Darwin Initiative Capability & Capacity: Final Report

Darwin Initiative Project Information

Project reference	DARCC019
Project title	Building Government Capability and Capacity to Facilitate Human-Elephant Coexistence
Country(ies)	Angola, Ethiopia, and Malawi
Lead Organisation	The Elephant Protection Initiative Foundation (EPIF)
Project partner(s)	1. National Institute for Biodiversity and Protected Areas Angola (INBAC)
	2. Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA)
	3. Department of National Parks and Wildlife, Malawi (DNPW)
Darwin Initiative grant value	£198,978.00
Start/end dates of project	01 April 2023 to 31 March 2025
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Project website/blog/social media	https://www.elephantprotectioninitiative.org/
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	Alex Chunga (NHFP Malawi) (Training reports)
	José Agostinho (EPIF Angola) (Training reports)
	Ndaona Kumanga (NHFP deputy Malawi) (Training reports)

NNP ER briefing in Ethiopia, SMART training in Malawi, STE training in Tsavo, SMART training in Angola

1   Project Summary

The rapid and ongoing loss of species and habitats requires concerted and coordinated action globally. Africa is the world's poorest continent with an exponential population growth that exerts enormous pressure on basic human needs. This, in turn, impacts land use, and, frequently due to lack of spatial planning, results in increasing fragmentation and degradation of wildlife habitats. Fragmentation of wildlife habitats is a major threat to biodiversity and species distribution, first due to the isolation of protected areas, and second, in the case of elephants, increased fragmentation not only results in a decline of dispersal areas, but it disrupts movements via corridors and migration routes. Fragmentation and poor connectivity has not only resulted in significantly lowered resilience for elephant populations and all other migratory species, especially under conditions of accelerating climate change, but also in an exponential increase of Human-Elephant Conflict (HEC). Increasing HEC throughout most of the African elephant range has led to insecurity and increased poverty for communities living with elephants, primarily due to crop raiding, human injury and the loss of lives, which in turn led to an erosion of popular support for conservation, and the loss of elephants due to retaliatory killings and locally increased poaching.

Thus, HEC has a negative impact on wildlife conservation and biodiversity. As a keystone species, mitigating climate change through carbon sequestration and facilitating the existence of other wildlife species as landscape architects, declining numbers of elephants jeopardise both biodiversity and climate. Moreover, in addition to crop losses and human injuries and fatalities, HEC has other dire consequences for people. These include:

- *Fear and anxiety*: Communities that live in fear of elephants are constantly on edge, which can take a toll on their mental health.

- *Social isolation*: HEC can lead to social isolation, as people become afraid to leave their homes, to interact with their neighbours, tend to their crops, fetch water, or even travel to school.

- *Economic hardship*: The loss of staple foods, property, and educational opportunities can have a devastating impact on the livelihoods of affected communities.

- *Displacement*: In some cases, HEC can even lead to the displacement of entire communities.

HEC also disproportionately affects vulnerable people, such as women, children, and the elderly. These groups are often more reliant on agriculture for their livelihoods and are less able to protect their property and themselves from elephants.

In the context of sustainable conservation of African elephant populations and advancing human-elephant coexistence, it is evident that communities and wildlife authorities mandated to manage, mitigate, and prevent conflict will bear the brunt of this rapidly worsening problem. Neither wildlife authorities nor communities are currently adequately equipped to deal with this situation.

In African range states, the EPIF believes that HEC solutions must be African-led, with leading roles fulfilled by African governments and their wildlife authority experts. Currently, these institutions' capability, capacity, and funding are entirely insufficient to deal with the colossal challenges of HEC, the impacts of climate change, and the complexities of land-use planning across elephant habitats. The EPIF understands that African governments and their mandated wildlife authorities can turn the tide on HEC by providing the political will that is key for accountability and proactive decision-making to benefit both communities and elephants. However, this can only be achieved when adequately supported through targeted training, knowledge exchange, and cross-regional network development to raise the capacity of local experts to adequately manage HEC.

By investing directly in the capability and capacity of governments – that is, National HEC Focal Points (NHFPs) and selected staff within the authorities responsible for human-wildlife conflict (HWC) and coexistence - we believe a more sustainable long-term impact may be achieved, both for elephants and people.

Without detailed information on conflict situations in areas affected by HEC, it is difficult to know what type of interventions are required. It is not only the social context that is important – that is conflicts

between groups of people about the wildlife resource - but also the types of conflicts that are prevalent, how often they occur and where (frequencies and spatial distribution). Thus, a sound monitoring and evaluation (M&E) program is a prerequisite to tackling conflict. An M&E program provides a mechanism for continuing review and refinement through feedback for the adaptive management system. This mechanism should include ongoing compilation and review of data on HEC conflicts and community status in relation to these conflicts, as well as the data on the efforts taken to address these conflicts and build capacity in both wildlife authorities and communities, ideally facilitating coexistence. It is important to define both the spatial and temporal scales of monitoring activities.

As such, the project had a focus on increasing capability and capacity of wildlife authorities to monitor, analyse and report on HEC conflicts. This will enable them to develop locally suitable interventions and monitor changes in response to these.

The three project countries, Angola, Ethiopia and Malawi, are EPI member countries. The EPIF has been working with each country for a number of years, in terms of development of their National Elephant Action Plans (NEAPs), each containing a chapter on HEC that describes the situation when the NEAP was developed, and by assisting them to place ivory stockpiles out of commercial use through our stockpile management system.
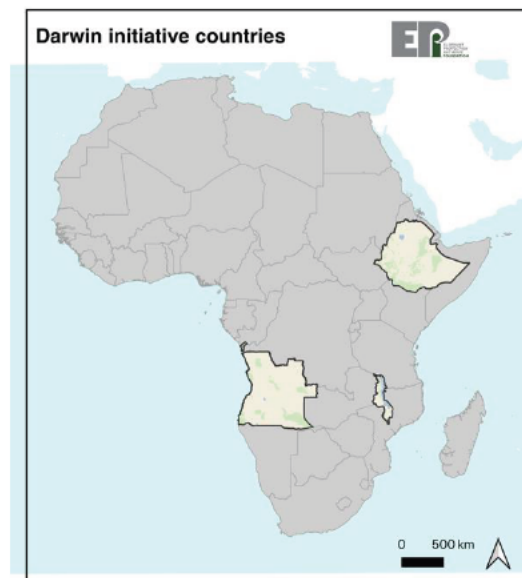
2   Project Partnerships

Primary stakeholders/Partners

The primary stakeholders of the project and target for capacity building were the Departments in the three target countries (Angola, Ethiopia and Malawi) who are mandated to manage wildlife and HEC.

- **Angola**: The National Institute for Biodiversity and Protected Areas (INBAC), is a public institution within the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Angola and has legal, administrative, financial and patrimonial autonomy. INBAC nominated Mr Noe Pinto as National HEC focal point (NHFP).

- **Ethiopia**: The Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA) is a public institution under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. They are mandated to manage wildlife in Ethiopia. EWCA nominated Mr Hailu Zerfu as NHFP.

