 18.39 hectares in March 2025. Nursery management training conducted in September 2024 with 61 participants (39 men and 22 women) (see annex 4.8 Tree nursery training report)

In addition, three awareness meetings were held based on the findings of the ecological assessment report which was done in year 1. The focus of the meetings was the dangers of encroachment into Chia and negative effects of invasive species on biodiversity in Chia.

There were eleven invasive plant species recorded around Chia Lagoon both aquatic and terrestrial. During sanctuary monitoring, the hunting clubs also engaged in invasive species removal of the common species at Chia including the following species *Ceratophyllum demersum*, *Myriophyllum spicatum*, *Gmelina arborea* as well as *Azolla nilotica*.

Indicator 2.3: Community members in the 9 villages and wider area, including schools and wildlife clubs, are more aware of the importance of lagoon ecosystem and how to manage it through engagement events, backed up by press, social media and radio communications. (Likely audience 2000 in total / 50% female).

The project has conducted community awareness events in year one: World wetland day commemoration with 4 villages 1000 community members, 50 school children from Chia and Chizongwe primary school Wildlife Clubs; Project launch 2000 community members from over 6 villages and a community rally around Chia which had at least 1000 attendees

In July 2024 the project organised community sports tournament at Nkhanga which attracted an estimated 1000 community members (see annex 4.1: Media articles).

Indicator 2.4.1 Bird and habitat monitoring protocol is defined and 10 Malawian monitors are trained (including local people). Simple bird ID guide is designed and distributed for volunteer/community/visitor use. (500 copies and online) By middle of year 2.

15 volunteer local hunters trained in bird and habitat monitoring. These trained local communities have been involved in the monthly bird and habitat monitoring activities in order to improve their hands-on experience. The project will further identify interested community members so that knowledge is passed on to wide community. The bird ID guide designed and printed and is used for monthly birds monitoring (see annex 4.2: Birds Monitoring Report)

Indicator 2.4.2 Annually updated data is available on bird species using and breeding in and around the lagoon. (Including designated Bird Sanctuary areas) Data is shared with Global Biodiversity Information Facility, World Bird Database and IWC Annual Waterbird Census.

Data was collected through the monthly bird monitoring exercises where local monitors are being mentored. Data is shared on World Bird Database.

Indicator 2.5: Chia Lagoon is assessed against the Key Biodiversity Area criteria (birds, fish and at least one other taxa) (Trigger species to be defined based on preliminary surveys and in discussion with National KBA Coordination Group) Based on KBA assessment: Feasibility of pursuing protected area or OECM status) (e.g. Ramsar site/community based managed area) is assessed. Need for Chia Lagoon Management Plan is assessed. By end of project

The National KBA Coordination Group has been meeting to review the KBA trigger species data and KBA assessment process. Based on the ecological assessment report; 175 Plant, 67 bird, 13 mammal, 84 Herpetofaunal, 123 Aquatic species were recorded in Chia Lagoon. The project further collected data on fish species.

Indicator 3.1.1: The baseline socioeconomic situation of the Chia Lagoon is better understood. By end of Q3. Impact of project is evaluated. By end of project.

The project conducted a rapid assessment on livelihood activities which communities are engaged in. This was also to check on issues raised during the socio-economic study conducted in the year one such community accessibility of loans, common microfinance in the communities. The rapid assessment further revealed that the communities prefer village saving schemes compared to formal banks or micro lending institution due to high interest rates and very short repayment period. (See annex. 4.9: Rapid Socio-economic Assessment Report)

Indicator 3.1.3: 50 individuals (60% women) are trained and supported (separate to the Microloan Foundation support) to start or improve these enterprises by end of year 2

89 people including 78 women (representing 91.7 percent of women) and 11 Men were trained on sustainable livelihoods in 2024. These trainings focused on financial and business management, and after loan disbursement, the beneficiaries were trained on their specific enterprises so that more knowledge is gained for better management of the enterprises.

Indicator 3.1.4: 5 Supported livelihood enterprises (involving average 30 members each) will be operating around the lagoon by end of Project. (150 direct beneficiaries – including the 50 trained in 3.1.3) (60% women) (supporting 5-10 additional people)

30 village loans and savings groups were set up and a 3-day training was conducted in March 2025 each group composed of 25 members thus 750 women involved. 15 community facilitators trained to provide support to individual groups.

Indicator 3.2.1 A microfinance facility is established for the target communities supported by Microloan Foundation by end of year 2.

85 men and 85 women initially underwent Microloan Foundation trainings to support their livelihoods in April 2024. This was part of identifying potential community members who could access the loans. After a thorough assessment 78 women qualified to access the loans from MLF. A socio-economic assessment was done in September to understand the financial impact of micro finance facility being implemented. One key finding was that most individuals prefer to engage with village savings groups to access loans rather than banks or micro lending institutions (see annex 4.9: Rapid Socio-Economic Assessment Report.)

Indicator 3.2.2: 150 individuals (90% women) access loans and receive training (7 sessions) in financial management and business, linked to different enterprises by end of project.

78 women underwent intensive trainings by Microloan Foundation. 34 women accessed loans (first phase) amounting to MK6,800,000 (£2955) and successfully repaid between September to November 2024. An additional 750 women were recently trained in Village Savings and Loans (VSL) concept, record keeping. 15 women have accessed loans in the second phase amounting to MK2,150,000 (£912). In total MK9,000,000 (£3911) has been disbursed to women groups.

Indicator 3.3.1: Avitourism opportunities are promoted through materials and outreach to wildlife tourism enterprises by end of project.

Two meetings with local hospitality institutions were organised by the project team in order to have bird watching at Chia Lagoon and involvement of bird hunting clubs as part of the tourism packages for the visitors. Local hospitality institutions included Nkhotakota pottery, Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve lodge, Sani Beach Lodge. African Parks which are managing Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve approximately 50km away from Chia Lagoon expressed interest to be including avitourism at Chia for their visitors. The project will continue supporting the institutions with Chia lagoon avitourism promotional materials.

Indicator 3.3.2: Better facilities for boat and bird watching is available through provision of basic infrastructure and supplies (i.e. shelter, boat maintenance & life jacket provisions) by end of project.

20 life jackets were procured and 5 boats were maintained in December 2024. The life jackets will ensure safety of visitors to Chia for bird watching and are being accessed by the boat operators through the Chia association. A bird hide will be constructed in year 3 of the project.

Indicator 3.3.3: The potential for expanded avitourism, benefitting the local community is better understood by end of project.

Meetings with tourism players resulted in their interest of incorporating avitourism at Chia into their promotional packages. Greater understanding of the potential to expand avitourism will be developed once avitourism questionnaires are administered and rapid feasibility assessment conducted.

Indicator 4.1: The project is promoted, networks are built and wider experience is gained from meetings with stakeholders involved in e.g. Fish for Tomorrow and Chia Lagoon fisheries management, Ramsar focal points, Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve, and wider Lake Malawi Integrated Water Management programmes by end of Q2.

The project held several activities such as promotional media tour which also included key stakeholders of the project to appreciate interventions by the project including boats ride using the maintained boats. The stakeholders appreciated how birds sanctuaries are being managed in collaboration with beach village committees. The following stakeholders participated; Ripple Africa (Fish For Tomorrow Project), Fisheries Department, Forestry Department, Nkhotakota District Council (Trade, Community Development, Disaster, DEC, DESC, Water, Gender, Finance, Environment, Nutrition, M&E, Social welfare, Irrigation, Health, Education, Lands, Information departments) Environmental Affairs Department, African Parks, Umunthu, Momentum etc.

Indicator 4.2: National Dissemination. Project information and progress is shared with other Lake Malawi and Lake Chilwa water management and fisheries initiatives, and with local, district and national government stakeholders. By end of project.

The project participated in the national wetlands and wildlife commemorations where the project activities and outcomes were shared. The minister of Tourism and wildlife graced the occasion. This activity provided platform for the project to share project initiatives with national stakeholders.

Indicator 4.3: International Dissemination. Project information, progress and results from Lake Chilwa are disseminated for an international audience through at least 2 online stories, and participation in at least 1 international event. By end of project

Two project staff attended Council for African Partnership meeting held in Senegal in September 2024 where project achievements were shared with participants from other countries. Several online and print articles for the project have been published on different platform (See annex 4.1: Media articles)

3.3 Progress towards the project Outcome

Indicator 0.1.1: Bird populations increase by 20-30% over baseline. Bird species diversity increases by 20% over baseline. By end of project.

