

Africa newsletter



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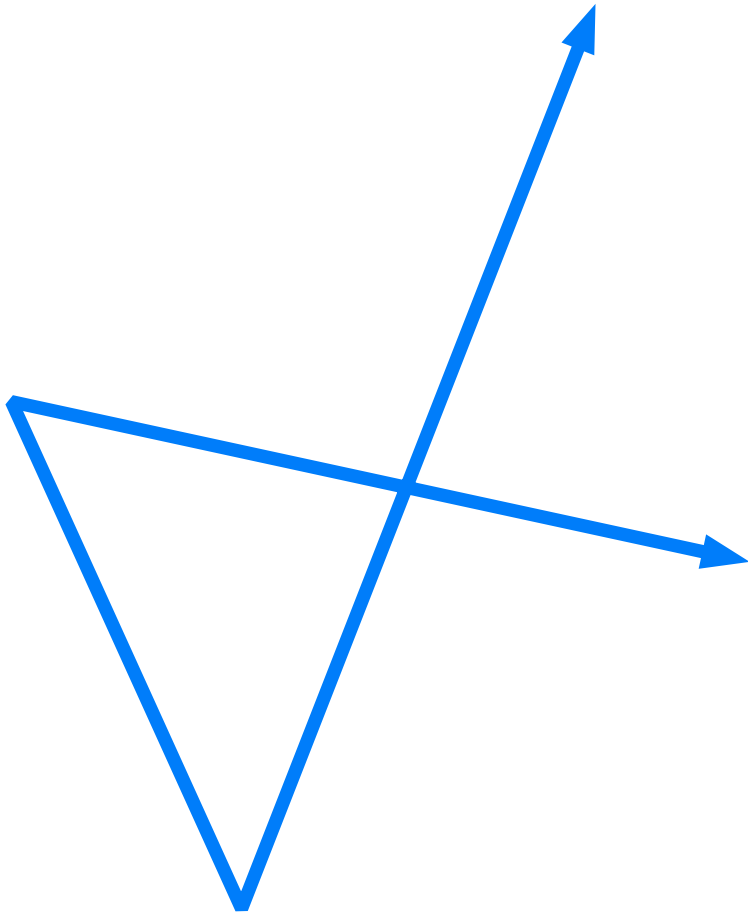
august 2022



vision:
animals and people
thriving together.



mission:
fresh thinking
and bold action
for animals, people
and the place we
call home.



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About IFAW (International Fund for Animal Welfare) - IFAW is a global non-profit helping animal and people thrive together. We are experts and everyday people, working across seas, oceans and in more than 40 countries around the world. We rescue, rehabilitate and release animals, and we restore and protect their natural habitats. The problems we’re up against are urgent and complicated. To solve them, we match fresh thinking with bold action. We partner with local communities, governments, non-governmental organizations and businesses. Together, we pioneer new and innovative ways to help all species flourish. See how sat ifaw.org

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Cover photo: Patrick Sayialel / © IFAW
IFAW-supported Team Lioness Olgulului Community Wildlife Ranger (OCWR) Beatrice Sailepu uses binoculars while on patrol near the base camp at the Risa community in Amboseli, Kenya.



Photo: Rudriwan Aaride / © IFAW



Photo: Rudi van Aarde / © IFAW

science and planning to give elephants room to roam

With its science-based approach, [Room to Roam](#) is an ambitious IFAW initiative that seeks to connect and secure habitats and create safe passages for elephants and other wildlife to move freely within their home ranges in [East](#) and [Southern Africa](#).

In April 2022, a group of IFAW staff gathered for the “[Kapula 3](#)” meeting held in [Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe](#). The third in a series of similar gatherings, [Kapula 3](#) was convened to have a dialogue with Professor Rudi van Aarde, Chair of the [Conservational Ecology Unit \(CERU\)](#) of the [University of Pretoria](#), as he provided updates on the latest science informing this key institutional priority.

IFAW has supported more than 20 years of ongoing research by Professor Van Aarde and his team at [CERU](#) into the connectivity of “mega-landscapes”—including vital collaboration with other leading elephant scientists. This work has informed IFAW’s elephant work to date and will now help IFAW realise Room to Roam’s goals to

deliver true safe space for stable and persistent African elephant populations, so that elephants and people can coexist and thrive.

Connectivity safeguards biodiversity, builds resilience and sustains human communities over time. IFAW has strategically prioritised four “anchor” landscapes for conservation interventions:

- ▶ Hwange-Matetsi-Zambezi (Zimbabwe)
- ▶ MAZALA (Malawi/Zambia)
- ▶ Nyerere National Park (Tanzania)
- ▶ Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro (ATK) (Kenya)

More than 150,000 elephants roam across landscapes that often fall outside of formal protection, exposing them to poaching and human-wildlife conflict. Climate change compounds the threat of broken landscapes, with animals like elephants risking their lives and travelling farther

outside protected areas to seek essential water and food for survival.

IFAW believes every species and every habitat can bounce back. To survive, elephants need safe routes to roam freely through countries, over borders, at a distance from human footprint. They need access to healthy habitat for food and water, and protection from the threat of poachers.

IFAW is forging partnerships with communities, traditional leaders, governments, private sector actors and other [NGOs](#) in a long-term plan to reconnect critical landscapes and help wildlife flourish.

- ▲ A yellow-billed stork fishes for frogs.
- ◀ Elephants at Mana Pools National Park, Zimbabwe.

working towards gender equity in Amboseli, Kenya



Photo: Patrick Seyiata / © IFAW

692

dependents benefiting from community-based organisation

60

women getting vocational training

Through IFAW's [Community Engagement program](#) we seek to provide women and girls access to education and employment opportunities, where they can take on leadership roles in their communities.