- **Malawi**: The Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) in the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Wildlife (MoTC&W), is mandated to conserve, manage and regulate the use of wildlife resources in the Republic of Malawi. The Minister of the MoTC&W nominated Mr Alex Chunga as NHFP, and Mr Ndaona Kumanga, manager of Kasungu National Park, as deputy

NHFP. Local stakeholders are the Wildlife Action Group, responsible for managing Thuma and Dedza-Salima Forest Reserves under the Ministry of Forestry, and the communities.

At project onset, a fourth country, Gabon, was included. However, due to a military coup in August 2023 and uncertainty about political unrest, a Change Request to remove Gabon as a target country was submitted, and approved, and the funding was reallocated to the remaining three countries.

The NHFP were selected by the Government, after a needs assessment and scoping trip to each country (undertaken in Angola in November 2023; Ethiopia in June 2023; and Malawi in September 2023). For Angola and Malawi, the NHFP was nominated by their respective Ministers and consequently appointed by the Director of the wildlife authorities, whereas in Ethiopia, the NHFP was nominated and appointed by the Director General of EWCA, with the Ministry informed at a later stage. The NHFP was our main point of contact and was responsible for liaising and transmitting information within the Department.

The HEC needs assessments were conducted with the management of the respective wildlife authorities and other relevant stakeholders, resulting in tailored support packages for each of the mandated institutions. This approach ensured that all partners were involved with planning and decision making from the onset of the project. The Government Departments selected the target pilot sites for project activities, based on local knowledge of need and practicalities. The communities around the pilot sites were also key project partners, liaising directly with the wildlife departments.

During activity implementation, all three Government departments were involved in: activity planning with participant identification and budget development; and provision of technical input. The NHFPs, where possible, led activity implementation and were pivotal for the success of the project. Each of our main government partners have been involved in all of our reporting, including this final report, through the production and submission of reports for all activities, including the provision of photographic evidence. The partnership between the EPIF and each of the Governments is strong, and is based on transparency and communication, all decisions are Government-led with guidance from the EPIF, with an adaptive project management approach based on their needs.

Other partners included:

The Save the Elephants (STE) Coexistence team were instrumental in running the HEC mitigation Training-of-Trainers workshops in Tsavo, Kenya. In the course of the project, the NHFPs of each target country, as well as four additional staff were trained in HEC mitigation techniques. After they received their training, the NHFPs provided training in locally suitable HEC interventions for selected sites in their respective countries. This is an ongoing process, but makes STE an important partner.

Both the **SMART and EarthRanger (ER) partnerships** were instrumental in providing expertise for training purposes as well as inviting candidates from the target countries to their Global Congresses.

3   Project Achievements

3.1 Outputs

The project successfully achieved its intended outputs.

Output 1. Capable and capacitated NHFPs and other staff members in place with the authorities responsible for wildlife management in each of the three target countries.

For two target countries, a suitable NHFP candidate was nominated by their respective Ministers, and appointed by the Directors of DNPW (Malawi) and INBAC (Angola). For Ethiopia, a suitable candidate was nominated and appointed by the Director General of EWCA. Memorandums of Understanding between the respective wildlife authorities and EPIF, which included terms of reference for the NHFPs, were developed and signed.

A needs assessment was undertaken in each country in close collaboration with the wildlife authorities, and relevant stakeholders, and resulted in the development of tailored support packages. All wildlife authorities wished to strengthen their capacity for monitoring of HEC issues, which involved the procurement of suitable equipment and training in the use of existing software packages. Angola opted

for SMART, Ethiopia for EarthRanger, and Malawi for advanced SMART. As well as a better understanding of HEC mitigation methods available. [MOV 1a, 1b, 1c: Needs Assessment reports]

During the course of the project, the training of NHFPs and other selected staff focussed on:

- the use of different monitoring software (SMART or ER) through international conferences and in-country demonstrations to the different tools.

- Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), including analysis and reporting, provided by local consultants with guidance from EPIF staff and the manual developed by EPIF.

- techniques that can be applied to mitigate HEC, initially by specialists from STE in Tsavo, Kenya and in-country by the NHFPs.

The tailored capacity building support packages outcomes were:

Angola:

Three training sessions were run, with a total of 32 participants. A training on HEC mitigation interventions run by Save the Elephants in Tsavo, Kenya for 3 people (3 men), of which 2 were Government staff (INBAC), including the NHFP and one EPIF project officer, who also provided translation support for the INBAC staff. [MOV 2a. Training report]

Two training courses on the use of SMART – firstly an in-person 5-day foundation level training in Kissama National Park for 20 people (17 men/3 women) run by Julian Geoffrey of Artio Conservation. Followed by a 4-day online SMART administrator training course for 9 people (6 men/3 women). These training courses have provided the foundation understanding needed to implement SMART at pilot sites. [MOV 2b and 2c. Training reports]

Ethiopia:

Six training sessions or conferences were undertaken, with a total of 54 people participating.

- A 5-day SMART Global Congress in Windhoek, Namibia for two people (2m/0f) [MOV 3a].

- A 2-day EarthRanger Congress in Mombasa, Kenya for two people (2m/0f) [MOV 3b].

- A 5-day EarthRanger training course in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for 18 people (17m/1f)) - 12 from CCNP and 6 from EWCA headquarters [MOV 3f, 3g].

These courses aimed at building understanding of monitoring systems available and discussing with counterparts from other countries about their experiences and lessons learnt. Subsequently the training on the implementation of EarthRanger.

- A 3-day Save the Elephants training in Tsavo, Kenya for two people (2m/0f) [MOV 3c]

- A one-day in-country training course on mitigation measures run by the NHFP for CCNP for 20 people (18m/2f) [MOV 3h].

- A one day in-country training on and M&E run by the NHFP for CCNP for 10 people (10m/0f) [MOV 3h].

These courses aimed at firstly building capacity of the NHFP on mitigation solutions available, and subsequently sharing that information to communities and EWCA staff at the pilot site - Chebera-Churchura National Park (CCNP). CCNP was identified as the main HEC hotspot, therefore there was a focus on building capacity on M&E and mitigation techniques, and to assist the communities with various techniques used to address HEC.

Malawi:

Seven training sessions were undertaken with a total of 42 people participating.

- A 5-day SMART Global Congress in Windhoek, Namibia for two people (2m/0f) [MOV 4a].

- A 5-day SMART training course in Lilongwe run by Julien Geoffrey for 12 people (11m/1F) [MOV 4b].

- A 3-day Save the Elephants training in Tsavo, Kenya for two people (2m/0f) [MOV: 4c].

- A 3-day mitigation measures training course run by the NHFP for six people (6m/0f).

- A 1-day Monitoring & Evaluation training course in Kasungu National Park run by the deputy NHFP for eight people (5m/3f) [MOV 4d].

- A 1-day Monitoring & Evaluation training course for five people in Vwaza and Nyika National Parks run by the deputy NHFP (5m/0f) [MOV 4d].

- A 3-day SMART training course in Thuma Forest run by the SMART Administrator for DWNP for seven people (5M/2F) [MOV 4e].

Overall:

For three target countries combined, a total of 16 training sessions were done, with a total of 128 people trained. The majority of trainees were from the respective wildlife authorities and either included the NHFPs or were done in-country by the NHFPs.