The project conducts monthly birds monitoring where 15 selected community members are also being trained to identify and monitor birds of Chia. MUST is leading the training of the local birders in birds monitoring. The total number of bird species recording at Chia Lagoon and its surrounding floodplains is now at 162 birds. An additional 64 species have been added to the list of 98 species recorded during the projects baseline study. This represents a 65% in the total number of species recorded. This indicates that with more time spent in the Marsh there is opportunity to record more. Of the new additions, 23 three species (35%) are waterbirds The data being collected will be analysed to better detect changes in bird populations and diversity. (See annex 4.2: Birds Monitoring Report).

Indicator 0.1.2: Biodiversity knowledge (birds and other taxa) of Chia Lagoon and surrounding area will be available to inform management decisions and capacity for national monitoring will increase. By end of project. 10 people trained/mentored in survey techniques. By end of year 2.

Chia Ecological Assessment Report having information on birds, amphibians, plants and reptiles was shared with local government to be used in planning. 15 community members have been trained in bird identification and monitoring. Waterbird information has been packaged into knowledge products on birds (bird guidebook) of Chia Lagoon and surrounding areas. This knowledge will be available to inform management decisions including on monitoring.

Indicator 0.2: Approx. 25 hectares of waterbird habitat is better protected through community-based management. Approx. 75 Ha of lagoon and watershed are in a better ecological state through community-based restoration. By end of project.

The project has been strengthening capacities of local communities and government extension officers to progress project objectives after the project end. 18.39 hectares of the area surrounding the lagoon is under restoration with tree planting within the current reporting period. Areas under restoration includes Mtanga 2, Shaban, Ntanga4, Ngalauka, Nganga 3, Chipala as well as Chia and Malowa Primary Schools which borders Chia lagoon. 5 bird sanctuaries have been mapped out and their improved management.

Indicator 0.3.1: 1,500 people (50% women) from 9 villages benefit directly from greater waterbird abundance and sustainable waterbird hunting management. Wider population (est.14,000 people) benefit from ecosystem restoration. By end of project

Awareness raising on the need to utilise Chia Lagoon sustainably was conducted reaching about 4000 (40% women) people. Communities have been organised into an association which is an umbrella body for hunting groups to enhance regulated/controlled waterbird harvesting.

Indicator 0.3.2: Populations in adjacent lagoon villages benefit indirectly from a healthier ecosystem. By end of project

180 people trained in enterprise development (44% women). The project in partnership with Micro Loan Foundation (MLF) is helping to identify enterprises to be developed. MLF works directly with women and are being trained to manage different enterprises. Awareness created on the importance of Chia and the willingness of the population to engage in sustainable use of the Chia resources will result in a healthier ecosystem benefiting the communities themselves.

Indicator 0.4: 150 people benefit from enterprise training and support. (60% women) 150 people (90% women) in 9 villages benefit from finance and business training and loans from Microfinance supported livelihoods investments (170 total, as many receive enterprise support and loans) (Indirectly benefitting a further 850 household members) Monthly incomes increase by 10%

30 village loans and savings groups formed and trained with each group composed of 25 members thus 750 women involved (about 3750 households). 15 community facilitators trained to provide support to individual groups.

78 women underwent intensive trainings by Microloan Foundation on financial management before loan disbursement. 34 women accessed loans (first phase) amounting to MK6,800,000

and successfully repaid between September to November 2024. 15 women have accessed loans in the second phase amounting to MK2,150,000.

3.4 Monitoring of assumptions

Outcome assumption 1: The Sustainable Bird Hunting Clubs approach works as it did in Lake Chilwa and reduced hunting pressure and habitat restoration measures lead to bird population increases.

Comments: We believe this will hold true as the habitat and communities are similar. An association has been formed and a bird hunting protocol developed is expected in regulating and easing pressure on birds. The project in conjunction with MLF is supporting enterprises and their success is further expected to help to reduce pressure on birds.

Outcome assumption 2: Bird population annual fluctuations do not prevent measurement of impact

Comments: The project will take into account all factors that may affect the population fluctuation such as weather. The project baseline data was collected during dry and wet season in order to collect information that best represented the situation on the ground. This assumption (See annex 4.2: Bird Monitoring Report) will however, continue to hold true so long as there are no extreme climate conditions such as extreme drought or rains affecting the project site.

Outcome assumption 3: Management and restoration activities result in improvements of ecological status. Area covered by Hunting Clubs and Restoration will be agreed with the communities.

Comments: We believe this will hold true, although benefits would be observed towards the end or after the end of the project. The data being collected will be useful to assess trends in ecological status; the capacity building for the Hunting Clubs and the restoration activities being implemented through the participation of community members themselves we believe will result in positive ecological outcomes. **Outcome assumption 4:** Enterprise training, practical support and financial assistance leads to livelihoods improvements that do not drive further degradation.

Comments: We expect this assumption to hold true due to shared understanding of the project objectives and our community beneficiaries. We hope enterprises which are being done by the women groups with support from microfinances including MLF will improve the livelihoods of community thus reducing pressure on Chia biodiversity. The VSLA and community revolving fund will supplement the loaning scheme. The association in place will further help enforcement of the hunting protocols to reduce pressure on bird populations.

Output Assumption 1: There is strong political will within local government to support the structures

Comments: We think this will hold true due to consultations with the District Fisheries, environment and Forestry Departments, who are fully supportive of the project including now the District Environmental Sub-sector Committee.

Output Assumption 2: There is strong and lasting engagement by hunters and the wider community.

Comments: We think this will hold true e.g. due to the successful setting up of Chia bird association with accompanying capacity building. So far, the Chia communities **have** been inspired by the success at lake Chilwa and are replicating best practices at Chia. We think that an improved status of Chia will motivate hunters and the wider community to stay positively engaged for longer.

Output assumption 3: Bird sanctuaries, hunting management and other conservation and restoration efforts result in increased bird populations.

Comments: We think this will hold true as these measures will directly and indirectly benefit birds. The bird monitoring taking place at the site will help to detect changes in bird populations.

Output assumption 4: Restoration efforts are not destroyed by extreme drought or flooding

Comments: The assumption holds true. The catchment areas of Chia are receiving though delayed and like in year 1, exceptionally high levels of rainfall, and the lagoon has experienced rising water levels. We are monitoring the situation so that we can develop adaptive measures.

Output assumption 5: Community members are convinced by communications activities and have the willingness and capacity to participate.

Comments: Based on positive feedback from communities during different activities, we think this assumption will hold true.

Output assumption 6: Species monitoring confirms that the site should be designated as a Key Biodiversity Area.

Comments: We think this will hold true from the ecological assessment conducted which revealed presence of rare species like the Lonides' worm snake and fish catch data which records Lake Salmon (Vulnerable) and ilapia (*Oreochromis karongae* – Critically endangered) as KBA trigger species.

Output assumption 7: Improved livelihoods options will drive a reduction in unsustainable resource use.

Comments: We think this will hold true as some communities have already started reporting improved income from enterprises they operate and this will minimize pressure on the Chia resources.

Output assumption 8: The project term will be long enough to establish the Microloan facility in the local community, recruit beneficiaries and provide training and loans.

Comments: We think this will hold true as Revolving Fund has been set up and recruitment of beneficiaries has begun and trainings will commence.

Output assumption 9: Relevant stakeholders will be open to engagement and will embrace lessons learned.

Comments: We think this will hold true, based on positive engagements so far achieved at both community and district levels.

Output assumption 10: There will be sufficient data available to support dissemination during the project.

Comments: This assumption will hold true as the ecological assessment for Chia was conducted for the first time through this project including socio economic studies. Dissemination is already happening locally and internationally including through online means.