Wildlife rangelands are located in rural areas where women providing for their families often interact with wildlife more than men. Actions like fetching water, harvesting crops and collecting firewood for cooking put women at greater risk of dangerous encounters with animals like elephants, buffaloes, crocodiles and hippos.

At IFAW, we recognise the unique challenges faced by women and we work to make their voices heard in conservation. When women have alternative opportunities for education and professions, economic livelihoods increase, communities thrive and human-wildlife conflict plummets. The future of conservation needs local women in leadership positions. Here are some of the ways we are making that happen.

Education scholarships in Amboseli, Kenya

Since 2014, through our [Amboseli project](#), IFAW has offered education scholarships to 120 students studying at varying levels of secondary, college and university education. The first cohort of 60 students was inducted into the IFAW scholarship project in 2014 with 17 female students—three in high school and 14 in colleges and universities. Providing education for women and girls promotes empowerment and socioeconomic and gender equity. For the second cohort, we are supporting nine girls: three girls studying at undergraduate level, two at diploma and four at secondary level.

Team Lioness—one of the first all-women wildlife ranger units in Kenya

Since February 2019, IFAW's [Team Lioness](#), one of the first all-women wildlife ranger units in Kenya, has been protecting wildlife in Amboseli's vast community lands. The unit is made up of 16 female rangers, all drawn from the local community. Most members are the first in their families to have formal employment, which provides economic freedom to them and their families. The women are also role models who provide social empowerment to other women from the local community. Members of Team Lioness hold multiple roles in society, including some of them being mothers. That's why IFAW, in collaboration with the Germany-based [Margarete-Breuer Stiftung \(MBS\)](#)

[Foundation](#), has constructed a nursery to care for babies of Team Lioness rangers during the working day. The nursery gives the women peace of mind that their children are safe as they go about their daily work duties.

Esiteti Osotua women's community-based organisation

IFAW has contracted the [Esiteti Osotua women's community-based organisation](#) in [Amboseli, Kenya](#) to provide monthly supplies and rations to more than 80 community wildlife rangers. The financial returns are split two ways: an agreed portion goes to the women's savings bank accounts; the other portion is given to each of the 179 women to cater for the needs of their families, such as paying school tuition fees and purchasing groceries. The group returns have been used to purchase young cows and bulls. Once mature, the cows provide milk for the women's families and the bulls are sold at a profit.

In addition, IFAW has provided technical knowledge and financial support to aid the women in self-organising as a community-based organisation. This includes helping the women write the group's constitution, understand roles and responsibilities, register the organisation, link with the [Kajiado county government](#) and establish a shop. IFAW is also involved with providing oversight and direction where necessary, to ensure that the community-based organisation is effectively managed, and resources are equitably shared with the 692 dependents in [Esiteti](#) village.

Jenga Mama (Empower Women) Project

IFAW has also partnered with the [MBS Foundation](#) to finance 60 local community women with vocational training in hairdressing and beauty therapy, food and beverage production, plumbing, garment making and information technology. The training will see them acquire the professional skills and knowledge to start small businesses, reducing their dependency and interactions with nature and giving wildlife room to roam in their habitat. The economic returns will support their families and community, and help them become advocates for wildlife. Animal welfare often starts with the wellbeing of people. By creating new alternative sources of income that generate stability and leadership, the women of Jenga Mama are helping their community create peaceful coexistence between people and wildlife.

how IFAW's work in Amboseli contributes to the UN's sustainable development goals (SDGs) related to gender equality

SDG 1: No poverty: IFAW is facilitating opportunities for women and girls under the conviction that this will increase their chances of being employed in different sectors. Employment results in socioeconomic empowerment, thus reducing levels of poverty.

SDG 4: Quality education: High school and post-high school education and training opportunities ensure that women and girls receive a quality education.

SDG 5: Gender equality: IFAW promotes gender equality and empowerment for women and girls in Amboseli by facilitating opportunities for education and employment.

SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth: IFAW is promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all—particularly for women and girls.

SDG 10: Reduced inequalities: Socioeconomic inequalities are reduced by education, training and income-generating activities for women.

SDG 15: Life on land: Through their patrols of wildlife habitat, Team Lioness reduces the degradation of natural habitats and halts the loss of biodiversity.

SDG16: Peace, justice and strong institutions: Providing opportunities for the socioeconomic empowerment of women ensures that women participate at all decision-making levels to promote peaceful societies.

SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals: Partnering with the women and the local community in Amboseli ensures that we strengthen domestic resource mobilisation to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection.

◀ IFAW-supported Team Lioness Olgulului Community Wildlife Ranger (OCWR) Beatrice Sailepu uses binoculars while on patrol near the base camp at the Risa community in Amboseli, Kenya.



Photo: Frank Ogello / © IFAW

Ann Nailantei—her passion for catering will help wildlife conservation

Ann Nailantei is passionate about food preparation, cooking and food presentation. While in grade six, she and several of her classmates travelled to [Turkey](#) for a cultural festival focusing on music, dance and food and other aspects of her native [Maa](#) culture. This international experience ignited a fire in her to study and learn more about food and beverage production and catering.