In addition to the training courses:

Participants from INBAC, EWCA, and DNPW attended the jointly-hosted HEC workshop by the EPIF and the World Bank's Global Wildlife Program in Nairobi in May 2024 [MOV 7], which focused on addressing the escalating challenge of HWC, particularly HEC, in Africa. Alongside representatives from 21 other countries and experts from organisations such as Save the Elephants and EarthRanger, they discussed the impacts of HWC on local livelihoods and emphasised the need for community-centred conservation strategies, evidence-based policies, and cross-sectoral collaboration.

Output 2. Monitoring systems in place and operated by capable staff with the authorities responsible for wildlife management in each of the three priority countries.

Three monitoring systems have been developed and the pilot phase of implementation in progress, with 66 participants on training courses for their respective monitoring system.

In Angola, INBAC decided SMART was the most effective monitoring system for their needs, after the EPIF showcased different options available to use. An implementation plan for SMART was developed and agreed upon [MOV 2d SMART implementation plan].

Equipment required for the SMART monitoring system and to capture data in the field was procured, this included phones for data capture and laptops which were distributed to five pilot sites who participated in the SMART training course. Additionally, a phone and a laptop were procured for the control room at INBAC Headquarters.

A SMART training course was run in Kissama National Park for 20 people (17 men/3 women) for INBAC staff from 11 sites, and was run by a SMART consultant, Julian Geoffrey from Artio-Conservation.

A follow up 4-day training course on SMART Connect was conducted via zoom for nine potential SMART Administrators (6 men/3 women). The SMART database configuration took longer than anticipated as a consultative approach by INBAC is being followed, obtaining information and needs from all protected areas. Data collection at pilot sites had not commenced as of the end of March 2025. Because the SMART system is not yet fully operational in the pilot sites in Angola, baseline data are not yet available. [MOVs 2b and c. Angola training reports]

In Ethiopia, after a technical assessment of EWCA needs and practical aspects, EWCA decided that EarthRanger (ER) was the most effective method to implement as a monitoring tool. An implementation plan was developed and agreed on. NechiSar (NNP) National Park does not contain elephants, but HWC is an issue and on request of EWCA it was agreed that it should be the EarthRanger pilot site. Equipment to run ER for the central operations room in Addis Ababa and the local operations room in NNP were procured and installed at each site – this included desktop computers and peripheral items including large screens, data collection devices, and connectivity equipment. [MOV 3d and 3e. TAP and Letter on ER]

A five-day training course was run by an ER expert, Swabir Abdulrehman in Addis Abada for 18 people – including the ER administrators at Head office, ER operation room managers at NNP and rangers at NNP [MOV 3g, 3f].

After the training course, the rangers commenced collecting data during their patrols, which is fed through to the NNP operations room and the EWCA central operations room in Addis Ababa. A monitoring visit was conducted to NNP by the NHFP and the EWCA Director General to discuss and review ER use in the National Park [MOV 3j] which showed its functionality and benefits to aid park management decisions. ER deployment to other sites is now in discussion. First monitoring reports with baseline data became available for all federally managed sites with elephants in Ethiopia in 2023, primarily based on an old SMART system.

In Malawi, many of the national parks used SMART already to capture law enforcement data, but DNPW wished to augment its use. Equipment to operate SMART was procured for the central operations room at DNPW Headquarters as well as 12 Smartphones to capture data during patrols for all sites containing elephants and managed by DNPW, as well as for the Thuma, Dedza-Salima Forest Reserves, managed by WAG.

SMART consultant Julien Godfrey conducted a 5-day Advanced SMART Training course for DNPW staff in Malawi. The training focused on advanced use of the SMART software, including how to capture field data using mobile devices, with focus on HEC information. A total of 12 participants attended, including staff from DNPW headquarters in Lilongwe (3), Lengwe National Park (1), Kasungu National Park (3), Vwaza Wildlife Reserve (1), Nkhotakhota and Majete Wildlife Reserves, both managed by African Parks (2), and Thuma/Dedza Salima Forest Reserves, managed by the Wildlife Action Group (2) on behalf of the Forestry Department. Participants were reinvigorated by the advanced techniques, leaving them better equipped to handle monitoring data, and specifically HEC data more efficiently [MOV 4b SMART training].

A follow up three-day training course was run by the SMART coordinator for DWNP for Thuma/Dedza-Salima Forest Reserves for seven people to help set up the SMART database. [MOV 4e SMART training].

Pilot sites Malawi: Kasungu (KNP) and Nyika (NNP) National Parks and Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve (VMWR), managed by DNPW, and Thuma/Dedza-Salima Forest Reserves, managed by WAG. HEC hotspots were identified for all sites. In Kasungu, the electric fence constructed by our partner (IFAW) on its eastern boundary was extended to nearly reach the Zambian border (17 km remaining), which helped lowering HEC towards the east of the park, but elephants circumvent the fence and started focussing on other areas along the Kasungu boundary. A 70 km long fence along the eastern boundary of VMWR also lowered HEC incidences, but here elephants also circumvent the fence at both ends. In Malawi, with the exception of the site managed by WAG, all sites containing elephants and managed by DNPW are fully operational.

First baseline reports became available for all sites with elephants and managed by DNPW in Malawi in 2023, based on an old version of SMART.

Output 3. HEC Focal Point Network (HFPN) in place.

All NHFPs and selected staff of the wildlife authorities attended the Save the Elephants (STE) training-of-trainers on HEC mitigation techniques in Tsavo, Kenya. They were all introduced to the STE HEC network using WhatsApp, with HEC practitioners from all over the continent available for advice and discussion. This is a valuable network for wider sharing of ideas and the group is used on a regular basis.

The EPIF has set up a HEC community on WhatsApp with the NHFPs and the EPI Focal Point for the country to share news, information and upcoming events relating to the EPI, HEC or elephants in general. [MOV 5]

Output 4. HEC monitoring data is available at regular intervals and relevant local solutions are being implemented in each priority country.

For both Ethiopia and Malawi, baseline data and follow-up data one year later have been submitted in time. We should note, however, that due to sharp fluctuations in the number of HEC incidents in the

course of a year, primarily depending on the crop growing season, harvesting time and rainfall patterns, unit time for all indicators pertaining to HEC incidents should be one year.

HEC hotspots were identified for all sites managed by DNPW in Malawi, and for one pilot site in Ethiopia.

Angola: Due to the late start, pilot sites are not yet operational and no monitoring reports have been submitted.

Ethiopia: Using ECF funds, the 3 communities to the northwest of CCNP (main HEC hotspot) were provided with 3 watchtowers as an early warning system, as well as solar powered spotlights to deter elephants.

Malawi: Using DI project funds, Kasungu National Park received 2 motorcycles for a HEC Rapid Response Unit, first to capture data in the field, and second to help communities chase elephants out of the fields and settlements.

For trends in the different types of HEC incidents for the above pilot sites see Outcome below.

3.2 Outcome

Project outcome: Improved capacity within each of the three wildlife authorities to identify HEC problem areas, monitor the types and frequencies of conflict, and address these with locally relevant solutions.

Angola:

Due to changes at the Ministry and INBAC, work in Angola effectively started in the course of 2024, one year later than anticipated. Despite the delay, SMART implementation commenced and staff capacity built on different mitigation measures. Providing a strong foundation for EPIF follow up activities with INBAC.