3.5 Impact: achievement of positive impact on biodiversity and multidimensional poverty reduction

The high level impact that was in our application was: *Waterbird populations of Chia Lagoon flourish and local people and biodiversity benefit from community-based management, improved ecosystem functioning and enhanced, sustainable economic opportunities*

To contribute to impacting on biodiversity our project is applying both direct and indirect approaches, including the following:

- ⇒ Conducting ecological assessments to understand the biodiversity being impacted
- ⇒ Establishing community structures for better management of resources and reducing pressure/threats (bird hunting)
- ⇒ To build capacity within the community to better manage resources (biodiversity) they benefit from
- ⇒ Creating alliances with other stakeholders for increased impact

- ⇒ Drawing lessons and best practices from other places (e.g. Lake Chilwa) and applying them at Chia
- ⇒ Newly creating bird sanctuaries for improved bird management and protection

Our project is located in a zone with high levels of poverty and we contribute to addressing poverty and supporting human development and wellbeing as approach to addressing biodiversity threats. To contribute to this highlevel impact, we:

- ⇒ Collaborated with loaning institutions to facilitate credit access by communities that are engaged in our project
- ⇒ Supported capacity building of community members to acquire basic skills on financial and business management
- ⇒ Supported community members to identify enterprises to engage with for improved livelihoods at household level
- ⇒ Procured life jackets and supported repair of boats in support of existing community enterprises
- ⇒ We continue to explore opportunities such as avitourism which could potentially improve livelihoods within communities

4. Project support to the Conventions, Treaties or Agreements

The project contributes to:

CBD (Kunming/Montreal, Global Biodiversity Framework), and the Malawi NBSAP 2015-2025:

- The NBSAP recognises the need to integrate biodiversity conservation into development and the need to raise awareness at public and government level. This project is directly contributing to these aims for Malawi.
- It also contributing to NBSAP Goal which is to enhance the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity for the environment and human wellbeing especially intervening at unsustainable bird extraction at Chia. One of the WESM staff are part of the National Biodiversity Assessment forum.

More specifically the project is helping to:

- Improve capacity and knowledge on biodiversity issues of Chia;
- Mainstream biodiversity management into sectoral and local plans at the district level and regional plans to make Nkhotakota a tourism hub;
- Reduce direct pressures on biodiversity e.g. bird hunting
- Improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity e.g. establishment of bird sanctuaries

The project activities further contribute to Malawi's vision 2063 especially the pillar 7 on Environmental Sustainability. The project is conducting restoration of degraded ecosystems through natural regeneration and tree planting and has generated additional information that can be used for a future National Wetlands Policy and designation of Chia as a Ramsar site. The project has engaged the Ramsar focal point, the director of Department of National Parks and Wildlife on wetland policy, sustainable waterbird hunting.

The project is working to support Malawi on implementation of the CMS/AEWA Resolution 6.4 on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Migratory Waterbirds and National Parks and Wildlife Act 2017. The Act outlines which species can be hunted within and outside protected areas and the requirements for licenses and penalties. The project will help to implement the hunting regulations in the Act, through a community approach.

5. Project support for multidimensional poverty reduction

The project aims to benefit 1,020 people, including 170 people in the nine Chia Lagoon villages covered by the Hunting Clubs and/or receiving enterprise support and access to microlending scheme. (Benefitting 850 family members) and, indirectly, 14,000 people in the villages. 34 women accessed loans (first phase) amounting to MK6,800,000 (£2955) and successfully repaid between September to November 2024. An additional 750 women were recently trained in Village Savings and Loans (VSL) concept, record keeping. 15 women have accessed loans in the second phase amounting to MK2,150,000 (£912). In total MK9,000,000 (£3911) has been disbursed to women groups. These loans have increased income of the over 245 household members with the 750 women newly trained in different enterprises, over 3750 householder members are expected to benefit in year 3. Furthermore, a revolving fund scheme of £6000 is in the process of being operationalised and credit will be accessed by men as well therefore, further increase number of communities with an opportunity to improve their livelihoods.

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

Please quantify the proportion of women on the Project Board.	Project Steering Committee (PSC) oversees and leads the overall direction of the project. PSC consists of 60% women
Please quantify the proportion of project partners that are led by women, or which have a senior leadership team consisting of at least 50% women.	None of the project partners have a leadership team consisting of at least 50% women. However, WESM management is led by a women. BirdLife Board Level 39% are Women. Global Leadership Team: 36% are Women.

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

	unequal power relationships and seeking institutional and societal change	
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6. Monitoring and evaluation

The project continues to use the monitoring and evaluation framework was developed following the project logical framework and is managed by a dedicated staff to the project. All the project indicators have been allocated various leads for tracking complete with the frequency and methodology of collecting data. The work plan and the budget also act as important tools to monitor and evaluate implementation.

In addition, the project implementation team consists of BirdLife, WESM and MUST staff meets monthly to monitor progress. The Project Steering Committee also provides another layer of monitoring progress. The committee has met once in the year where leads of various project themes provided updates on the elements they lead.

Project staff leading on various themes organise meetings from time to time to ensure progress is on tasks and activities is on track but also to receive feedback.

7. Lessons learnt

Case 1: The project continues to receive enormous support from all levels including community and government. This has been attributed to the active involvement of the stakeholders at all levels from the project planning and implementation stages. Further, during even community meetings local leaders are able to share messages on importance of Chia Lagoon protection. In addition, the capacity being built of communities including birds hunters, women, association as well as VNRMCs this approach instils a sense of ownership and enables project integration at various levels.

The project resonates well with the stakeholders needs. This is an important ingredient to achieve progress for such a project requiring community participation.

Case 2: The communities around Chia have for a long-time extracted birds and other lake resources without any form of regulation. The exchange visit to Lake Chilwa gave them a new opportunity to look at resource use differently. They learnt from their peers that communities supported by their traditional leaders can effectively protect and sustainably manage their resources. The Chia community got inspired to replicate lessons learnt from Lake Chilwa.

This implies that peer-to- peer learning is an important approach that can successfully be used to initiate and cause change at community level.

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

We received reviewer comments from our Year 1 report as shown the table below. The reviewers recommended that we provide feedback our following (current) annual report). The project partners welcomed the comments made by the reviewers, the feedback has been provided in collaboration with the partners

No.	Reviewers Comment	Response/Feedback
1	The project has set up a steering committee (Birdlife, WESM and MUST); this is reported to meet regularly, but it only met once in the first year. It is not clear why this should have been the case, and how regularly it will meet in the future.	The steering committee meets once per year. It met once in year 2. It will meet once in year 3.

2	The Logframe indicates that nine areas of lagoon habitat are to be restored - more information on tree planting would be useful – note it is not clear whether these are true ‘restored forests’ or community forests for harvesting produce, as the report indicates that non-native guavas, mangos and oranges are being planted.	13,597 planted to cover 18.39 hectares in March 2025. This was in community forests, farmlands as agroforestry as well as uncultivated zones bordering Chia lagoon.
3	The Chia ecological study report lacks detail in places: for example it presents an overview of bird numbers, and a systematic list, but no details on the abundance or local distribution of individual species, or breeding populations.	Monitoring of birds has been started and will provide trends about birds abundance at species level but also give more details on the population distribution of species. See annex 4.2: Birds monitoring draft report
4	The project indicates that population monitoring of different species will guide quota setting – more information on this aspect of its work would be useful.	The monthly bird monitoring being conducted by the project will contribute to quota setting by providing evidence of birds population to relevant government departments
5	In the final paragraphs of Section 12, the project reports a key highlight to be the mapping of bird sanctuaries using state-of-the-art drone technology – it would be interesting to read more about this in the next annual report.	A drone was used to get high resolution pictures at the project site for designation of the sanctuaries. The images helped to inform the extent of natural habitats and cultivated areas. To imagery from the drones was used to map out the sanctuaries which included existing fish sanctuaries. See <i>annex 4.11: Chia Lagoon Birds sanctuaries</i>

9. Risk Management

There are no major new risks faced by the project see risk register (See Annex 4.10)

10. Scalability and durability

By capacity building the hunting community groups, members of Village Natural Resources Committees and engaging BVCs, school wildlife clubs, and creating links with other natural resources management initiatives for purposes of replication best practices in other parts of the country, we are progressively building sustainability and durability of the project achievements. Additionally, the awareness creation on sustainable natural resource use that has been made in the young people and local resource users will help them to positively embrace environmental matters into the future.

The new ecological knowledge that has been generated and the regular bird monitoring involving local communities by the project plus the management recommendation that will be formulated will help in the improvement of management of Chia beyond the current project as well as inform national policies implementation and review processes.