Ten years later, Ann's dream is about to become a reality—she is a beneficiary of a scholarship to study food and beverage production at the [Masai Technical Training Institute \(MTTI\)](#) in Kenya's [Kajiado](#) county. The scholarship has been offered by IFAW through a project financed by the Germany-based [Margarete-Breuer Stiftung \(MBS\) Foundation](#). The three-year [Jenga Mama project](#) seeks to empower 60 women from [Amboseli](#) who live and interact with wildlife, with the vocational and technical knowledge and skills on their preferred subject. The long-term goal is to help these

women acquire the skills to successfully open and operate small and micro enterprises, which will have socioeconomic benefits for them, their families and the communities where they live. These benefits are part of IFAW's support to communities that live and interact with wildlife, so that they will depend less on the natural resources within the landscape for subsistence.

"In the three months I have been in school, I have learned how to bake cakes well without burning them," she says with a chuckle. "Baking has become a favourite of mine as has frying chicken."

Ann's passion to be in the hospitality industry radiates on her face as she speaks of her experiences at [MTTI](#). She loves interacting with her fellow students and has amongst other activities joined the environmental club. Growing up she had a desire to plant and grow trees, which was not an easy task given the dry weather and

presence of wildlife in [Amboseli](#). However, she believes the artisan course she is currently undertaking will tie in nicely with her love for the environment—an essential component for thriving wildlife, which in turn brings in tourists and much-needed revenue for her community.

Ann, who lives with her two-year-old daughter and both parents, is an avid sportswoman who plays netball, volleyball and football. She is a member of the [Maasai Association at MTTI](#)—an indication of her eagerness to be a well-rounded individual. At the end of her current training, she hopes to start her own catering business, even as she furthers her education to the highest level possible.

▲ Ann Nailantei, MBS Jenga Mama beneficiary kicks a ball during a football match with her colleagues.



Photo: Heiko Laschitzki / © IFAW

Daisy Ochiel—improving lives and protecting wildlife by empowering women

As a [Female Engagement Assistant](#) in Kenya's [Amboseli](#) and [Loita](#) landscapes, IFAW's Daisy Ochiel gets to combine her love of wildlife with her dreams of helping communities develop.

Women in this area are at the forefront of interacting with nature as they provide for their families, but they are often marginalised when it comes to socioeconomic empowerment. "I've learned a lot from Maasai women who live with wildlife and what their experiences are, from gender-based violence to how their lives are tied to conservation," says Daisy.

One of Daisy's roles is implementing the [Jenga Mama project](#) (named after the Swahili words for "Empower a Woman"), in which IFAW and the Germany-based [Margarete-Breuer Stiftung \(MBS\)](#)

[foundation](#) are helping 60 women in the [Amboseli](#) community learn professions and set up microenterprises that generate sustainable incomes for their families and communities, while giving wildlife space to thrive.

"It's pretty exciting," says Daisy. "We have all of them in school right now. They are learning handicrafts, hairdressing, tailoring, catering, ICT and more. We also have a plumber in the group. She's a single mother who said, 'I want to set an example for my daughter that you don't have to settle for what women are settling for.' Even plumbing is a woman's job. My favourite part of my job is spending time with these women and hearing them tell their stories, especially how school is transforming them. I also enjoy when they share how they are overcoming their challenges and fears."



Photo: Heiko Laschitzki / © IFAW

- ▲ Daisy Ochiel, IFAW's Female Engagement Assistant in Kenya's Amboseli and Loita landscapes.
- ▲ Daisy Ochiel catches up with some of the women participating in the Jenga Mama project.

Faith Lekatoo—a woman’s perspective on the value of cultural knowledge in wildlife conservation



Photo: Frank Ogallo / © IFAW

For the first nine years of her life, Faith Lekatoo did not speak or understand her native [Maa](#) language, customs or culture. She lived in Voi, a cosmopolitan town in [Kenya’s](#) south almost 300 kilometres from her home in [Amboseli](#). Her father worked in [Voi](#) before opting to move his family back to their cultural roots in [Amboseli](#). The move was not easy for Faith as she struggled to learn and understand the language and customs while in high school.

Her perspective changed after going to college, where she fully and proudly embraced her culture. Studying for a diploma in [Wildlife Management](#) at the [Kenya Wildlife Service Training Institute](#)

([KWSTI](#)), Faith graduated fourth overall in October 2021 as the only female in her class. Of the 120 beneficiaries of the IFAW-funded scholarship project, Faith is also the first and only female trainee with a diploma in wildlife management, a male-dominated career.

“Wildlife has to coexist with humans—this is a concept I embraced while in college. Looking back, this became more pertinent for me when I experienced it when we moved back to [Amboseli](#) as the [Maa](#) community interact with wildlife daily,” she says as a matter of fact and with much confidence.

Wildlife has used [Maa](#) community lands as dispersal and migratory routes in search of water and pasture for millennia. The community has learned wildlife behaviour and mannerisms, leading to a semblance of coexistence. While interning as a tour guide, Faith gained some of this knowledge from a fellow community member. “Despite the knowledge I acquired in class, living and working with Benjamin (a tour guide from the community) has taught me a few things I did not learn in class,” says Faith. She explains that Benjamin, who has no formal education on tour guiding, can easily and accurately distinguish bird species from their different and sometimes confusing chirpings. “Benjamin also taught me that an elephant’s stride is on average two meters, which is something I did not learn in college,” she adds.

When asked if she has aided in her community’s coexistence with wildlife, Faith, currently an IFAW intern in [Amboseli](#) says, “Yes, I have. My community sometimes believes that some wildlife is a bad sign or omen. I have conversations with my grandmother for instance and let her know that wildlife is just adapting to its surroundings and looking for pasture or safe habitat, and not necessarily a sign of bad things to come,” she explains.