Ethiopia:

EWCA has a significantly improved capacity to identify and monitor HEC incidents, and address these with locally relevant solutions. With a nominated dynamic and engaged NHFP, Earth Ranger operationalised in one pilot site and at the head office operations room, while different mitigation measures were implemented with monitoring data on impact generated.

This is demonstrated by one pilot site: Chebera-Churchura National Park, number of households involved is 2.392 (approximately 11.960 people), the total number of HEC incidents declined from 511 in 2023 to 456 in 2024 (though this figure also includes incidents where elephants were deterred and moved away, so they visited but with no impact). Surface area of crops destroyed by elephants decreased from 1,101 km^2 in 2023 to 0.594 km^2 in 2024, **a decline of 46% in one year.** In 2023, 3 people were killed and 8 injured by elephants as compared to 0 and 2 in 2024, **a decline of 81.8% in one year.** In 2023, 2 elephants were killed as a result of HEC, with one elephant killed in 2024. In 2024, **83.9% of people were positive about the presence and conservation of elephants** as compared to 65.3% in 2023. [MOV 3i]

In Ethiopia's CCNP, the implementation of HEC mitigation solutions, such as high-power torches and watchtowers, has reduced crop damage by 46%, and human fatalities and injuries by 82% over a period of only one year. Only 2 retaliatory killings of elephants were reported in 2024. These interventions have benefitted 2,392 households. Furthermore, community-driven governance of resources has highlighted the project's potential to promote equity in resource management and biodiversity conservation.

Malawi:

DWNP has a significantly improved capacity to identify and monitor HEC incidents and address these with locally relevant solutions. With a nominated dynamic and engaged NHFP, SMART was reinforced

for data collection on HEC and expanded to Thuma/Dedza-Salima Forest Reserves, while different mitigation measures were implemented, with monitoring data on impact generated.

This is demonstrated by the pilot sites: Kasungu and Nyika National Parks and Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve. Approximate number of households involved is 30.309 (136,390 people).

- The total number of HEC incidents for three sites combined, decreased from 195 in 2023 to 139 in 2024, **a decline of 28,7% in one year.**
- The Surface area of crops destroyed by elephants decreased from roughly 0,5 km^2 in 2023 to 0.4 km^2 in 2024, **a decline of 20% in one year.**
- In 2023, 3 people were killed and 1 injured by elephants as compared to 1 and 0 in 2024, **a decline of 75% in one year.**
- In 2024, 2 elephants were killed as a result of HEC, with zero elephants killed in 2023.

Summary: Although this only concerns 4 pilot sites in 2 target countries, improved capacity of the authorities in monitoring, evaluation and applying HEC interventions generated positive results in terms of significantly improved personal security, less property damage and significantly lower crop losses.

3.3 Monitoring of assumptions

During the project no assumptions were changed and all assumptions were monitored regularly.

Assumptions:

1.Suitable and motivated NHFPs and other staff available in each country.
Comment: This assumption holds true for all three target countries. The NHFPs for the three target countries were dedicated, motivated and easy to work with.

2.Management of the respective authorities responsible for wildlife management is cooperative.
Comment: This assumption holds true for all three target countries, except that primarily due to changes in INBAC management, for Angola, project implementation was delayed by one year.

3.No political obstacles.
Comment: See comment 2 above.

4.Suitable consultants can be found to conduct the training.
Comment: This assumption holds true, especially due to the pleasant ongoing collaboration with both the EarthRanger and SMART partnerships, as well as with STE.

5.The budget is sufficient to carry out all activities.
Comment: Although inflation has been steep since submission of this application, realignment of the budget due to dropping Gabon as a target country has provided us with a budget that was more or less sufficient to carry out most of the basic activities for three target countries. We should note, however, that both Angola and Ethiopia require ample technical and funding support for a few more years to get the M&E systems operational for all medium-term sites selected.

6.Transport is available with the authorities responsible for wildlife management.
Comment: Although transport was available in all three target countries, it was not always in the proper condition to carry out the activities at hand, or, funds were lacking for fuel and periodic maintenance.

4 Contribution to Darwin Initiative Programme Objectives

4.1 Project support to the Conventions, Treaties or Agreements

The project has directly supported commitments under the **CBD** by aligning with the NBSAPs of Angola, Ethiopia, and Malawi. By improving the capability, capacity, and knowledge of wildlife authorities, the project has enhanced their ability to address HEC and contribute to biodiversity goals. M&E systems established through training in SMART and EarthRanger software have the potential to inform land-use planning, particularly by identifying HEC hotspots and migratory corridors.

The project's activities have also supported the **CMS** by generating monitoring data that in the medium term will help identify cross-border migratory pathways and inform land-use planning to maintain connectivity for migratory species. These insights enhance regional collaboration and integration of conservation priorities into national strategies.

Aligned with the **SDGs**, the project has contributed to SDG 15 (Life on Land) by reducing retaliatory killings (medium-term trend) and improving biodiversity outcomes. The promotion of community-led governance and restoration of attitudes toward elephants supports SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production). This is evidenced by improved community attitudes of three key communities to the northwest of CCNP, which increased from 65.3% positive in 2023 to 83.9% in 2024. Additionally, the reduction of HEC incidents and crop damage has safeguarded food security (SDG 2) and contributed to poverty reduction (SDG 1) by stabilising incomes and protecting livelihoods.

4.2 Project support to biodiversity conservation and multidimensional poverty reduction

The project has made significant targeted progress toward improving biodiversity conservation outcomes. By building the capacity of wildlife authorities in Angola, Ethiopia, and Malawi, the project has empowered them to address HEC effectively and sustainably. Monitoring systems and tailored training programmes have enabled authorities to identify conflict hotspots and implement appropriate mitigation strategies. As a result, in the pilot sites in both Ethiopia and Malawi, HEC incidents decreased, with significantly lower crop damage and drastically improved personal security. These achievements underscore the project's potential to contribute to stabilising elephant populations and improving ecosystem connectivity.

The project has also positively contributed to poverty reduction. Approximately 2,392 households near Chebera-Churchura National Park in Ethiopia, and 30,309 households near Kasungu and Nyika National Parks and Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve in Malawi have benefitted directly from reduced HEC, which should have positive implication on improved food security and economic stability. Women, who often manage household food production and bear the brunt of HEC impacts, are expected to see improvements in their livelihoods through reduced crop losses. By safeguarding property and mitigating the risks associated with HEC, the project has supported the potential for greater resilience and better living conditions for vulnerable rural communities.

In all target countries, the monitoring systems established through this project will help inform decisions on future HEC interventions when additional funding becomes available, ensuring governments are better equipped to prioritise and address conflict hotspots effectively.

These outcomes highlight the project's success in addressing the interconnected challenges of biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction, laying the foundation for sustained coexistence between humans and wildlife.

4.3 Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

Please quantify the proportion of women on the Project Board[1].	50% The day-to-day management of the project is the responsibility of the EPIF core HEC Team consisting of 4 members, 2 women and 2 men,
Please quantify the proportion of project partners that are led by women, or which have a senior leadership team consisting of at least 50% women[2].	100% - in all three countries the ministries under which the respective wildlife authorities operate are currently led by a strong and capable female Minister. Although the NHFPs and Wildlife Department leads in all three countries are men.