Awareness raising will continue to amplify the impact. The increased awareness on environmental matters within the communities through several media platforms including community radios will not only be applicable during but also beyond the project period. The community driven systems to manage and regulate waterbird harvesting backed by the national law and local traditional leaders and data collected at Chia will continue to operate during and beyond the project lifetime. Although it is early to report on trends, more birds are being sighted with some reduced poaching activities (See annex 4.2: Birds Monitoring draft Report)

The trainings of 750 women on the enterprise management and development plus introduction of support systems have the potential to increasingly gain strength and continue supporting the communities in the long term, effectively improving their livelihoods. The project rationale and activities are well aligned with local needs, leadership and operations of government agencies.

With these considerations, we believe that the project outcomes will be realized and are founded on strong sustainability footing.

The project is in its year two of implementation and we have not detected anything that might cause us to change what was originally proposed.

11. Darwin Initiative identity

The project publicizes the Darwin Initiative and, where appropriate, the Darwin Initiative logo used in numerous ways: The Darwin Initiative was included in all documents produced, including in all participants sheets, workshops programs and invitations, presentations, training courses material, as well as in the Terms of Reference launched to recruit consultants to conduct studies for the project. The Darwin Initiative funding was recognised as a distinct project with a clear identity but also as one of the projects contributing to the improvement of the environmental wellbeing of Chia and its catchment. The project produced pull up banners, posters all bearing logos of Darwin Initiative.

All social media posts about the project activities included the link to Darwin Initiative / Biodiversity Challenge Funds Facebook and Instagram pages and were often reposted <https://wesm.mw/2024/11/22/celebrating-conservation-and-community-engagement-a-football-and-netball-bonanza-at-chia-lagoon/>

12. Safeguarding

[illegible]

13. Project expenditure

Table 1: Project expenditure during the reporting period (1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025)

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2024/25 Grant (£)	2024/25 Total Darwin 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	158,689	158,689	0%	

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 (£)			Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) AG Leventis Foundation
Total additional finance mobilised for new activities	0	0	

occurring outside of the project, building on evidence, best practices and the project (£)			
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14. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

No other comments

15. **OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements or progress of your project so far (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes.**

Conserving Malawi's Chia Lagoon through a Community-led Approach

As part of implementing project activities, the project Partner WESM led the development of community-based sustainable hunting groups to manage waterbirds through the establishment of bird sanctuaries and habitat restoration activities. The project facilitated the first bird guiding training, with 180 hunters trained on how to identify and record bird species as part of capacity building to support avitourism. Additionally, the project procured, distributed, and supervised the planting of 6,000 tree seedlings as part of restoration activities of degraded areas around Chia Lagoon, covering 18.39 hectares.

"By involving the community in conservation efforts, we not only protect the environment but also create economic opportunities through tourism. Chia Lagoon is a hidden gem—its potential as a tourism hotspot could transform the local economy and protect its biodiversity for future generations", notes Chifundo Dalireni, the Project's Coordinator at WESM

A key element of the project is improving livelihoods. The project has partnered with Microloan Foundation to provide credit to the local communities. In March 2024 the project conducted a two-day business management training attended by 180 bird hunters including 79 women and 101 women. Following this training, two micro-loan clusters made up of 19 and 15 men and women respectively were established, with 6.5 million Malawi Kwacha (US\$ 3900) given out, in the first phase of the loan disbursement.

Women from local communities, like Prisca Banda a 35-year-old female entrepreneur, have benefited greatly from these loans.

"I received a loan of MK150,000 (65 GBP) to expand my Zitenje (cloth) and fish businesses. With the profits, I bought a bicycle, repaid the loan with interest, and I've been able to support my family of six. This loan has made a huge difference in my life. I'm more financially independent, and my family's standard of living has improved, and now, we no longer engage in unsustainable practices in the Lagoon", says Banda.

"Through the support from micro loans, I have been able to pay school fees and I am now in the process of expanding my business to diversify the farm products I sell to include rice and watermelons", says Zainab Amis, a 45-year old woman who runs a farm produce business selling tomatoes and onions.

"The district council is fully supportive of this project. We understand the importance of conserving our natural resources while simultaneously improving the livelihoods of our people", notes Jane Khaira, Nkhotakota District Environmental Officer.

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)
image	Media articles (annex 4.1)	Community awareness meeting through sports		Yes
image	Media articles (annex 4.1)	Media tour		Yes

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>Waterbird populations of Chia Lagoon flourish and local people and biodiversity benefit from community-based management, improved ecosystem functioning and enhanced, sustainable economic opportunities</p>	<p>The project is contributing to creating a positive impact on biodiversity and improved ecosystem functioning and community livelihoods at Chia. To date, we have improved information about the biodiversity of Chia through the ecological assessment conducted in year 1 and bird monitoring that has been initiated during year 2. The pressure in form of unsustainable bird hunting has been assessed and the involved community members identified. Structures to regulate the hunting have been created and hunting protocols developed. Members of community engaged in hunting have been supported on capacity building to identify and manage livelihood improvement enterprises. Extensive awareness on the need to manage Chia lagoon resources sustainably has been created within the community. Collaboration with other organisations including government agencies for sustained impact has been achieved.</p>	
<p>Outcome</p> <p>Bird abundance and diversity increases, ecosystem recovers and the quality of life and sustainable livelihood opportunities improve for Chia communities</p>		
<p>Outcome indicator 0.1</p> <p>Bird populations increase by 20 30% over baseline. Bird species diversity increases by 20% over baseline. By end of project.</p>	<p>At the moment, the project supports monthly bird monitoring since October 2024 where 15 selected volunteer community members are also being trained/mentored to monitor birds of Chia. Through monitoring, changing bird population and diversity will be detected.</p>	<p>In year 3, bird monitoring will be continued in close collaboration with trained community members.</p>

<p>Outcome indicator 0.1.2</p> <p>Biodiversity knowledge (birds and other taxa) of Chia Lagoon and surrounding area will be available to inform management decisions and capacity for national monitoring will increase. By end of project. 10 people trained/mentored in survey techniques. By end of year 2.</p>	<p>Ecological assessment and socio- economic studies were shared with the District Executive Committee. They welcomed the findings and indicated that they will be used to inform the district socio-economic profile which is under review. 15 members of local community trained in survey techniques including 2 project officers and 3 government officers</p>	<p>The reports will further be shared with National Biodiversity Assessment forum as Chia is of national importance.</p> <p>The skills gained will help sustaining the project impact after the project end.</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.2</p> <p>Approx. 25 hectares of waterbird habitat is better protected through community-based management. Approx. 75 Ha of lagoon and watershed are in a better ecological state through community-based restoration. By end of project.</p>	<p>The project has been strengthening capacities of local communities and government extension officers. The capacity will be used to further best practices after the project end.</p> <p>Community-based tree nurseries have been set; 18.39 hectares of the area surrounding the lagoon is under restoration with tree planting during the current reporting period</p>	<p>Support for the community tree nurseries to be continued.</p> <p>Invasives species removal by communities will be prioritised in the 3rd year.</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.3.1</p> <p>1,500 people (50% women) from 9 villages benefit directly from greater waterbird abundance and sustainable waterbird hunting management. Wider population (est.14,000 people) benefit from ecosystem restoration. By end of project</p>	<p>Awareness raising on the need to utilise Chia lagoon resources sustainably conducted reaching about 4000 (40% women); bird hunters organised into an association enhance regulated/controlled waterbird harvesting with hunting protocols in place</p>	<p>3rd year the project will spread best environmental management practices to other communities adjacent to the targeted villages through radio and community meetings</p>
<p>Outcome indicator 0.3.2</p> <p>0.3.2 Populations in adjacent lagoon villages benefit indirectly from a healthier ecosystem. By end of project</p>	<p>The project is directly and indirectly contributing to the achieving a healthy and sustainably managed Chia lagoon. It is, therefore, envisaged that the lagoon will continue to provide ecosystem services now and into the future, hence, benefiting the surrounding populations for longer.</p>	<p>The project will continue to support restoration activities and including tree planting and removal of invasive species. Community support for hunting structures to work will continue.</p>