Faith believes that young girls and women who are still in school should believe in themselves and be open to tying in their culture and interactions with wildlife to earn a living. “Let us as women not settle for the conventional courses but venture into professions with few women such as wildlife management and conservation—and that way, we will encourage our communities to live and thrive with wildlife,” she concludes.

120

beneficiaries of the IFAW-funded scholarship project

◀ Faith Lekatoo, IFAW intern and beneficiary of the IFAW scholarship project.



**how to protect
elephants and
communities in
Africa?**



**create room
to roam**





Photo: Frank Ogallo / © IFAW

countering wildlife trafficking in Loita Forest

Rampant poaching and illegal wildlife trafficking in Kenya threaten the existence of some of the world's most iconic wildlife such as elephants, lions, rhinoceroses and other endangered species. These animals are not only critical to maintaining the health and biodiversity of the ecosystems they inhabit, but they also provide valuable economic opportunities for communities and governments as they attract tourists from around the world. Poaching and illegal wildlife trafficking sometimes involve the trafficking of people, drugs and arms, which means they can jeopardise not just wildlife, but also the security of communities.

Although pastoralists such as the Maasai have coexisted with wildlife for generations, population growth and lifestyle changes, including the expansion of agriculture, have altered the balance within which people and animals coexist. Added to these changes are the pressures of expanding infrastructure and development, such as roads and mining, which affect the dispersal ranges of far-roaming megafauna and increase interactions with people, often leading to conflict. Increases in human-wildlife conflict (HWC) often reduce community coexistence with wildlife, creating an environment conducive to retaliatory poaching.

The Loita Forest, locally known as Entime Naimina-Enkiyo ("Forest of the lost child"), is an indigenous forest in Kenya that stretches over a range of hills and valleys in the Great Rift Valley covering Maasai ancestral lands. The forest covers around 33,000 hectares and is one of the few community-managed indigenous forests in the country. The forest is a key landscape for elephant conservation and it also plays a significant role in the Maasai's culture, serving not only as a source of food, but also as a source of traditional medicine.

With support from the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) and in partnership with Ilkimpa Community Conservation Association (ICCA) a community-based organisation, as well as the Kenyan Wildlife Service (KWS), IFAW has supported and facilitated the provision of practical security skills, training and mentorship to 10 community wildlife crime monitors and 19 community rangers in Loita. The wildlife crime monitors and community rangers aid in wildlife security. Additionally, IFAW has

provided equipment and operations support for ranger patrols in the landscape.

Recently, James Isiche, IFAW's East Africa Regional Director, visited ICCA in Loita where he met with the leadership of ICCA and the community rangers. He delivered phones for the community wildlife crime monitors to use for communicating with the rangers in case of wildlife threats. James also handed over motorbikes for efficient transportation by the ICCA rangers.

Partnering with communities to secure room to roam for wildlife

The loss of habitat, which is essential to wildlife sustainability, is one of the greatest challenges facing wildlife conservation around the world. Developing innovative methods to improve wildlife conservation by linking the geographic ecology of a species with landscape structure and patching connectivity is important for landscapes across various regions.

In the face of rising human-driven habitat change and development pressure, landscape planning that protects ecosystem ecological integrity is crucial. Wildlife monitoring data can help boost the efficacy of such planning by providing unique and useful information on animal distribution and location-specific behaviours. Given the intricacy of animal movements, frequently used tracking data analysis can oversimplify the connection between movement behaviour and location.

Collaboration with communities is essential in combating wildlife trafficking. Crime prevention approaches in Loita and the communities in the wildlife rangelands and landscape are based on identifying and addressing the drivers of wildlife crime. Without addressing the socio-political drivers that motivate wildlife crime, strengthening law enforcement will be less successful. Building trust among these communities is critical to developing community-oriented crime prevention approaches and supporting intelligence gathering, information sharing and wildlife crime investigations.

While Kenya's challenges are immense, the rewards can be equally significant. Eco-tourism is more profitable domestically

than poaching. In many illicit economies, poaching generates the most money for those higher up in the organisation, in this case foreign organised crime. In contrast, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism in Kenya was generating more than USD\$ 800,000 (KES 100 billion) annually. Equally important, Kenya's wildlife is a national treasure and a crucial component of the country's identity and heritage. Innovative solutions could preserve Kenya's wildlife populations for generations to come – this is IFAW's long-term vision!

security skills, training and mentorship provided to 10 community wildlife crime monitors and 19 community rangers

◀ James Isiche, IFAW's East Africa Regional Director, displays one of the phones IFAW presented to the Ilkimpa Community Conservation Association (ICCA) in Loita to be used by wildlife crime monitors to communicate with wildlife rangers in case of any wildlife threats as they conduct surveillance.



transforming poachers into rangers in Loita Forest

Frank Ogallo, IFAW Programme Communications Manager, visited Loita, interacted with the local community and provided this report.

Whether we are working to protect landscapes, securing safe release sites for rescued wildlife or responding to disasters, community engagement is the ‘vein’ that runs through IFAW’s programmatic work. Our sustained success requires the engagement, support and leadership of local communities and partners—from governments and authorities to [Indigenous Peoples](#).

Now, more than ever, there is a spotlight on conservation organisations and the way they interact with local communities and Indigenous groups. Conversations on conservation and environmentalism are being turned towards inclusivity, intersectionality, women and Indigenous rights. IFAW’s long-standing and far-

reaching community engagement work allows us to talk authoritatively on this topic. In April 2022, I travelled for two days with IFAW’s [East Africa Regional Director James Isiche](#) and [Chris Kiarie](#), the [International Narcotics and Law \(INL\) Grants Project Manager](#) to [Loita Forest](#). We were delivering motorcycles and mobile phones to the [Ilkimpa Community Conservation Association \(ICCA\)](#), a community-based organisation operating in [Loita Division of Narok County, Kenya](#) that prioritises protection of wildlife—specifically, elephants living in the [Loita Forest](#).

