

Final Evaluation Report

We ask all grant recipients to complete a project evaluation that helps us to assess the success of your project.

We understand that projects often do not follow the predicted course, but knowledge of your experiences is valuable to us and to others who may be undertaking similar work—remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

Please DO NOT fill in and submit this form until the project has been completed.

Please complete this evaluation report in English and refer to the reporting guidelines. We may ask for more information or a revised report if we have follow-up questions or feel information is missing. Note that edits may be made before posting on our website, so please provide the report in **MS Word format** (not PDF).

Your final budget should be submitted separately, using the Excel template sent with your offer letter.

Please email both the completed report and budget to jane@rufford.org.

| Your Details | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Full name | Zablon Fredrick Fataely |
| Project title | Enhancing Community-Based Conservation and Sustainable Livelihoods for the Barabaig Pastoralist Community in South-Eastern Ruaha National Park, Tanzania |
| Application ID | 46071-2 |
| Project start date | February 2025 |
| Project end date | February 2026 |
| Date of report submission | 30 th March 2026 |

Outcomes, indicators and activities

1. Indicate the level of achievement of the project’s original expected outcomes. Include a brief explanation of the activities conducted and your key findings, providing specific, measurable outputs, based on the indicators in your project proposal (e.g. number of camera traps deployed).

| Expected outcome (as per project proposal) | Level of achievement | Indicator (as per project proposal) | Summary of activities and outputs |
|---|----------------------|--|---|
| Enhanced Community Awareness and Participation in Elephant Conservation | Fully achieved | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Barabaig community members attending conservation workshops • Increase in community-led conservation initiatives • Decrease in elephant killings | <p>Monthly conservation workshops were held for the Barabaig community from March 2025 to February 2026. A total of 12 workshops were organized, engaging around 310 community members, with an average of 247 men and 63 women attending. The workshops focused on elephant conservation, the ecological significance of elephants, and the impacts of traditional elephant hunting.</p> <p>In addition, 5 Barabaig leaders and 10 youth who are traditionally famous and influential were trained as conservation ambassadors between February 2025 and March 2026. These ambassadors are now supporting conservation awareness activities in their villages and facilitating discussions on wildlife protection during community meetings. Increased participation in village discussions on wildlife conservation indicates a positive shift in community awareness and engagement.</p> |

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| <p>Development of Alternative Livelihoods</p> | <p>Partially achieved</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of alternative livelihood programs initiated • Participation rate in livelihood programs | <p>Alternative livelihood activities were introduced to reduce reliance on traditional elephant hunting and promote conservation-friendly income sources within the Barabaig community. Although the initial plan focused only on beekeeping, community consultations revealed varying livelihood preferences. As a result, the project adapted to include goat keeping as an additional livelihood option, increasing community participation.</p> <p>A total of 16 households from three villages participated in the livelihood program. Ten families selected beekeeping and received 30 Kenyan Top-Bar beehives (three hives per family), together with training on hive management, honey harvesting, processing, and marketing. The remaining six families selected goat keeping and each received two female goats as a starting asset. Since distribution, several goats have reproduced, and some households now own more than two goats, indicating early livelihood growth.</p> <p>During the initial reporting period, hive occupancy was low. We distributed the beehives shortly after the short rains, when flowering was limited and natural water sources were scarce. These conditions reduced bee swarming and colonisation activity. As a result, only 7 of 30 hives were occupied during that period. Conditions have improved significantly since the long rains ended in early April 2026. Vegetation has recovered and water is now available, increasing bee activity in the project area. As of this follow-up report, 16 hives have been successfully colonised. Several participating beekeepers expect to harvest</p> |
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| | | | <p>honey this coming dry season, depending on hive maturity and honey readiness. We will assess honey volume and quality during the first harvest and report final figures in the next reporting period. To improve occupancy rates, we held a planning meeting with the beekeepers. We agreed to relocate uncolonised hives during the harvest period to sites with better flowering and water access, where bee attraction is stronger.</p> <p>Moreover, ongoing livelihood and conservation training sessions were conducted for community members, covering sustainable income generation, conservation-friendly practices, and the importance of protecting elephants and other wildlife. The introduction of both beekeeping and goat keeping improved community engagement while providing practical livelihood alternatives that support household income and encourage coexistence with wildlife.</p> <p>Approximately 120 community members received livelihoods and conservation training. Beyond this core group, broader workshops and village meetings engaged an additional 190 participants, bringing our total outreach to about 310. These larger meetings focused on conservation awareness and community feedback towards the project implementation.</p> |
| Reduction in Traditional | Partially achieved | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease in reported elephant killings • Increase in | <p>We established a community-based elephant monitoring and surveillance initiative involving 8 trained Barabaig youth. Participants were trained to record elephant movements and</p> |