<p>Outcome indicator 0.4</p> <p>0.4 150 people benefit from enterprise training and support. (60% women) 150 people (90% women) in 9 villages benefit from finance and business training and loans from Microfinance supported livelihoods investments.</p> <p>(170 total, as many receive enterprise support and loans) (Indirectly benefitting a further 850 household members) Monthly incomes increase by 10%</p>	<p>180 people trained in enterprise development (44% women); the project in partnership with Micro Loan Foundation (MLF) is helping to identify enterprises to be developed.</p> <p>MLF works directly with women who have been trained on managing different enterprises.</p> <p>30 village loans and savings formed trained each group composed of 25 members thus 750 women involved. 15 community facilitators trained to provided support to individual groups.</p>	<p>The revolving funds will increase the number of beneficiaries in to improve livelihoods of more communities members.</p> <p>The project will continue to support the groups in the 3rd year to ensure sustainability</p>
<p>Output 1</p> <p><i>Chia Lagoon Sustainable Bird Hunting Clubs and Bird Hunting Association are established and sustainably managing waterbird hunting.</i></p>		
<p>Output indicator 1.1</p> <p>100 community members/hunters (20% women) are aware and interested in sustainably managing the waterbirds.</p>	<p>180 community members 51 Women 129 Men are currently active in 18 bird hunting clubs (with 10 members in each club)</p>	<p>The hunters forming the clubs and the association will further be to entrench sense of sustainable management of the waterbirds. More people will be encouraged to join the structures.</p>
<p>Output indicator 1.2,</p> <p>75 club members are inspired and gain capacity in sustainable hunting practices and enforcement protocols including through exchange visit with Lake Chilwa communities</p>	<p>30 people consisting of 17 bird hunters, 3 traditional leaders, 7 fisheries officials and 3 sub-Fisheries Association (28 Men and 2 Women) went to Lake Chilwa for an exchange visit in year one.</p> <p>The lessons learnt in sustainable hunting practices and use of protocols through this trip was shared to 200 community members who reported to have been inspired by Lake Chilwa best practices including structures that have</p>	<p>The project will continue raising awareness on the importance of adhering to requirements of the protocols.</p>

	been put in place to manage Lake Chilwa resources.	
<p>Output indicator 1.3</p> <p>The level of bird hunting is known (extent, which species, methods), guiding management and informing monitoring.</p>	<p>Data on hunting collected through questionnaire administered in the community; preliminary list of hunted birds developed, and hunting methods identified as reported in year 1</p>	<p>Bird monitoring will continue and results shared with the community, leaders and relevant government agencies</p>
<p>Output indicator 1.4</p> <p>A code of conduct for the local Clubs and Chia Lagoon level Association is agreed upon and 10 Hunting Clubs are formally established (150 members)</p>	<p>180 community members 51 Women 129 Men are currently active in 18 bird hunting clubs (with 10 members in each club)</p> <p>A bird hunters association was formed in June 2024 and 13 hunters (chair persons from the bird hunting clubs) were elected into the association committee and 5 hunters were elected into the association executive committee. In total the association has 17 men and 1 woman.</p> <p>A code of conduct for local clubs was developed in July.</p> <p>The association also underwent training on governance and constitution development in October 2024, see annex 4.3</p>	<p>The association will be registered as a Community Based Organization with Malawi government in year 3. Further capacity building of the association will be supported including on fundraising</p>
<p>Output indicator 1.5</p> <p>90% of Association members adhere to sustainable hunting bylaws / use best practices.</p>	<p>56% of association members reported adherence to the sustainable hunting practices outlined in the code of conduct.</p> <p>Evidence provided in M&E Assessment Survey Report (March 2025)</p>	<p>The project will continue supporting adherences to the protocols</p>
<p>Output 2.</p> <p>Waterbird habitat in Chia Lagoon is better protected and restored</p>		

<p>Output indicator 2.1.</p> <p>Nesting birds are better protected through the establishment of 5 bird sanctuaries.</p>	<p>15 Bird sanctuaries covering 1500 Hectors were identified and currently under improve management. A map has been developed showing the 5 main sanctuaries (see annex 4.4)</p>	<p>The project will continue supporting the association to manage the sanctuaries.</p>
<p>Output indicator 2.2.</p> <p>9 areas of lagoon habitat are restored or under natural regeneration (approx. 75 ha) (through invasives removal in lagoon and 5km radius and through tree planting and natural regeneration due to alternative timber lots)</p>	<p>13,597 tree seedlings from 4 village nurseries were planted in March 2025 covering 18.39 hectares</p> <p>Nursery management training conducted in September with 61 participants (39 men and 22 women)</p> <p>3 awareness meetings were held in communities also highlighting the findings of ecological study.</p>	<p>Monitoring of the planted trees will continue as well as encouraging communities to maintain tree nurseries in year 3.</p> <p>Invasive species removal by the communities will be implemented in year 3</p>
<p>Output indicator 2.3.</p> <p>Community members in the 9 villages and wider area, including schools and wildlife clubs, are more aware of the importance of lagoon ecosystem and how to manage it through engagement events, backed up by press, social media and radio communications. (Likely audience 2000 in total / 50% female).</p>	<p>The project conducted community awareness events in year one, commemorated World wetland day involving 4 villages (1000 community members), 50 school children from Chia and Chizongwe primary school Wildlife Clubs, Project launch attracted about 2000 community members from over 6 villages and participated in a community rally around Chia which had over 1000 attendees</p> <p>In July 2024 the project organised community sports tournament at Nkhanga which attracted an estimated 1000 community members</p>	<p>Awareness activities will continue in year 3 but at a lower scale</p>
<p>Output indicator 2.4.1</p> <p>Bird and habitat monitoring protocol is defined and 10 Malawian monitors are trained (including local people). Simple bird ID guide is designed and distributed for</p>	<p>15 volunteers trained in bird and habitat monitoring. The bird ID guide designed and printed (See annex 4.5)</p>	<p>More interested local people will be mentored on bird identification and monitoring in year 3.</p>

volunteer/community/visitor use. (500 copies and online) By middle of year 2.		
<p>Output indicator 2.4.2</p> <p>Annually updated data is available on bird species using and breeding in and around the lagoon. (Including designated Bird Sanctuary areas) Data is shared with Global Biodiversity Information Facility, World Bird Database and IWC Annual Waterbird Census.</p>	Data was collected through the bird monitoring. Data shared on World Bird Database.	Regular bird monitoring will continue
<p>Output indicator 2.5</p> <p>Chia Lagoon is assessed against the Key Biodiversity Area criteria (birds, fish and at least one other taxa) (Trigger species to be defined based on preliminary surveys and in discussion with National KBA Coordination Group) Based on KBA assessment:</p> <p>Feasibility of pursuing protected area or OECM status) (e.g. Ramsar site/community based managed area) is assessed. Need for Chia Lagoon Management Plan is assessed. By end of project</p>	Ecological study was conducted by MUST in year one the following taxa recorded: 175 Plant, 67 bird, 13 mammal, 84 Herpetofauna, 123 Aquatic species. An application designate Chia Lagoon as a KBA status was submitted.	A full assessment for KBA will be produced and shared in year 3
<p>Output 3.</p> <p>Capacity of target communities around Chia Lagoon to pursue alternative, sustainable livelihoods is increased.</p>		
<p>Output indicator 3.1.1</p> <p>The baseline socioeconomic situation of the Chia Lagoon is better understood. By end of Q3. Impact of project is evaluated. By end of project.</p>	A baseline socio-economic survey was completed.	Impact of project on livelihoods to be evaluated.
<p>Output indicator 3.1.2</p> <p>Communities identify and prioritise 5 sustainable livelihood enterprises for support within the target villages (including avitourism) By end of year 1</p>	4 Enterprises: boating, rice farming, watermelon farming and avitourism were identified and prioritised.	Support on the enterprises will continue in year 3

