

## Final Evaluation Report

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Your Details	
<b>Full Name</b>	Godfrey Mtare
<b>Project Title</b>	Transboundary Landscape Connectivity propels a robust wildlife economy: Modelling with African lion
<b>Application ID</b>	38193-1
<b>Date of this Report</b>	28 July 2023

**1. Indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.**

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
Predictively modelling patterns of landscape connectivity for African lion				Data collected on lion movement and land uses.
Examining and testing factors that influence lion movement				Data collected on factors that affect movement, i.e., fences, water, fire, roads, etc. (human footprint).
Economic significance of African lion				Preliminary interviews and discussions with few local community members and stakeholders to understand the prevailing scenario and obtain guidance for developing questionnaire and choice experiments.
Identifying innovative policies for securing Hwange-Kazuma-Chobe WDA of KAZA TFCA				With help of KAZA Secretariat, managed to identify quite a number of policies, strategic documents and guidelines at both KAZA TFCA level and SADC TFCAs level

**2. Describe the three most important outcomes of your project.**

The study is still underway and forms part of my DPhil, but below are some of the outcomes which are already showing:

- a).** The study has played a crucial role in understanding the role of connectivity within the Hwange-Kazuma-Chobe Wildlife Dispersal Area. The data collected and preliminary analysis are quite insightful.
- b).** Preliminary evidence for socio-economic and ecological benefits for local communities and lions, respectively, due to connectivity.
- c).** Identification of sound management policies that will facilitate free movement of African lions and also promoting seamless transboundary natural resources management.

**3. Explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.**

Some of the unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project were: i) receiving funds late from university (received whilst enroute to airport), ii) high costs of hiring

4X4 fieldwork vehicle, and iii) accessibility of other areas due to poor road network and rugged terrain. Nonetheless, I had to be innovative and focused due to limited time in logical planning. I also had channel some of the resources on accommodation, as well as co-financing in order to cater for the vehicle hire costs.

**4. Describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefited from the project.**

Local communities and other partners operating in this landscape were very interested and actively involved in the project. The meetings with them were quite productive and engaging.

All the research assistants and volunteer are from the local communities, thereby providing a source of employment and exposure.

**5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

There are plans to continue with this work since it is part of my DPhil study, particularly on economic valuation of African lion by local communities and also work on human-lion conflict and co-existence.

**6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?**

I plan to share results of my work using different platforms. First and foremost, I shall submit manuscripts to peer-reviewed journals. Also, I intend to go back to the local communities and stakeholders such as ZimParks, Forestry Commission, Hwange Rural District Council, etc., in the Hwange-Kazuma-Chobe WDA of KAZA TFCA to hold feedback meetings, thereby presenting my findings and receiving feedback. Further, I will utilise The Rufford Foundation and University of Oxford websites to share results of the work.

**7. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?**

The next important steps would be to disentangle the economic value of African lion and human-lion conflict mitigation. An understanding of local socio-economic factors in HKC WDA is envisioned to result in tangible conservation gains within the landscape. To explore this in great depth, I will utilise choice experiments for the economic valuation through eliciting local people's values for lions. Utilising a survey in the KAZA TFCA (Hwange-Kazuma-Chobe WDA), the study will explore local community's preferences for African lion based on identified factors/attributes such as number of lions, human-wildlife conflict and tourism revenue. This will build on the work already done in the fieldwork of April-May 2023; and thus, could be done in November-December 2023.

**8. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the Foundation receive any publicity during the course of your work?**

The Foundation received good publicity through explaining to local communities and stakeholders how the project is being made possible with generous support from The Rufford Foundation. However, I strongly feel that I should have made a provision in the budget for promotional materials and also being able to receive funds in time from the University in order to organize and prepare.

**9. Provide a full list of all the members of your team and their role in the project.**

**Godfrey Mtare** – Principal Investigator

**Prof Andrew Loveridge** – Supervisor

**Charles Jonga** – Mentoring and guidance

**Nobesuthu Ngwenya** – Research Assistant

**Liomba Jr Mathe** – Research Assistant

**Bloomer Mafuwa** – Research Volunteer

**10. Any other comments?**

The Rufford Foundation provided timely funding support in order to conduct my fieldwork since my university scholarship does not cover fieldwork. Thus, I am very much indebted and extremely grateful to The Rufford Foundation for this generous financial support. It is my profound wish to continue developing and building on this amazing relationship with The Rufford Foundation.

It is no doubt that findings of this study assist current conservation efforts, help to strengthen ecological integrity and prevent species loss (African lion). However, it will be of paramount importance to raise awareness of the benefits of increasing landscape connectivity and closing the gap between policy intent and what is happening on the ground. This will immensely assist in the design and implementation of policies aimed at improving connectivity, human-wildlife coexistence and tourism development.

Therefore, this study is critical and significant in setting KAZA TFCA on a new path to improve the prospects for people, lions and tourism development as it will demonstrate the importance of landscape connectivity in propelling a robust wildlife economy, whilst unpacking the true value of African lion, community engagement and the role all this can play in delivering sustainable socio-economic benefits.