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| <p>Elephant Killings</p> | | <p>community surveillance activities related to elephant conservation</p> | <p>report killing incidents using basic GPS tools and field observations. We trained 8 Barabaig youth to carry out surveillance against an initial target of 30 to 50. The lower number reflects the challenges we encountered during implementation, including the fact that for many youth shifting from traditional elephant hunting practices to carrying out surveillance represents a major change. Some community members were initially reluctant to engage, as surveillance is sometimes perceived as conflicting with older traditions. This is gradually changing as trusted elders endorse the programme. Moreover, several interested youth asked about wages after seeing other conservation projects in the area that offer stipends to field staff, e.g., lion defenders for the carnivores project. Our current budget does not include payments for surveillance, so participation has been limited to those willing to volunteer their time.</p> <p>These trained community members now collaborate with conservation stakeholders, including MBOMIPA Wildlife Management Area authorities, to monitor elephant presence in village lands adjacent to the National Park. The surveillance activities have improved information sharing with authorities and promoted non-violent responses to elephant encounters. Community reports indicate a reduction in traditional elephant killings compared with previous years, although continued monitoring will be required to confirm long-term trends.</p> |
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2. If relevant, describe any other important or unexpected outcomes of your project. Feel free to include evidence (e.g., maps, tables and figures).

The project generated several important and somewhat unexpected results. One notable outcome was the increased willingness of community members, particularly women (3 individuals), to participate in livelihood activities. In a context where women are often excluded from such opportunities, the involvement of women in goat keeping marked a meaningful step toward more inclusive participation. The project also strengthened trust and collaboration between the Barabaig community and conservation stakeholders. Community members became more open to engaging with local authorities and NGOs, especially in reporting elephant movements and discussing conservation challenges. This improved relationship has created a stronger foundation for future conservation efforts in the area.

Another important outcome was the growing sense of ownership among trained Barabaig conservation ambassadors and community members involved in monitoring activities. Some participants began to take initiative in sharing conservation messages within their villages, beyond the formal project activities. Overall, these outcomes, although not fully anticipated at the beginning, indicate positive social and behavioural shifts that support the long-term sustainability of conservation efforts in the landscape.

Challenges

3. Explain any challenges that arose during the project (e.g., severe weather, broken equipment, delay in obtaining research permits, etc.). Were you able to overcome these? If so, please explain how.

Several challenges arose during the project's implementation. One major challenge was community preferences regarding alternative livelihoods. The project initially planned to introduce beekeeping as the sole livelihood intervention. However, during community consultation meetings, it became clear that not all households were interested in beekeeping, mainly due to concerns about the skills needed and the time required to manage hives. To address this, the project adjusted its approach by adding goat keeping as another livelihood option. This change allowed more families to participate and helped ensure the intervention better reflected community needs and capacities. Another challenge involved logistical issues related to transportation and access to remote villages during field activities, especially in rainy periods when roads became difficult to pass. These conditions sometimes caused delays in scheduled training sessions and the distribution of materials. The project team responded by rescheduling activities and working closely with village leaders to

reorganize meetings at times when community members could attend and travel conditions were better. A further challenge was maintaining consistent attendance during training sessions, as many Barabaig community members are pastoralists who often move with livestock in search of grazing areas. To overcome this, the project coordinated with village leaders to schedule activities during periods when most households were present in the villages.

4. Were there any changes to the project plan or any activities that you were unable to carry out or had to adapt? (If these changes impacted your budget, please include amounts in the budget section only.)

N/A

Community and other stakeholder involvement

5. Were any local community members or other stakeholders involved in the project (e.g., fishers assisting with data collection)? Please describe who and their involvement. Disaggregating gender data is important for highlighting diversity, equity and inclusion. When quantifying stakeholder engagement, please state how many women and men were involved.

Local community members were actively involved throughout the project, particularly from the Barabaig pastoralist communities in the three target villages. Their participation was central to both the conservation and livelihood components of the project. 310 community members (247 men and 63 women) participated in conservation awareness workshops and more than that during village meetings. These participants contributed to discussions, shared local knowledge, and supported the development of community-based conservation approaches. In addition, 5 local leaders and 10 youth who are traditionally famous and influential were trained as conservation ambassadors. They played a key role in mobilising community members, facilitating meetings, and promoting conservation messages within their villages.

For the livelihood component, 16 households were directly supported, involving both men and women. Among the beneficiaries, 10 households engaged in beekeeping, and 6 households kept goats. Notably, 3 of the goat-keeping beneficiaries were women, reflecting efforts to promote inclusive participation and support women's involvement in income-generating activities. According to the Barabaig community, the women in this society are undermined and do not have the opportunity to stand and receive the benefits of the livelihood program; therefore, for this project, we somehow managed to convince this community.