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

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

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

During the first year of project implementation, staff selected for the position of NHFP and for training purposes were required to follow government protocol, were restricted to existing staff within the respective wildlife authorities, and were suitable for the role, which resulted in only men being selected as the focal points. Because the wildlife authorities of all three target countries operate under Ministries, each with a very strong and capable female Minister in charge, we anticipate that wildlife management will undergo a rapid revolution with increasingly more women participating at all levels in these countries.

HEC disproportionately affects vulnerable people, such as women, children, and the elderly. These groups are often more reliant on agriculture for their livelihoods and are less able to protect their property and themselves from elephants. Therefore, with every reduction in HEC as a direct result of this project, basic needs and vulnerabilities of women and marginalised groups have been addressed first.

4.4 Transfer of knowledge

Knowledge transfer has been a critical component of the project, ensuring that the tools and methodologies developed can be effectively applied to conservation challenges. National and international training sessions, including workshops on Earth Ranger, SMART, M&E systems, and HEC solutions have provided wildlife authority staff with the technical expertise to address HEC. For example, the workshop jointly hosted by the EPIF and the World Bank's Global Wildlife Programme (GWP) in Nairobi brought together 70 participants, including government representatives from EPI-member and non-member states, representatives from NGOs, funders and other experts in the environmental field. The event fostered cross-regional exchange of best practices and enhanced participants' capacity to apply these approaches in their home countries.

In addition to training, the project disseminated knowledge through EPIF blogs, social media, technical videos, and manuals, such as the EPIF-developed *Human-elephant Conflict Monitoring and Evaluation Framework* (Jachmann, 2024) MOV 6. Furthermore, the establishment of the HEC Focal Point Network in Angola, Malawi, and Ethiopia (currently facilitated through WhatsApp) has created a platform for ongoing information sharing and collaboration. This network has the potential to enable the replication and scaling of successful mitigation strategies across the region, and we intend to expand it further to foster Africa-wide collaboration.

4.5 Capacity building

The project's capacity-building initiatives have strengthened institutional and individual expertise within wildlife authorities in Angola, Ethiopia, and Malawi. By adopting a training-of-trainers approach, the project ensured that skills development was both scalable and sustainable. As a result, of three target countries combined, approximately 20 government staff are now equipped to train additional personnel, further expanding the reach and impact of the project's interventions. Those trained trainers have already conducted several sessions on M&E systems and HEC mitigation and management, highlighting the success of this approach.

Additional key achievements include Hailu Kassa (male) from Ethiopia presenting at the EPIF x GWP HEC workshop in Nairobi to 70 participants, which showcased the project's outcomes and increased his regional recognition, and Ndaona Kumanga (male) from Malawi leading M&E systems training across the three pilot sites in Malawi.

Capacity-building efforts extended beyond training to include the provision of practical tools tailored to each country's needs. In Ethiopia, high-powered torches were supplied to aid in HEC mitigation, while in Malawi, motorbikes were provided to enable quicker responses to HEC incidents. M&E equipment was distributed to the wildlife authority headquarters, empowering local authorities to collect and analyse data effectively. These resources have enabled authorities to implement HEC mitigation measures independently. By equipping NHFPs and their teams to use monitoring data for adaptive management, the project has built institutional resilience, ensuring that conservation outcomes can be sustained and scaled over time.

5 Monitoring and evaluation

During the project, no changes were made in project design, nor in the original log frame. This project deals with monitoring and evaluation that should be the foundation of any conservation project, which includes HEC. A sound monitoring system, which can also collect data on illegal activity, law enforcement and wildlife observations is especially important in countries where basic information on most of these is lacking.

Implementation of locally adapted HEC mitigation solutions are vital for individual homesteads and communities; however, they may not solve the problem in the longer term. Countries need a comprehensive, long-term strategy to tackle HEC. And to achieve this, reliable data and a clear understanding of HEC dynamics on the ground is required, as addressing HEC requires information about the type of conflicts prevailing and where and when these incidents occur. If each HEC incident is recorded in the field using standardised data capture procedures by the wildlife authorities and community rangers, and the data collated both at the local and central operations room using a monitoring software, the resulting collated data will be of consistent quality, ensuring reliability for analysis and reporting. This consistency allows for meaningful comparisons between different areas experiencing conflict, as well as evaluation of different mitigation techniques used, providing feedback for the adaptive management system. Standardised data capture and analysis facilitates reporting, minimises administrative burdens, drastically improves response times, and provide important spatial graphical information for reporting and management purposes. A robust Monitoring and Evaluation program, using existing software packages such as EarthRanger or SMART, is imperative to not only effectively and efficiently address HEC, but also problems with illegal activity and addressing this by upgrading the patrol effort (increasing effort or spatial optimisation) and/or changing law-enforcement strategy (increased focus on intelligence and other types of enforcement). With a fully operational system, real time data on HEC is captured by national park or community rangers using mobile devices, sent to a site-based operations room as well as to the control centre at the wildlife authority's Headquarters (NHFP).

As such, setting up sound monitoring systems is a prerequisite to the success of any conservation project, but especially when attempting to address HEC. We did however, underestimate the time and funds required to set up systems with a landscape-wide coverage in vast countries that lack internet

connectivity in many places, with poor infrastructure such as in Angola, and where field staff require ample training to bring them up to speed on basic computer knowledge and data management.

6   Lessons learnt

One of the most significant lessons from this project has been the importance of government buy-in to ensure smooth implementation. Ministerial approvals in Angola and Ethiopia took longer than expected, causing delays in project activities and highlights the need for proactive engagement with government authorities early in the project cycle to secure commitments and mitigate delays.

Another key learning has been the recognition that HEC monitoring and mitigation requires long-term investment, particularly in countries with limited infrastructure and technical capacity. In Angola, for example, the project had to build capacity from the ground up, establishing the first monitoring system and providing fundamental training. The diversity of technological and institutional capacities across the three participating countries reinforced the importance of tailoring approaches to local contexts. While Malawi benefited from upgrading its existing SMART system, Ethiopia required a more intensive EarthRanger rollout, and an internal assessment revealed gaps in technology skills and data management, necessitating additional training before EarthRanger could be fully deployed. This demonstrates that a one-size-fits-all approach is ineffective in conservation capacity-building.

The project also underscored the value of strong local partnerships. In Malawi, collaboration with the Wildlife Action Group ensured broader engagement and a more efficient rollout of training and monitoring systems.

Gender inclusion remains a critical challenge in conservation, and the project has demonstrated the need for proactive measures to ensure equitable participation. While all three participating countries have female ministers overseeing wildlife authorities, the number of women in field-based roles remains limited. Future projects should more strongly promote and recommend female engagement in training and conservation activities to help address this imbalance and encourage greater participation in governance structures.

Despite these challenges, several aspects of the project worked well. The establishment of NHFPs in all three countries provided a dedicated structure for coordination. Training sessions, particularly those on EarthRanger and SMART, significantly improved the technical capacity of wildlife authorities. Moreover, participation in global conservation forums, such as the HEC workshop jointly hosted by EPIF and the World Bank's Global Wildlife Program in Nairobi (May 2024), helped reinforce the project's international relevance, facilitated valuable cross-country learning, and provided an opportunity to promote the Darwin Initiative to a broad audience of conservation practitioners and policymakers.

7   Actions taken in response to Annual Report reviews

All issues received as feedback after the first annual report have been discussed with partners and addressed, no outstanding issues remain.