<p>Output indicator 3.1.3</p> <p>50 individuals (60% women) are trained and supported (separate to the Microloan Foundation support) to start or improve these enterprises by end of year 2</p>	<p>89 people including 78 women (representing 91.7 percent of women) and 11 Men were trained on enterprise development in 2024</p>	<p>More interested communities will be linked to MLF loans in year 3</p>
<p>Output indicator 3.1.4</p> <p>5 Supported livelihood enterprises (involving average 30 members each) will be operating around the lagoon by end of Project. (150 direct beneficiaries – including the 50 trained in 3.1.3) (60% women) (supporting 5-10 additional people)</p>	<p>30 village loans and savings groups were set up and a 3-day training was conducted in March 2025; each group was composed of 25 members thus 750 women involved. 15 community facilitators trained to provided support to individual groups.</p>	<p>The project will be monitoring the village savings groups and provide support as appropriate.</p>
<p>Output indicator 3.2.1</p> <p>A microfinance facility is established for the target communities supported by Microloan Foundation by end of year 2.</p>	<p>The Revolving Fund has been established (see Annex 4.6) and Microloan Foundation trained and disbursed loans members of the Chia Community</p>	<p>Capacity building on financial and business management will continue in the 3rd year</p>
<p>Output indicator 3.2.2</p> <p>150 individuals (90% women) access loans and receive training (7 sessions) in financial management and business, linked to different enterprises by end of project.</p>	<p>78 women underwent intensive trainings by Microloan Foundation including on financial management before loan disbursement.</p> <p>34 women accessed loans (first phase) amounting to MK6,800,000 and successfully repaid between September to November 2024.</p> <p>15 women have accessed loans in the second phase amounting to MK2,150,000</p>	<p>MLF will continue training both existing and new loanee</p>
<p>Output indicator 3.3.1</p> <p>Avitourism opportunities are promoted through materials and outreach to wildlife tourism enterprises by end of project.</p>	<p>2 Meetings with local hospitality institutions were organised to promote bird watching at Chia Lagoon. Local hospitality institutions including Nkhotakota pottery, Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve, Sani Beach Lodge were involved.</p>	<p>3rd year will better understand the avitourism potential of Chia by administering questionnaires and</p>

		engaging relevant stakeholders.
<p>Output indicator 3.3.2</p> <p>Better facilities for boat and bird watching is available through provision of basic infrastructure and supplies (i.e. shelter, boat maintenance & life jacket provisions) by end of project.</p>	<p>20 life jackets were procured for use by boat operators and 5 boats received a facelift in December 2024</p>	<p>3rd year will better understand the avitourism potential of Chia by administering questionnaires and engaging relevant stakeholders; support for boat operators will be continued.</p>
<p>Output Indicator 3.3.3</p> <p>The potential for expanded avitourism, benefitting the local community is better understood by end of project.</p>	<p>Meetings with tourism players resulted in the interest by African Parks to propose an agreement with the association so that tourist visiting game reserve would be advised to also visit Chia for avitourism.</p>	<p>The project will facilitate agreements between interested tourism players and Chia association.</p>
<p>Output 4. Etc.</p> <p>Ecosystem management and restoration is integrated into the wider water management and fisheries management structures</p>		
<p>Output Indicator 4.1</p> <p>The project is promoted, networks are built and wider experience is gained from meetings with stakeholders involved in e.g. Fish for Tomorrow and Chia Lagoon fisheries management, Ramsar focal points, Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve, and wider Lake Malawi Integrated Water Management programmes by end of Q2.</p>	<p>Government Institutions and Non-Governmental Organisations engaged by the project; Ripple Africa (Fish For Tomorrow Project), Fisheries department, Forestry Dept, Nkhotakota District Council (Trade, Community development, Disaster, DEC, DESC, Water, Gender, Finance, Environment, Nutrition, M&E, Social welfare, Irrigation, Health, Education, Lands, Information departments) Environmental Affairs Dept, African Parks (Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve), Umunthu, MACODA, FOCCAD, MISO,</p>	<p>2 meetings are planned for the 3rd year with district stakeholders and networks</p>

	Momentum, CISP, ELDS, PIH, DPF, Lozi Youth, Tongole Foundation	
<p>Output Indicator 4.2</p> <p>National Dissemination. Project information and progress is shared with other Lake Malawi and Lake Chilwa water management and fisheries initiatives, and with local, district and national government stakeholders. By end of project.</p>	The project participated in the national wetlands and wildlife commemorations where the project objectives and intended outcomes were shared.	At least 1 national stakeholders meeting will be held in the 3 rd year to share project successes including results of the various studies conducted.
<p>Output Indicator 4.3</p> <p>International Dissemination. Project information, progress and results from Lake Chilwa are disseminated for an international audience through at least 2 online stories, and participation in at least 1 international event. By end of project</p>	Project staff attended CAP meeting in Senegal where project achievements were shared with the international audience.	Project staff plans to attend the 15 th meeting of parties to the RAMSAR Convention (COP 15) in Zimbabwe and disseminate project results further

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
<p>Impact:</p> <p>Waterbird populations of Chia Lagoon flourish and local people and biodiversity benefit from community-based management, improved ecosystem functioning and enhanced, sustainable economic opportunities</p>			
<p>Outcome:</p> <p>Bird abundance and diversity increases, ecosystem recovers and the quality of life and</p>	0.1.1 Bird populations increase by 20 30% over baseline. Bird species diversity increases by	0.1.1 Bird population census at start and end of project (Annual Waterbird Census part of International Waterbird Census).	The Sustainable Bird Hunting Clubs approach works as it did in Lake Chilwa and reduced hunting pressure and habitat restoration

<p>sustainable livelihood opportunities improve for Chia communities</p>	<p>20% over baseline. By end of project.</p> <p>0.1.2 Biodiversity knowledge (birds and other taxa) of Chia Lagoon and surrounding area will be available to inform management decisions and capacity for national monitoring will increase. By end of project. 10 people trained/mentored in survey techniques. By end of year 2.</p> <p>0.2 Approx. 25 hectares of waterbird habitat is better protected through community-based management. Approx. 75 Ha of lagoon and watershed are in a better ecological state through community-based restoration. By end of project.</p> <p>0.3.1 1,500 people (50% women) from 9 villages benefit directly from greater waterbird abundance and sustainable waterbird hunting management. Wider population (est.14,000 people) benefit from ecosystem restoration. By end of project</p> <p>0.3.2 Populations in adjacent lagoon villages benefit indirectly from a healthier ecosystem. By end of project</p> <p>0.4 150 people benefit from enterprise training and support.</p>	<p>0.1.2 Annual waterbird counts, submitted on BirdLasser; Surveys for other taxa, using iNaturalist. Important Bird Area (IBA)/Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) assessment for birds, fish and at least one other taxa and recommendations for further action for the site. List of trained in-country staff/volunteers/outline of training provided.</p> <p>0.2 Map of Chia Lagoon showing area under Hunting Association Management, and areas under restoration. Pressure, State, Response measure applied to assess change in state. To include extent of invasive alien species, photo evidence of restoration, application of satellite imagery to develop story map.</p> <p>0.3.1 List of villages fully engaged in project activities, with population information. List of active participants. Community survey of perceived impact.</p> <p>0.3.2. Map of Chia Lagoon showing area under Hunting Association Management, and restored areas. Indicate areas of indirect benefit.</p> <p>0.4 Detailed reports of the training provided, number of loans, purpose of loan, and</p>	<p>measures lead to bird population increases.</p> <p>We believe this will hold true as the habitat and communities are similar.</p> <p>Bird population annual fluctuations do not prevent measurement of impact This is a possibility as populations may be impacted by e.g. weather, hiding longer term trends. Therefore, the population data should be analysed alongside the site condition report and non-bird taxa.</p> <p>Management and restoration activities result in improvements of ecological status. Area covered by Hunting Clubs and Restoration will be agreed with the communities, so is an estimate.</p> <p>We believe this will hold true, although benefits may not really be evidenced until after the project has concluded. Also, the lack of recent, comprehensive bird data means that there is a risk that bird population and diversity targets are too ambitious or too conservative.</p> <p>Enterprise training, practical support and financial assistance leads to livelihoods</p>
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	<p>(60% women) 150 people (90% women) in 9 villages benefit from finance and business training and loans from Microfinance supported livelihoods investments.</p> <p>(170 total, as many receive enterprise support and loans) (Indirectly benefitting a further 850 household members) Monthly incomes increase by 10%</p>	<p>financial management of the loan fund. Number and location of beneficiaries (disaggregated by gender). Recipient survey.</p>	<p>improvements that do not drive further degradation.</p> <p>Based on experience, we think this will hold true. However, the project will consider the type of enterprises undertaken and their impact on reducing unsustainable resource use.</p> <p>Income increase is modest. However, this is likely to increase over time.</p>
<p>Output 1</p> <p>1.0 Chia Lagoon Sustainable Bird Hunting Clubs and Bird Hunting Association are established and sustainably managing waterbird hunting.</p>	<p>1.1 100 community members/hunters (20% women) are aware and interested in sustainably managing the waterbirds.</p> <p>1.2 75 club members are inspired and gain capacity in sustainable hunting practices and enforcement protocols including through exchange visit with Lake Chilwa communities</p> <p>1.3 The level of bird hunting is known (extent, which species, methods), guiding management and informing monitoring.</p> <p>1.4 A code of conduct for the local Clubs and Chia Lagoon level Association is agreed upon and 10 Hunting Clubs are formally established (150 members)</p>	<p>1.1 Reports of engagement activities including participation (with gender, village and occupation information and notes on community attitudes)</p> <p>1.2 Lake Chilwa exchange visit report. Training content, participation and effectiveness report.</p> <p>1.3 Bird hunting surveys and report.</p> <p>1.4 Published code of conduct for Association and Clubs, government authorisation and membership reports.</p> <p>1.5 Monitoring/enforcement methodology. Reports of monitoring actions and infringements. Hunting Clubs/Association member survey.</p>	<p>There is strong political will within local government to support the structures</p> <p>We think this will hold true due to consultation with the District Fisheries Department, who are fully supportive.</p> <p>There is strong and lasting engagement by hunters and the wider community.</p> <p>We think this will hold true due to site visits and discussions with local people and experience from Lake Chilwa. We think that an increase in bird abundance helps to demonstrate benefit of adherence to bylaws/best practices.</p>