The [Loita Forest](#) covers an area of approximately 33,000 hectares bordering the [Masai Mara National Park](#) and located next to the [Tanzanian](#) border in southern [Kenya](#), east of the famous [Serengeti National Park](#). Most of its inhabitants are members of the [Loita Maasai](#) community, sharing the forest and its resources with a few [Purko Maasai](#). There are more than

2,000 residents from nine settlements spread along the periphery of [Loita Forest](#).

[ICCA](#) engaged the services of 19 local youth and trained them as community rangers to track and offer relevant information on wildlife movement and the preservation of the ecosystem. The community ranger unit in [Loita](#) comprises four women and 15 men whose job is to protect wildlife and support local communities.

In my conversations with the rangers, I came across three community rangers who were former poachers. For more than five years they had been hunting down elephants for their ivory and selling it across the border in [Tanzania](#). They mentioned that they were poaching for socioeconomic benefits, selling bush meat and ivory to put food on their table or have some money in their pockets.



Photo: Frank Ogallo / © IFAW

In 2018, when [ICCA](#) began its work in Loita, the former poachers were among the first people [ICCA](#) approached. As locals born and bred in the area, they knew the landscapes intimately, had well-developed local social networks, and had a better understanding of the elephant corridors from [Loita](#) to [Magadi](#) and the [Mara](#) region. Offering the reformed poachers employment would not only eliminate them as a poaching threat, but also provide [ICCA](#) with intimate knowledge of poaching routes, methods and additional poachers operating there. They also needed to change their opinions on poaching and provide an alternative solution to earning a decent living.

Jackson and Julius Kone, who are cousins, were the first community rangers recruited in Loita. Simeone later joined them in 2019. Jackson is now an Instructing Officer, with Julius as his deputy. Simeone acts as the group commander of the 19 rangers selected from the nine villages in Loita. They patrol regularly, monitoring wildlife, preventing poaching, engaging with local communities in conservation and helping communities resolve human-wildlife conflicts. They also hold educational workshops to teach local communities about elephants, educating them on elephant habitats, typology, food sources

and why they are under threat of extinction through loss of habitat and poaching/ivory wars. Most importantly, they show their community that these are their elephants and their country, and why both should be protected.

Their success has come because of the approach of embedding in wider community engagement activities that respect rights and local customs and build trust, like selecting rangers from across the settlements. Since 2018 no poaching incidents have been reported in [Loita](#). Human-wildlife conflict incidences do still occur.

My experience with the rangers opened me up to looking beyond communities as simply being the ‘eyes and ears’ of law enforcement. Success depends clearly on local support, and conservation projects should start by prioritising local needs. Supporting community voices in decision making and building trusting relationships is critical because communities must be full and active partners in conservation.

With support from the [Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs \(INL\)](#), [Kenya Wildlife Service \(KWS\)](#), local and regional partners including [ICCA](#), [KWS](#) intelligence,

prosecutor and [Airwing](#) departments and local communities residing in the vicinity of the [Kenya-Tanzania](#) border, IFAW is working to secure wildlife on key transboundary community and nationally gazetted lands.

4

years since last reported poaching incident in Loita.

▲ Ilkimpa Community Conservation Association (ICCA) Rangers (L-R) Jackson, Simeone and Julias in Loita Forest.



climate-smart farming aims to end poaching

Small-scale farmers across [Zambia](#) have begun harvesting the first crops from a climate-smart project aimed at securing livelihoods and protecting wildlife. They are part of a project to improve the income of communities and individual farmers by training them to farm high-value crops like groundnuts, soybeans and cowpeas, thus reducing reliance on poaching for bush meat or for profit.

The project targets 3,500 mostly female farmers—1,000 in [Malawi](#) and 2,500 in

[Zambia](#)—across a 32,278-square-kilometre part of the [Malawi-Zambia Transfrontier Conservation Area \(TFCA\)](#). The area includes extensive communal lands as well as three national parks, [Lukusuzi](#) and [Luambe](#) in [Zambia](#) and [Kasungu](#) in [Malawi](#).

The project is a partnership between IFAW and [Community Markets for Conservation \(COMACO\)](#) and is funded by the [German Agency for International Cooperation \(GIZ\)](#). It has begun recruiting and training 30 local leaders in the [TFCA](#) who will, in turn, each

train and monitor 83 farmers. Others will learn to identify products such as mushrooms and caterpillars to sell for income and to prevent illegal activities such as poaching and cutting down trees for charcoal.

“Climate change is negatively affecting small-scale farmers in the [Lukusuzi/Kasungu TFCA](#) landscape in [Zambia](#) and [Malawi](#) leading to a loss of income. This can lead to people engaging in poaching of wildlife for subsistence or profit,” said Neil



Photo: Julia Gumbert / © IFAW

Greenwood, IFAW Regional Director Southern Africa. “IFAW believes people and animals thrive together. By supporting climate-smart livelihoods in communities in the [TFCA](#), we can improve incomes and protect wildlife from the threat of poaching.”

“The focus of the project is finding practical, cost-effective solutions to the growing challenges of climate change that small-scale, poor farmers face today,” said Dale Lewis, CEO and Founder of [COMACO](#). “It expands on [COMACO](#)’s current range of works with 230,000 farmers by identifying 3,500 vulnerable households encompassing women and youth and supporting them with multiple livelihood skills for increased income and food security.”