8   Sustainability and legacy

The project has made significant strides in raising its profile within Angola, Ethiopia, and Malawi, while laying the groundwork for sustainability beyond its duration. Project activities have been aligned with national conservation priorities, ensuring relevance to national biodiversity action plans and international commitments. While the project's activities have not yet been formally integrated into national conservation strategies, the data and lessons generated provide a strong foundation to inform future wildlife management approaches, particularly in HEC mitigation. Participation in the HEC workshop, jointly hosted by EPIF and the World Bank's Global Wildlife Program in Nairobi (May 2024), further elevated the project's visibility, fostering cross-country learning and strengthening connections with key stakeholders at both national and international levels.

There is clear evidence of increased interest and capacity in HEC management resulting from the project. In Ethiopia, the NHFP produced a comprehensive HEC baseline report, showcasing enhanced

data collection, analysis, and reporting capabilities that did not previously exist within the wildlife authority. In Malawi, the successful upgrade of the SMART system, combined with targeted staff training, has significantly improved the country's ability to monitor and respond to HEC incidents. Angola made notable progress through the adoption of SMART, representing an important step in building technical expertise within its wildlife authority, particularly in the context of limited pre-existing monitoring systems.

To maintain the capability and capacity built through the project, the NHFPs remain central to ensuring continuity within wildlife management authorities. These roles have proven effective in not only coordinating HEC activities but also in institutionalising knowledge within government structures. Even if NHFPs are replaced, the skills and systems developed will remain embedded within the respective authorities. Provisions in MoUs with government partners help to formalise these roles, reducing the risk of capacity loss due to staff turnover.

The integration of EarthRanger and SMART into national monitoring systems will support long-term sustainability by enabling continuous data collection and adaptive management. This shift from ad-hoc data gathering to structured monitoring represents a lasting change in how HEC is managed at the national level. Regular technical support and refresher training will be important to maintain these systems, alongside the cultivation of internal expertise through peer-to-peer learning within wildlife authorities.

The HEC Focal Point Network, established through the project, has facilitated knowledge sharing between countries, enabling the exchange of best practices, tools, and strategies. While still in its early stages, this network has shown potential to strengthen regional collaboration on HEC, and its expansion to include other EPI member states could amplify the project's long-term impact.

In addition to technical systems, the project has generated valuable materials - including baseline reports, monitoring data, and training manuals (HEC M&E Framework) - that will continue to support capacity development. These resources are being shared with relevant stakeholders to ensure accessibility beyond the project's duration.

In conclusion, the project's sustainability is rooted in strengthened institutional capacity, embedded monitoring systems, and a growing network of HEC practitioners. While continued technical support and resource mobilisation will be necessary to maintain momentum, the foundations laid by the project will contribute to lasting ecological, social, and technical benefits. The data and outcomes generated not only support current HEC management efforts but also have the potential to shape future conservation strategies across the region.

9   Darwin Initiative identity

The project has made considerable efforts to promote the Darwin Initiative and ensure that its contributions are prominently recognised. The Darwin Initiative logo has been consistently featured in project-related materials, including reports, presentations, training materials, and workshop banners, reinforcing the UK Government's role in supporting vital conservation efforts. Notably, the logo was prominently displayed in presentations delivered to key government staff in Angola, Ethiopia, and Malawi, as well as to both EPI member and non-member sites during technical meetings, and at the international HEC workshop jointly hosted by EPIF and the World Bank's Global Wildlife Program in Nairobi (May 2024). Additionally, the logo featured in sessions attended by experts in the field, partner NGOs, and other stakeholders, further amplifying its visibility within the global conservation community.

We have actively showcased the project's successes, made possible through Darwin Initiative funding, across our communication platforms. Regular updates celebrating key achievements have been posted on our blogs and social media channels, including X (formerly Twitter) and LinkedIn, where we have tagged the Darwin Initiative and Biodiversity Challenge Funds accounts to increase visibility. These posts have highlighted milestones such as the successful rollout of the SMART system in Malawi, the EarthRanger training workshops in Ethiopia, and participation in the HEC Mitigation and Management

Workshop hosted by Save the Elephants in Tsavo, Kenya. Through these channels, we've ensured that the Darwin Initiative's critical support is front and centre in our storytelling.

Participation in international conservation forums, especially the Nairobi workshop, provided significant platforms to showcase the Darwin Initiative's role in advancing HEC mitigation strategies. During stakeholder meetings and training sessions across the target countries, the UK Government's contribution through the Darwin Initiative has been explicitly acknowledged. Government agencies in Angola, Ethiopia, and Malawi have recognised the value of Darwin Initiative support in strengthening national capacity for HEC management.

The project has maintained a distinct identity within the conservation landscape, operating under the broader framework of the EPIF while clearly branded as a Darwin Initiative-supported project. Awareness of the Darwin Initiative is strongest among government officials, conservation practitioners, and partner organisations engaged in the project. To enhance outreach, future activities could also focus on engaging local media outlets and community-based organisations to further promote the Darwin Initiative's impact at grassroots levels.

Social media engagement has proven highly effective in raising awareness of the project's progress and the Darwin Initiative's contributions. Project updates have been regularly shared, with direct links to the Darwin Initiative and Biodiversity Challenge Funds accounts, ensuring consistent recognition. Moving forward, we aim to expand digital outreach and strengthen collaborations with local media to further amplify the visibility and impact of Darwin Initiative-supported activities.

- https://www.elephantprotectioninitiative.org/post/building-a-smarter-future-for-conservation-earthranger-in-ethiopia

- https://www.elephantprotectioninitiative.org/post/building-bridges-between-humans-and-elephants-insights-from-the-human-elephant-coexistence-toolbox

- https://www.elephantprotectioninitiative.org/post/advancing-conservation-through-cutting-edge-technology-for-enhanced-protected-area-and-wildlife-mana

- https://www.elephantprotectioninitiative.org/post/human-elephant-coexistence-lessons-from-tsavo

10 Risk Management

Several new risks emerged during the project, requiring adjustments to the project's design and implementation strategy.

One of the most significant risks was political instability, an external risk identified in the original proposal. Although the military coup in Gabon occurred in August 2023, its impact extended into the current reporting period, ultimately leading to the country's removal from the project. This required a Change Request to reallocate resources to the remaining three countries, ensuring that project objectives remained achievable despite the reduced geographic scope. This risk aligns with the originally identified concern about political instability, which was considered a strategic risk that could only be managed through adaptive project focus.

Delays in obtaining ministerial approval in Angola disrupted timelines, highlighting the importance of sustained government engagement. While delays were anticipated to some extent under risks related to delivery chain management and government cooperation, the extent of these delays exceeded initial expectations. The project adapted by maintaining regular communication with key stakeholders and ensuring flexibility in the implementation timeline to accommodate these administrative bottlenecks.

Infrastructure and technological limitations posed significant challenges, particularly in Angola, where limited internet connectivity and a lack of computer literacy among field staff slowed the implementation of the SMART monitoring system. Although not explicitly highlighted in the original risk assessment, this risk is related to challenges in delivery chain effectiveness and the capacity of government departments. To mitigate these issues, the project provided additional technical training and ongoing support to Angola and Ethiopia. In Ethiopia, the phased rollout of EarthRanger was

adjusted to begin with an internal assessment of staff capacity, allowing for tailored training based on identified needs.