	1.5 90% of Association members adhere to sustainable hunting bylaws / use best practices.		
Output 2 2.0 Waterbird habitat in Chia Lagoon is better protected and restored	<p>2.1 Nesting birds are better protected through the establishment of 5 bird sanctuaries.</p> <p>2.2 9 areas of lagoon habitat are restored or under natural regeneration (approx. 75 ha) (through invasives removal in lagoon and 5km radius and through tree planting and natural regeneration due to alternative timber lots)</p> <p>2.3 Community members in the 9 villages and wider area, including schools and wildlife clubs, are more aware of the importance of lagoon ecosystem and how to manage it through engagement events, backed up by press, social media and radio communications. (Likely audience 2000 in total / 50% female).</p> <p>2.4.1 Bird and habitat monitoring protocol is defined and 10 Malawian monitors are trained (including local people). Simple bird ID guide is designed and distributed for volunteer/community/visitor use.</p>	<p>2.1 Number and location of bird sanctuaries established (Detail of protection measures).</p> <p>2.2 Field reports with location information and restoration activities described and photographic record of invasives removal, tree planting and natural regeneration.</p> <p>2.3 Report of awareness actions including date, description, audience and, where possible, feedback.</p> <p>2.4.1 Monitoring protocols. Training reports. List of trainees and monitors.</p> <p>2.4.2 Annual bird monitoring reports and distribution</p> <p>2.5 I IBA/KBA Assessment (Boundaries defined, trigger species identified, monitoring done, KBA criteria applied, assess Pressure, State, Response score)</p> <p>Recommendations for further action</p>	<p>Bird sanctuaries, hunting management and other conservation and restoration efforts result in increased bird populations.</p> <p>We think this will hold true but will need to monitor carefully and make adaptations, if needed.</p> <p>Restoration efforts are not destroyed by extreme drought or flooding</p> <p>We will factor in climate resilience in the choice of restoration approach Community members are convinced by communications activities and have the willingness and capacity to participate.</p> <p>Based on positive reactions thus far and experience in Lake Chilwa, we think this will happen.</p> <p>Species monitoring confirms that the site should be designated as a Key Biodiversity Area.</p> <p>We think this will hold true although degradation of the site may put this at risk.</p>

	<p>(500 copies and online) By middle of year 2.</p> <p>2.4.2 Annually updated data is available on bird species using and breeding in and around the lagoon. (Including designated Bird Sanctuary areas) Data is shared with Global Biodiversity Information Facility, World Bird Database and IWC Annual Waterbird Census.</p> <p>2.5 Chia Lagoon is assessed against the Key Biodiversity Area criteria (birds, fish and at least one other taxa) (Trigger species to be defined based on preliminary surveys and in discussion with National KBA Coordination Group) Based on KBA assessment: Feasibility of pursuing protected area or OECM status) (e.g. Ramsar site/community based managed area) is assessed. Need for Chia Lagoon Management Plan is assessed. By end of project</p>		
<p>Output 3</p> <p>3.0. Capacity of target communities around Chia Lagoon to pursue alternative, sustainable+B20 livelihoods is increased.</p>	<p>3.1.1 The baseline socioeconomic situation of the Chia Lagoon is better understood. By end of Q3. Impact of project is evaluated. By end of project.</p> <p>3.1.2 Communities identify and prioritise 5 sustainable livelihood</p>	<p>3.1.1 Baseline socioeconomic survey. End of project beneficiary surveys.</p> <p>3.1.2 Community meeting reports (including participation records) and enterprise ideas outlined.</p> <p>3.1.3 Reports on training and support provided and enterprises</p>	<p>Improved livelihoods options will drive a reduction in unsustainable resource use.</p> <p>We think this will hold true if the link between sustainable management and the alternative livelihoods is made clear and enshrined in hunting protocols</p>

	<p>enterprises for support within the target villages (including avitourism) By end of year 1</p> <p>3.1.3 50 individuals (60% women) are trained and supported (separate to the Microloan Foundation support) to start or improve these enterprises by end of year 2</p> <p>3.1.4 5 Supported livelihood enterprises (involving average 30 members each) will be operating around the lagoon by end of Project. (150 direct beneficiaries – including the 50 trained in 3.1.3) (60% women) (supporting 5-10 additional people)</p> <p>3.2.1 A microfinance facility is established for the target communities supported by Microloan Foundation by end of year 2.</p> <p>3.2.2 150 individuals (90% women) access loans and receive training (7 sessions) in financial management and business, linked to different enterprises by end of project.</p> <p>3.3.1 Avitourism opportunities are promoted through materials and outreach to wildlife tourism enterprises by end of project.</p> <p>3.3.2 Better facilities for boat and bird watching is available through</p>	<p>supported (including beneficiary data).</p> <p>3.1.4 Evidence of enterprises functioning and beneficiary data.</p> <p>3.2.1 Micro Loans structure terms of reference and governance information</p> <p>3.2.2. Detailed reports of the number of loans, recipients, purpose, and financial management of the loan fund. Recipient survey. No of women and youth participating</p> <p>3.3.1 Birdwatching / avitourism materials and reports of marketing actions 3.3.2 Photos of birdwatching infrastructure/facilities</p> <p>3.3.3 Avitourism questionnaires and rapid feasibility assessment</p>	<p>and participation agreements e.g. for the microfinance loans.</p> <p>The project term will be long enough to establish the Microloan facility in the local community, recruit beneficiaries and provide training and loans.</p> <p>We think this will hold true as Microloan Foundation is established in the region already.</p>
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	provision of basic infrastructure and supplies (i.e. shelter, boat maintenance & life jacket provisions) by end of project.		
Output 4 4.0 Ecosystem management and restoration is integrated into the wider water management and fisheries management structures	<p>4.1 The project is promoted, networks are built and wider experience is gained from meetings with stakeholders involved in e.g. Fish for Tomorrow and Chia Lagoon fisheries management, Ramsar focal points, Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve, and wider Lake Malawi Integrated Water Management programmes by end of Q2.</p> <p>4.2 National Dissemination. Project information and progress is shared with other Lake Malawi and Lake Chilwa water management and fisheries initiatives, and with local, district and national government stakeholders. By end of project.</p> <p>4.3 International Dissemination. Project information, progress and results from Lake Chilwa are disseminated for an international audience through at least 2 online stories, and participation in at least 1 international event. By end of project</p>	<p>4.1 Meetings with government, NGO and other stakeholders</p> <p>4.2 Reports of national dissemination communications/events/meetings</p> <p>4.3 Reports of international dissemination communications/events/meetings</p>	<p>Relevant stakeholders will be open to engagement and will embrace lessons learned.</p> <p>We think this will hold true, based on engagement during planning process.</p> <p>There will be sufficient data available to support dissemination during the project.</p> <p>Dissemination can focus on Lake Chilwa results and the activities and preliminary results of Chia Lagoon. Also, to promote Community Based Natural Resource Management and Wetlands Management more broadly.</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)