[COMACO](#) trains farmers in organic principles that include planting legumes to improve soil nutrition and practicing crop rotation to keep fields healthy. Crops are planted alongside [Gliricidia sepium](#) trees, which provide additional nutrition to soil and are a natural pest repellent.

“[COMACO](#) planted 60 million trees for the 2021-2022 season. Our plan is also to plant 1.75 million trees under this project—500 agroforestry seedlings per 0.25 hectares of farmlands per farmer,” said Dale.

[COMACO](#) will also distribute 1,000 [Better Life](#) books to local schools and farmer producer groups in [Zambia](#) and [Malawi](#). The book is a local language training manual with colour-printed visual aids covering topics such as sustainable agriculture and crop and agroforestry management.

“*Enhancing Climate Resilience and Cross Border Collaborations in Kasungu/Lukusuzi Trans-frontier Conservation Area (TFCA)*” is a project of IFAW and [COMACO](#) supported and funded by GIZ. IFAW is the sole author and the views expressed are IFAW’s and not those of GIZ.

3,500

small-scale farmers learning climate-smart farming techniques

60 million

trees planted in the 2021-2022 season

▲ Elita Mwale and her family harvest peanuts on their farm at Chikomeni, Zambia. Elita, 40, is part of the [COMACO](#) project. A [COMACO](#) agent will buy her dried and bagged peanuts at a collection point.



Photo: Theresa Chapuapujy / © IFAM



game fence enhances coexistence at Kasungu National Park

The construction of a wildlife-proof fence means sleepless nights are over for thousands of people living in communities bordering [Kasungu National Park](#). Since the construction started in 2020, incidents of human-wildlife conflict in [Malawi's](#) second-largest national park have dropped by up to 63%.

According to current data, 763 cases of human-wildlife conflict (HWC) were recorded between 2017 and the end of 2019, while 212 cases have been recorded since 2020.

When complete, the new electric fence will protect a 40-kilometre section of the eastern boundary of [Kasungu National Park](#), where communal farmlands and property have experienced crop raiding and damage by elephants and other wildlife—including injury to people.

“All that has changed, and we’re seeing significant results as construction of the new fence progresses,” says Timothy Maseko Chana, Division Manager for

[Malawi's Department of National Parks and Wildlife \(DNPW\)](#).

“Our officers were devoting time and resources to problem animal control, but since the first phase of the fence was completed, there have been very few reported cases of HWC, especially on the fenced area.”

The [Government of Malawi](#) is repairing the fence with support from the [United States Agency for International Development \(USAID\)](#) through IFAW and with the cooperation of communities. More than 340 people have been employed during the three phases of the project, including 109 women.

“There are numerous benefits to the fence because it is helping address the problem of HWC,” says Chimwemwe Mhango, a community beneficiary. “The community is involved in the construction of the fence and has learned new skills in fence construction and maintenance.”

63%

reduction in human-wildlife conflict

- ▲ Incidents of human-wildlife conflict have dropped by up to 63% in the communities surrounding Kasungu National Park thanks to the construction of a wildlife-proof fence.
- ◀ More than 100 women have helped build a wildlife-proof fence along the eastern boundary of Kasungu National Park.



engagement stops farmers from encroaching on the buffer zone of Kasungu National Park

Typically, buffer zones are areas created to enhance the protection of a conservation area—often peripheral to it—and are intended to prevent human-wildlife conflict. The key to the success of a buffer zone is keeping people and animals away from each other.

In [Malawi](#), buffer zones cover areas that are five kilometres beyond the boundaries of the protected area. Unfortunately, these buffer zones have been encroached on and no longer exist in most areas. For example, areas of the buffer zone around [Kasungu National Park](#) have been turned into farms and settlements. The challenge has been especially big where the park boundary borders [Zambia](#) and densely populated communal lands reach right up to and—in many cases—into the buffer zone.

People in [Zambia](#) were planting crops and building structures across the border, unaware they were encroaching on the buffer zone that falls within [Malawi](#), and which exists to prevent them from coming

into conflict with wildlife. Mostly, they simply did not know it existed.

“I was farming in the buffer zone out of ignorance and was apprehended by law enforcers. I was then released after the two presidents of [Zambia](#) and [Malawi](#) decided to pardon us through their respective departments of wildlife and parks,” says local farmer Tissa Nkhoma.

Together with the [Departments of National Parks and Wildlife of Zambia and Malawi](#), IFAW’s [Combating Wildlife Crime \(CWC\)](#) project with support from the [United States Agency for International Development \(USAID\)](#) set up community meetings to explain the purpose of the buffer zone and to encourage people to stop farming and conducting other activities within it.

“The sensitisation meeting showed us the beacons and helped us understand that we were farming in the buffer zone. As a result, we have abandoned our fields and are no longer breaking the law,” Nkhoma explains.

District Commissioner for the [Lumezi District](#) in [Zambia](#), Jimmy Phiri, urged IFAW to conduct more sensitisation meetings to ensure that the problem of encroachment is addressed on the landscape.

“We are pleased to report that the situation has changed because some farmers have abandoned their fields after learning that they have encroached on [Kasungu National Park](#),” Jimmy says.

- ▲ (Top left) Jimmy Phiri, District Commissioner for Lumezi District in Zambia has requested more sensitisation sessions be arranged for farmers.
- ▲ (Top right) Local farmer Tissa Nkhoma farms in the buffer zone surrounding Kasungu National Park.