Financial risks linked to currency fluctuations, originally flagged under fiduciary risks, also materialised due to global market volatility and inflation, impacting procurement costs. The project managed this by adjusting procurement timelines and seeking cost-effective solutions where possible.

Finally, the appointment and retention of motivated National HEC Focal Points (NHFPs) was identified as a key risk in the proposal. While NHFPs were successfully appointed in all three countries, varying levels of institutional support required additional engagement with senior management to maintain momentum, particularly in contexts where political changes affected departmental leadership.

These proactive adaptations helped maintain project momentum despite emerging and evolving risks, demonstrating the project's flexibility and resilience in response to both anticipated and unforeseen challenges.

11 Safeguarding

12 Finance and administration

12.1 Project expenditure

Project spend (indicative) since last Annual Report	2023/24 Grant (£)	2023/24 Total actual Darwin Initiative Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs (see below)				
Consultancy costs				
Overhead Costs				
Travel and subsistence				
Operating Costs				
Capital items (see below)				
Others (see below)				
TOTAL	198,978.26	198,978.26		

Staff employed (Name and position)	Cost (£)
Greta Iori - HEC Team management (left the EPIF mid-grant)	
Ruth Musgrave - HEC Team management	
Hugo Jachmann - HEC Technical Advisor	
Andrew Crichton - Operations (left the EPIF mid-grant)	
Jose Agostinho – Operations – Angola	
Harry Thorold - Finance	
Mihiret Rezene - Programme Support - Ethiopia	
TOTAL	

Capital items – description	Capital items – cost (£)
EPIF has previously provided a Fixed Asset Register as part of the audit process by BCF Finance Team. A copy of that register is included in the final submission.	

TOTAL	████████

Other items – description	Other items – cost (£)
Audit fees – per initial budget	████████
TOTAL	████████

12.2 Additional funds or in-kind contributions secured

Matched funding leveraged by the partners to deliver the project	Total (£)
Year 1 – salary matched to other grants (Conservation International) - As outlined in budget	████████
Year 2 – salary matched to other grants (Conservation International) - As outlined in budget	████████
Year 1 - In collaboration with the World Bank Global Wildlife Programme we convened Human-Elephant Conflict (HEC) focal points from multiple countries for a regional knowledge-sharing event to build on project learnings and evidence.	
TOTAL	

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

12.3 Value for Money

Was the project good value for money?

Yes, the project demonstrated strong value for money across all four VfM pillars - economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and equity - maintaining a focus on impact, accountability, and responsible use of public funds.

What evidence can you provide to support this?

Economy: We maintained rigorous financial controls throughout the project, in line with our procurement policy. Wherever possible, we leveraged in-kind support and existing infrastructure, including the use of government buildings and local facilities, reducing venue and logistical costs. We also successfully secured additional matched funding (██████████████ from various other grants, increasing the reach and sustainability of the project.

Efficiency: Project funds were deployed strategically to ensure optimal use of resources. Administrative costs were kept low, with the majority of expenditure going directly to programme delivery. Furthermore, we have completed the activities while being under budget in direct costs.

Effectiveness: The project met or exceeded all its key performance indicators, whilst a robust M&E framework guided delivery.

Equity: Targeting of the project was deliberate and inclusive, the project built capacity among local stakeholders and institutions. This approach ensured that outcomes extended beyond the project's immediate timeline and benefitted those most in need.

Conclusion: Throughout delivery, we upheld principles of openness, accountability, and continuous improvement. Decision-making remained evidence-based, and financial oversight was stringent. In line with the UK aid objectives, the benefits of this investment - both short and long-term - have significantly outweighed the costs. We are confident that the project has delivered lasting, high-quality results in a cost-effective manner.

13   Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

This Darwin Initiative project building the capacity and capability of three EPI member states has been pivotal in launching a strategic structured focus on human-elephant conflict issues in each country. The three countries have welcomed the support, been incredibly pro-active and dynamic in implementing the activities, despite the delays incurred due to large political changes outside the control of the wildlife departments.

In Angola, the implementation of a monitoring system, where previously nothing existed, and compounded by the delay in launching activities, has shown a slower progress of success, but since finishing the grant, and with different funding SMART is beginning to be implemented at two target sites.

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

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss with DEFRA the options for publicising the work supported under the Darwin Initiative grant. Please get in touch with info@epiafrica.org and we can draft something suitable.

Annex 1 Report of progress and achievements against final project indicators of success for the life of the project

Project summary	Progress and achievements
Outcome. Improved capacity within each of the three wildlife authorities to identify HEC problem areas, monitor the types and frequencies of conflict, and address these with locally relevant solutions.	
Outcome indicator 0.1 - Total number of HEC incidents per unit time per unit area. Outcome indicator 0.2 - Number of human fatalities per unit time per unit area Outcome indicator 0.3 - % of people in the target area willing to coexist with elephants. Outcome indicator 0.4 - Acreage of crops raided per unit time per unit area. Outcome indicator 0.5 - Number of retaliatory killings of elephants per unit time per unit area	**Ethiopia**: Pilot site: Chebera-Churchura National Park, number of households involved is 2.392 (approximately 11.960 people) - Total number of HEC incidents declined from 511 in 2023 to 456 in 2024. However, this includes incidents where elephants were deterred and moved away and is therefore not a good statistic. - Surface area of crops destroyed by elephants decreased from 1,101 km² in 2023 to 0.594 km² in 2024, **a decline of 46% in one year.** - In 2023, 3 people were killed and 8 injured by elephants as compared to 0 and 2 in 2024, **a decline of 81.8% in one year.** - In 2023, 2 elephants were killed as a result of HEC, with one elephant killed in 2024. - In 2024, **83,9% of people were positive about the presence and conservation of elephants** as compared to 65,3% in 2023. **Malawi:** Pilot sites: Kasungu and Nyika National Parks and Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve. Approximate number of households involved is 30.309 (136,390 people). - Total number of HEC incidents for three sites combined, decreased from 195 in 2023 to 139 in 2024, **a decline of 28,7% in one year.** - Surface area of crops destroyed by elephants decreased from roughly 0,5 km² in 2023 to 0.4 km² in 2024, **a decline of 20% in one year.** - In 2023, 3 people were killed and 1 injured by elephants as compared to 1 and 0 in 2024, **a decline of 75% in one year.** - In 2024, 2 elephants were killed as a result of HEC, with zero elephants killed in 2023. **Angola**: Due to changes at the Ministry and INBAC, work in Angola effectively started in the course of 2024, one year later than anticipated. Although SMART was introduced, staff in pilot sites still need further training for the system to become operational, starting in 2 pilot sites.
Output 1. Capable and capacitated NHFPs and other staff members in place with the authorities responsible for wildlife management in each of the three target countries.	
Output indicator 1.1 - Number of training sessions per target country.	**Angola**: Total of 3 training sessions: 2 on SMART software and data capture, and 1 on HEC mitigation interventions.