Output 1

- 1.1.1 Awareness raising and engagement activities to identify community members interested in participating in the waterbird management.
- 1.1.2 Engagement of District and local government, existing village structures (Beach Associations), hunters and women in the set up of local Sustainable Bird Hunting Clubs, following the Lake Chilwa model.
- 1.2.1 Exchange visits with Lake Chilwa Hunting Clubs are provided for inspiration and capacity development. Training and support for the establishment of the Chia Lagoon Sustainable Hunting Clubs, and an umbrella Association (if deemed appropriate), is provided.
- 1.3.1 Hunters, fishers and a selection of other household members and community leaders will be surveyed to assess the extent, nature and purpose of bird hunting at Chia Lagoon (how many birds, how many hunters, which species, what is a sustainable level of hunting)
- 1.4.1 Participatory process to agree what sustainable hunting means, define a code of conduct, hunting protocols and enforcement mechanisms of individual Sustainable Bird Hunting Clubs and an overarching Sustainable Bird Hunting Association.
- 1.5.1 Chia Lagoon Bird Hunting Associations in operation, including monitoring of adherence to agreed bylaws

Output 2

- 2.1.1 Participatory process for identifying and mapping bird sanctuaries (for breeding birds, threatened species), agreeing protection measures, providing signage and any minor structures, as needed and implementing a communications plan.
- 2.2.1 Participatory process to plan restoration.
- 2.2.2 Work with community to undertake restoration actions (set up native tree and/or native bamboo nurseries, seedling purchase if required, planting and care, sustainable harvesting, invasives removal, monitoring)
- 2.3.1 Awareness raising publications/broadcasts, social media and events will be held focused on the community. To include community events celebrating e.g. Wetlands Day / International Day of Biodiversity
- 2.4.1 Baseline waterbird survey and ecosystem health assessment (Pressure, State, Response)
- 2.4.2 Ongoing Waterbird monitoring protocol will be designed and implemented. Training provided for community participation.
- 2.4.3 User friendly Bird ID guides will be designed with pictures (in English and local languages) and distributed e.g. to WESM branches, Chia Lagoon Hunting Clubs/Beach Associations, Schools, Wildlife Clubs and tourism lodges. Share digital versions.
- 2.5.1 IBA/KBA assessment undertaken (include birds, fish (using existing data) and at least one other taxa – based on preliminary biodiversity surveys) and data shared on KBA database. Based on result of assessment proceed with designation and make recommendations for further action (e.g. management planning)
- 2.5.2 Feasibility for further protection assessed (either as a Ramsar site or Other Effective Area Based Conservation Measure (OECM, based on the CBNRM)

Output 3

- 3.1.1 Baseline socioeconomic surveys will be designed by external consultant and implemented by the consultant or/if deemed preferable, by the WESM team, with support of the consultant. End surveys with beneficiaries will gather feedback, assess impact and future ambitions.
- 3.1.2 Propose/discuss potential enterprises/look at feasibility (3 existing and 2 new - agriculture/agroforestry and processing; bee keeping; avitourism; that would be sustainable from an ecosystem, climate resilience and economic perspective).

3.1.3 Provide training and practical support to establish / expand enterprises in communities where Hunting Clubs are established e.g. bee keeping, fruit / fish processing, boat trips, micro renewables, hospitality.

3.1.4 Monitor and provide support, if needed, to enterprises.

3.2.1 Establish micro lending initiative to support these and other enterprises. Recruit members, 90% women.

3.2.2 Micro lending mechanism is in operation, coupled with finance and business training for beneficiaries.

3.3.1 Avitourism is promoted through marketing and outreach to tourism businesses, bird guide training and installation of physical facilities.

3.3.2 Provide practical support or small investments in avitourism/wildlife tourism infrastructure (e.g. boat repairs, safety equipment, signage).

3.3.3 Feasibility study of expanding avitourism and increasing benefits to local communities is conducted for Lake Malawi / Malawi.

Output 4

4.1.1 Meetings are held with stakeholders involved in Fish for Tomorrow and Chia Lagoon fisheries management and with Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve. And, where applicable, with wider Lake Malawi Integrated Water Management programmes. Use meetings to share project information and promote working relationships.

4.2.1 Dissemination of project information and emerging results at national level through articles/broadcasts, briefings and meetings

4.3.2 Dissemination of project information and wider experience/lessons learned of CBNRM, especially for wetlands at international level through articles and participation in international event

Annex 3: Standard Indicators

Table 1 Project Standard Indicators

DI 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
D1-A01	Number of community members/hunters aware and interested in sustainably managing the waterbirds		People and proportions	51 Women 129 Men (18 groups with 10 members in each group)	180 Community Members	180 Community Members		180 Community Members	100 community members/hunters (20% women)
D1-A04	Number of people inspired and applying new capacities in sustainable hunting practices and enforcement protocols after the exchange visit with Lake Chilwa communities.		People	17 hunters, 3 traditional leaders, 2 fisheries officials and 3 sub-F A (Fisheries Association) 23 Men 2 Women	25 People	200 People		225 People	75 members
D1-CO2	Records of the extent, species and hunting methods will be sort that will guide management and informing monitoring		Species hunted, Hunters methods	Taxa, gender	An assessment with 150 respondents (72 Men 78 Women) was done and indicated			An assessment with 150 respondents (72 Men 78 Women) was done and indicated	A report on the number of hunters, nature/purpose of hunting and how sustainable it can be, results shared and considered in

DI 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
					the following -Species hunted; Dove, Weaver (Ploceus bagla fetch , cucullatus),Heron, Bulbul,Cisticola Hunting methods; Netting, trapping, bow and arrow and shortgun.			the following - Species hunted; Dove, Weaver (Ploceus bagla fetch ,cucullatus),Heron, Bulbul,Cisticola Hunting methods; Netting, trapping, bow and arrow and shortgun. 51 Women 129 Men (18 groups with 10 members	management structures of Chia Lagoon

DI 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
								in each group)	
D1-B05	Number of people in hunting clubs/Number of hunting clubs established		Number of people	Gender, hunters (stakeholders)	51 Women 129 Men (18 groups with 10 members in each club)	51 Women 129 Men (18 groups with 10 members in each club)		51 Women 129 Men (18 groups with 10 members in each club)	150 community members/10 hunting clubs
D1-D01	Hectares of habitat with established bird sanctuaries		Area/Ha	Extent of habitat disaggregated by pre-project and post project sustainably managed area	15 Bird sanctuaries 1500 Hectors	15 Bird sanctuaries 1500 Hectors		15 Bird sanctuaries 1500 Hectors	9acres /3.6 Ha
D1-C05	Number of times biodiversity data is available to Global Biodiversity Information Facility. World Bird Database and IWC Annual Waterbird Census		Number of databases	Database type					Inputting into 3 databases

DI 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
D1-C04	New assessment of social economic situation published	Number	Gender 31 Women 117 Men	One Assessment				One Assessment	One Assessment
DI-A07	Number of institutions, groups, organisations that the project has contacted or that are aware about the objectives of the project and type of linkages made	Institution, organisation s, groups	Government Institutions and Non-Governmental Organisations; Ripple Africa (Fish For Tomorrow Project), Fisheries dept, Forestry Dept, Nkhota District Council (Trade, Community development,	5 Stakeholders/ Organisations	5 Stakeholders/ Organisations	36 Stakeholders/ Organisations		31 Stakeholders/ Organisations	5 Stakeholders/ Organisations

DI 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
			Disaster,DEC,DESC, Water , Gender, Finance, Environment, Nutrition, M&E, ,Social welfare, Irrigation, Health, Education, Lands, Information departments) Environmental Affairs Dept, African Parks (Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve), Umunthu,						

DI 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
			MACODA, FOCCAD, MISO, Momentum, CIS P, ELDS, PIH, DPF, Lozi Youth, Tongole Foundation						
DI-B DI	Number of people with increased participation in local communities / local management organisations (i.e., participation in Governance/citizen engagement).		Groups and institutions	Beach Village Committees 18, Village Natural Resources Management Committees 2, Lodges 14 Area Development Committees 3	23 Groups	25 Groups		48 Groups	5 Stakeholders /Organisations

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.	Yes
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. I have separated and zipped the documents into sizes that are less than 10MB
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 encouraged to develop a risk register.	Yes
If you are submitting photos for publicity purposes, do these meet the outlined requirements (see Section 16)?	No photos provided
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.	