Photo: Game Rangers International / © GRI



Photo: Game Rangers International / © GRI



Photo: Game Rangers International / © GRI

a better home for orphaned elephants (with better viewing for people too)

Construction is nearly complete on a viewing platform that will give visitors a look inside the elephant orphanage at the [Wildlife Discovery Centre in Zambia's Lusaka National Park](#). Visitors will be able to observe orphaned elephant calves as they play in the mud, drink bottles of milk and get rehabilitated on their journey back to the wild.

The existing IFAW-supported elephant orphanage in [Lusaka, Zambia](#) is in an area that has experienced rapid urban development, making it difficult to rehabilitate elephants for life in the wild. The orphanage is being relocated to the [Wildlife Discovery Centre](#) where the elephants will experience a better environment for rehabilitation as they will be exposed to fewer sights, sounds and smells of human activity.

IFAW, [Game Rangers International \(GRI\)](#), Zambia's [Department of National Parks and Wildlife \(DNPW\)](#) and [Sinking Ship Entertainment \(SSE\)](#) are developing the new elephant orphanage, which is scheduled to open in 2022.

- ▲ A new elephant calf viewing hide is being constructed by Game Rangers International in Lusaka, Zambia. The viewing hide is a part of the Wildlife Discovery Center, a new wildlife rescue and community education center being built in Lusaka National Park.



Photo: © IFAW

The Lifupa Women's Group —five years of impact for people and animals

The [Lifupa Women's Group](#) in Malawi's [Kasungu National Park](#) has applauded the [United States Agency for International Development's \(USAID\) Southern African Mission](#) for its support in helping improve their livelihoods.

[Kasungu National Park](#) has a permanent settlement which grew from the early beginnings of the [Lifupa scout camp](#) and

became home to not only rangers but also to the people supporting tourism enterprises in the park. Over the years rampant poaching killed almost all [Kasungu's](#) elephants and other wildlife, making the park unattractive to visitors. Work dried up and the community became listless and impoverished.

With support from [USAID](#), IFAW supported the governments of [Malawi](#) and [Zambia](#) by

launching the [Combating Wildlife Crime project](#) in 2017, and the community's fortunes have changed for the better.

"The [Combating Wildlife Crime Project](#) arrived at the right time, as almost all of the women staying in the park were either idle or lacked the financial means to support their families. The story has changed, however, because now we are economically



Photo: © IFAW



Photo: © IFAW



Photo: © IFAW

empowered,” says Maria Malunga, Chairperson of the [Lifupa Women’s Group](#).

With 50 members, most of them mothers, the cooperative has literally changed the fortunes for their families. The project provides various income-generating activities including running a maize mill, a tuck shop and a tailoring shop.

“These businesses make the income we need to support our families and keep us busy. Better still they are sustainable businesses because they are profitable, and we are diversifying by doing different things.”

Through the tailoring shop, the women produce merchandise such as bags and hats, and have orders from local and international organisations. Malunga says her family has improved financially since

she joined the group. “The group has 50 members, and we share the profits equally after every six months. Our lives are no longer the same. We can support our families,” she says.

With an average family of three, the 50 women involved have empowered approximately 150 beneficiaries through the proceeds of the businesses.

Beginning in May 2017 and concluding in May 2022, the goal of the project is to see wildlife populations stabilise or increase in the targeted landscape through a decrease in poaching-related mortalities. The project targets [Luambe National Park](#) and [Lukusuzi National Park](#) in Zambia and Malawi’s [Kasungu National Park](#).

- ▲ (Top photo) USAID Malawi team interacting with Lifupa Women’s Group.
- ▲ (Bottom-left photo) The arrival of USAID officials to Malawi’s Kasungu National Park. From left to right are: Timothy Chana Maseko (camouflage attire), Division Manager for DNPW Malawi, Patricio Ndadzela, CoP for the CWC Project, Musonsa Ngulube (blue shirt), Environment Specialist for USAID Southern Africa and (far right) Madalitso Kaferawanthu, Environment Team Leader for USAID Malawi.
- ▲ (Bottom-right photo) USAID officials at Lifupa Women’s Group.
- ◀ USAID officials with Lifupa Women’s Group.



Photo: Michèle Fortmann / © IFAW

spreading influence to protect elephants

Well-known Dutch television presenter Nicolette Kluijver has become an IFAW ambassador to raise awareness about the critical state of African elephants.

In February 2022, she visited the IFAW-supported [Wild is Life-ZEN project](#) in [Zimbabwe](#) that focuses on the rescue, rehabilitation, rewilding and release of orphaned elephants. Nicolette got to meet Beatrix and Moses, two orphaned elephants, and learn more about the challenges elephants face due to habitat loss, poaching and human-wildlife conflict. She was able to see first-hand the intensive care that goes into rehabilitating orphaned elephant calves, and why individual animals matter to IFAW and in conservation.

During her stay in [Zimbabwe](#), Nicolette shared her experiences daily with her social media followers and she was interviewed by several major Dutch news outlets. Nicolette is extremely grateful for the experience and was deeply moved by the elephants, their dedicated handlers and the whole team at [Wild is Life-ZEN](#). She has made it her mission to help IFAW protect elephants!