	Ethiopia: Total of 6 training sessions: 3 on EarthRanger/SMART software, 2 on HEC mitigation interventions and 1 on Monitoring & Evaluation. **Malawi**: Total of 7 training sessions: 3 on SMART software, 1 on HEC mitigation interventions and 3 on Monitoring and Evaluation. For 3 target countries combined, a total of 16 training sessions.
Output indicator 1.2 - Number of staff attending per target country.	**Angola**: A total of 32 staff attended the training sessions. **Ethiopia**: A total of 54 staff attended the training sessions. **Malawi**: A total of 42 staff attended the training sessions. For 3 target countries combined, a total of 128 staff were trained.
Output 2. Monitoring systems in place and operated by capable staff with the authorities responsible for wildlife management in each of the three priority countries.	
Output indicator 2.1 - Inventory of HEC problem areas available for each target country.	**Pilot sites Angola**: Not yet operational. **Pilot sites Ethiopia**: Chebera-Churchura (CCNP) and NechiSar (NNP) National Parks. - NNP does not contain elephants, but on request by EWCA functioned as the EarthRanger pilot site. HWC data on patrol is being collated. - CCNP, main HEC hotspot was identified, staff trained in M&E and mitigation techniques, and the communities assisted with various techniques used to address HEC. **Pilot sites Malawi**: Kasungu (KNP) and Nyika (NNP) National Parks and Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve (VMWR), managed by DNPW, and Thuma/Dedza-Salima Forest Reserves, managed by WAG. HEC hotspots were identified for all sites. In Kasungu, the electric fence constructed by our partner (IFAW) on its eastern boundary was extended to reach the Zambian border, which helped lowering HEC towards the east of the park, but elephants circumvent the fence and started focussing on other areas along the Kasungu boundary. A 70 km long fence along the eastern boundary of VMWR also lowered HEC incidences, but here elephants also circumvent the fence at both ends.
Output indicator 2.2 - First monitoring reports available.	First monitoring reports with baseline data became available for all federally managed sites with elephants in Ethiopia in 2023, primarily based on an old SMART system. First baseline reports became available for all sites with elephants and managed by DNPW in Malawi in 2023, based on an old version of SMART. Because the SMART system is not yet fully operational in the pilot sites in Angola, baseline data are not yet available. For pilot sites in Ethiopia and Malawi, additional monitoring reports were submitted late 2024

Output 3. HEC Focal Point Network (HFPN) in place	
Output indicator 3.1 - Number of online meetings per unit time.	All NHFPs and selected staff of the wildlife authorities attended the STE training-of-trainers on HEC mitigation techniques in Tsavo, Kenya. They were all introduced to the STE HEC network using WhatsApp, with HEC practitioners from all over the continent. For now, this is a much more valuable network, until such time when more EPI countries have joined our NHFP network. The WhatsApp network is currently used to share knowledge and experience, rather than reports and meeting.
Output indicator 3.2 - Number of HFPN reports circulated.	
Output 4. HEC monitoring data is available at regular intervals and relevant local solutions are being implemented in each priority country	
Output indicator 4.1 - Number of monitoring reports per unit time.	For both Ethiopia and Malawi, baseline reports and follow-up reports one year later have been received. Due to sharp fluctuations in the number of HEC incidents in the course of a year, primarily depending on the crop growing season, harvesting time and rainfall patterns, unit time for all HEC incidents should be one year. Due to the late start, no monitoring reports have been received from Angola.
Output indicator 4.2 - Trends in different types of HEC for each target country	For trends in the different types of HEC see Outcome above

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

Project summary	SMART Indicators	Means of verification
Outcome: Improved capacity within each of the four wildlife authorities to identify HEC problem areas, monitor the types and frequencies of conflict, and address these with locally relevant solutions.	- Total number of incidents per unit time per unit area - Number of human fatalities per unit time per unit area - Number of retaliatory killings of elephants per unit time per unit area - % of people in the target area willing to coexist with elephants - Acreage of crops raided per unit time per unit area - All of the above in relation to baseline set priorities	Monthly HEC monitoring data
Output 1 Capable and capacitated NHFPs and other staff members in place with the authorities responsible for wildlife management in each of the four target countries	1.1 Number of training sessions/target country 1.2 Number of staff attending/target country	1.1 Reports/List of participants/Photographic evidence 1.2 Reports/List of participants/Photographic evidence
Output 2 Monitoring systems in place and operated by capable staff with the authorities responsible for wildlife management in each of the four priority countries.	2.1 Inventory of HEC problem areas available for each target country 2.2 First monitoring reports available	2.1 Reports 2.2 Reports
Output 3 HEC Focal Point Network (HFPN) in place	3.1 Number of online meetings per unit time 3.2 Number of HFPN reports circulated	3.1 Reports 3.2 Reports
Output 4 HEC monitoring data is available at regular intervals and relevant local solutions are being implemented in each priority country	4.1 Number of monitoring reports per unit time 4.2 Trends in different types of HEC for each target country	4.1 Monitoring reports 4.2 Site visits

Activities

1.1. In collaboration with respective governments in each of the four priority countries, identify well-placed, enthusiastic and motivated NHFPs, and seek their formal nomination and responsibilities.

1.2. In collaboration with the appropriate government institution (primarily wildlife authorities), identify NHFP needs in each EPI member state and develop a support package that will help build lasting technical capacity, confidence and a sound understanding of managing HEC.

1.3. Training of the NHFP and other staff by specialist consultants.

1.4. In collaboration with partners, equip the NHFP with the necessary tools to enhance the quality and quantity of HEC information available to them, and, thus, to the EPI HEC Team.

2.1. Facilitate discussions and potential partners to help NHFPs explore and identify the most effective monitoring systems for HEC through available digital technology or alternative existing systems. Specialist consultants will deliver the training for the NHFP and other staff.

2.2. Invest in skills development for NHFPs, enabling basic reporting, management and monitoring of HEC, and best practice sharing and capacity building for management of HEC by the authorities responsible for wildlife management.
3.1. Set up a HEC Focal Point Network, initially starting with the four priority countries, but in time expanding this to encompass all 21 EPI member states.
4.1 Provide basic equipment to each target country to enable them and the affected communities to mitigate local HEC problems.
Important Assumptions 1. Suitable and motivated NHFPs and other staff available in each country. 2. Management of the respective authorities responsible for wildlife management is cooperative. 3. No political obstacles. 4. Suitable consultants can be found to conduct the training. 5. The budget is sufficient to carry out all activities. 6. Transport is available with the authorities responsible for wildlife management.

Annex 3 Standard Indicators

Table 1   Project Standard Indicators

DI Indicator number	Name of indicator	Units	Disaggregation	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Total achieved	Total planned
DI-A01	Number of people from key national and local stakeholders completing structured and relevant training	People	Gender	8 (8m/0f)	120 (105m/15f)	128	100
DI-A03	Number of local/national organisations with improved capability and capacity as a result of project.	Number of organisations	Type	3	3	3	4
DI-A04	Number of people reporting that they are applying new capabilities (skills and knowledge) 6 months after training.	People	Gender	8 (8m/0f)	120 (105m/15f)	128	100
DI-D02	Number of people whose disaster/climate resilience has been improved.	Households of effected communities	Improved		32701	32701	1000

Table 2   Publications

Title	Type (e.g. journals, manual, CDs)	Detail (authors, year)	Gender of Lead Author	Nationality of Lead Author	Publishers (name, city)	Available from (e.g. weblink or publisher if not available online)

Checklist for submission

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