Photo: Michèle Fortmann / © IFAW



Photo: Michèle Fortmann / © IFAW

- ▲ Dutch celebrity Nicolette Kluijver visited Zimbabwe to learn more about the work of the IFAW-supported project [Wild is Life-ZEN](#) and to meet some of the orphaned elephants they are rehabilitating for eventual release back into the wild.
- ◀ Rikkert Reijnen, IFAW Senior Advisor Conservation, and Nicolette Kluijver, Dutch celebrity, view a herd of orphaned elephants being rehabilitated by [Wild is Life-ZEN](#) in Zimbabwe.



enhancing collaboration through joint planning for the Malawi-Zambia Transfrontier Conservation Area

IFAW's work in the past, present and future came under the spotlight at a workshop held in [Zambia](#) from 21-23 March 2022.

"You can't plan for the future if you don't look back on the past," says Neil Greenwood, IFAW Regional Director for [Southern Africa](#).

IFAW has been active in the [Malawi-Zambia Transfrontier Conservation Area \(TFCA\)](#) for the past five years through its [Combating Wildlife Crime \(CWC\)](#) project. The project has successfully worked to train and equip rangers and stop poaching for bushmeat and profit across three national parks: [Lukusuzi and Luambe in Zambia](#) and [Kasungu in Malawi](#), plus communal areas in between.

Strategic planning discussions with IFAW,

the [Malawi Department of National Parks and Wildlife \(DNPW\)](#) and the [Zambia DNPW](#) reflected on the past five years of work in the landscape, reviewed current gaps and emerging needs and developed priority areas of collaboration for the upcoming five years.

Key participants included senior government officials and senior IFAW staff. Also participating were Dr. Dale Lewis, CEO and Founder of [Community Markets for Conservation \(COMACO\)](#), which partners with IFAW on a climate resilience project ([read more here](#)) and Dr Malidadi Langa, Chairman of the [Kasungu Wildlife Conservation for Community Development Association \(KAWICODDA\)](#). [KAWICODDA](#) and [COMACO](#) are local community organisations that effectively contribute to biodiversity/wildlife

conservation while enabling communities to construct viable livelihoods through benefits sharing and ecotourism enterprises.

Key outputs of the workshop will be the framework leading to an [IFAW Malawi-Zambia landscape strategic plan](#) that prioritises local approaches, and an implementation framework that outlines how IFAW, [DNPW Zambia](#), [DNPW Malawi](#) and local communities and stakeholders will collaborate to achieve future joint goals.

▲ Senior IFAW staff, representatives of the Governments of Zambia and Malawi, and other agencies met in Chipata, Zambia to review activities and make plans.



a new veterinary response vehicle for ZimParks

Urgent response is the key to saving sick or injured wildlife. The ultra-modern wildlife veterinary response vehicle—sponsored with the generosity of IFAW’s donors and handed over to ZimParks in April 2022—will allow responders to spring into action whenever needed.

The new vehicle will support the Wildlife Veterinary and Rescue Unit based in Zimbabwe’s Hwange National Park. It will provide in situ response to animals in distress, which may be treated and released back into the wild. If required, smaller wildlife can be transported to the Unit’s home base for care.

The conservation partnership between IFAW and ZimParks enhances wildlife protection and park management. The investments enable ranger training, provision of tools and equipment, better wildlife water supply, operational support (staff rations and fuel) and help for the veterinary unit and K9 dog unit.

▲ Jimmiel Mandima, IFAW VP Global Programs, presents the keys to the new veterinary response vehicle to ZimParks Director of Scientific Services, Professor Edson Gandiwa.



improving living conditions for community wildlife rangers

To improve the living conditions of the [Olgulului Community Wildlife Rangers \(OCWR\)](#), the [David Rio Foundation](#) has pledged significant support to IFAW to construct a new community ranger base in Ilmarba, within the [Kitenden Community Wildlife Conservancy](#). On 12 April 2022, David Scott Lowe, co-founder and CEO of the [David Rio Foundation](#), accompanied by Mboone Umbima, Vice President, Brand Strategy, broke ground at the proposed site. The site already houses 8 to 10 rangers in structures made from tin, which can get extremely cold at night and extremely hot during the day.

“We are happy to support the construction of this ranger base to ensure that you live well even as you work round the clock, day-in day-out to protect wildlife,” stated David. “This is just a small gesture to help you do your job better, more comfortably and efficiently. We want to support that. I commend you all for the brave work you do protecting wildlife and our environment. I

have tremendous appreciation, support and respect for you!” added David. Ensuring that rangers are adequately and comfortably housed ensures that animals and people thrive together and addresses a key component of ranger welfare needs. The Ilmarba ranger base is strategically located close to the [Kenya-Tanzania](#) border to dissuade bush meat poaching, which is rampant in the area due to the porous and remote border.

Maurice Nyaligu, Head of Programs, IFAW East Africa noted, “A ranger base is more than just the unit, and it includes radio communication, kitchen, ablution blocks, access roads and more, which will all be constructed through financial support offered by the [David Rio Foundation](#). We appreciate their support and congratulate them on the launch of their Foundation later this year which will focus on, amongst others, supporting wildlife conservation efforts. We look forward to a long-term partnership with them.”

“On behalf of Ilmarba OCWR base we thank you very much for supporting us and may God bless you,” stated Moses Sinkoi, the Sergeant at the base.

“It’s a beautiful spot! I appreciate you inviting us to your home away from home. My hope is that this is the first ceremony of many more to come where we can support you and the work you do— and look forward to coming back in October to officially open the newly constructed base,” concluded David.

▲ The David Rio Foundation’s David Scott Lowe (co-founder and CEO) and Mboone Umbima (Vice President, Brand Strategy) break ground on the site of the proposed community ranger base in Ilmarba, together with community wildlife rangers and Patrick Papatiti (Director Olgulului Community Wildlife Rangers).

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