Moreover, 9 family members (predominantly men, due to the nature of the activity) were involved in community-based elephant monitoring and surveillance. They assisted in tracking elephant movements, reporting incidents, and collaborating with local conservation stakeholders. Other stakeholders, including local NGOs (such as JAMII NA UHIFADHI TANZANIA), MBOMIPA WMA officers, contributed to the project through supported training, coordination, and technical guidance.

6. Describe if local communities and other stakeholders have benefitted from the project. Did local communities present any resistance to the project at any stage?

Local communities and other stakeholders benefited from the project in several ways; the Barabaig Community gained knowledge and awareness on elephant conservation, which helped them better understand the ecological importance of elephants and the risks associated with traditional hunting practices. This was reflected in increased participation in community discussions and a more positive attitude towards conservation activities. Moreover, the introduction of alternative livelihoods, particularly beekeeping and goat keeping, provided direct economic benefits to participating households. These activities offered new income opportunities and reduced reliance on practices that negatively affect wildlife for the Barabaig community. Early results, such as the reproduction of goats and the establishment of beehives, suggest that these benefits are beginning to support household livelihoods. In addition, community members involved in monitoring activities gained practical skills in wildlife tracking and reporting, strengthening local capacity for conservation.

Stakeholders such as local NGOs, MBOMIPA WMA authorities, and district wildlife officers also benefited through improved collaboration and information sharing with the community. The project created a platform for joint efforts in monitoring elephants and responding to wildlife-related challenges.

At the beginning of the project, there was some resistance from a few community members, particularly regarding the adoption of beekeeping as the only livelihood option. Concerns were mainly related to limited experience and the perceived difficulty of managing beehives. However, this resistance was addressed through continuous engagement and by adapting the project to include goat keeping as an alternative. Once community preferences were considered, participation improved and acceptance of the project increased.

7. If you have observed any behaviour change by stakeholders as a result of your project, please explain the change and how you have measured this. We

understand that behaviour change can take a long time, but any progress towards this is useful to include.

There are clear signs of positive behaviour change among both Barabaig community members and other stakeholders due to the project, although these changes are still in progress. A noticeable shift in attitudes toward elephant conservation has occurred. Community members who previously viewed elephants mainly through cultural and economic lenses are now more engaged in discussions about their ecological importance and the need for protection. This is evident in increased participation in conservation meetings and workshops, as well as a greater willingness to report elephant movements and incidents instead of resorting to harmful practices. Another significant change is the growing acceptance of alternative livelihoods. Households that have taken up beekeeping and goat rearing are beginning to depend on these activities for income, reducing the cultural and economic pressures associated with traditional elephant hunting. The early success in goat reproduction and the establishment of beehives has boosted confidence in these alternatives. Additionally, behaviour change was observed among the trained community members involved in surveillance. These individuals are now actively monitoring elephant movements, sharing information with authorities, and promoting non-violent responses to human-elephant encounters. This reflects a shift from passive observation to active participation in conservation efforts. These changes were assessed through attendance records from workshops, involvement in livelihood activities, community feedback during meetings, and field observations, including reports from community-based monitoring groups. Moreover, informal discussions with village leaders and stakeholders indicated a gradual decline in support for traditional elephant killing practices. While long-term behaviour change requires sustained engagement, the project has established a strong foundation for better human-elephant coexistence and increased community responsibility in conservation.

Communications and results dissemination

8. Have you or will you share your findings with relevant stakeholders? Please fill in the table below to explain who with and how.

| Type of stakeholder | Name of stakeholder (e.g. specific government entity or department) | What you have or will share (e.g. data, key results, recommendations) | How you have or will share this (e.g. reports, workshops, meetings) |
|-------------------------|---|--|--|
| Local community members | Barabaig community | Key findings on elephant conservation, human-elephant coexistence, and | Community meetings, village workshops, and outreach sessions are integrated into |

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| | | progress/results from livelihood activities (beekeeping and goat keeping), including practical lessons learned | ongoing conservation education activities |
| Local authority | MBOMIPA Wildlife Management Area (WMA) authorities | Trends in reported elephant killings, community surveillance outcomes, and recommendations for strengthening community-based conservation | Technical meetings, progress reports, and direct coordination during field activities and monitoring exercises |
| Other | JAMII NA UHIFADHI TANZANIA (JUT), Tanzania Research and Conservation Organization (TRCO), and Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) | Project results, livelihood performance data, conservation outcomes, and lessons for scaling community-based conservation approaches | Reports, collaboration in data analysis, knowledge exchange, and future publications |

9. Do you plan to share your data or findings with the relevant IUCN Species Survival Commission Specialist Group? If so, which group?

Yes, I plan to share the findings from this project with the relevant IUCN Species Survival Commission Specialist Group, particularly the African Elephant Specialist Group. The project generated useful insights on community-based approaches to reducing traditional elephant killings and promoting human-elephant coexistence through alternative livelihoods. Sharing these findings will contribute to broader conservation knowledge, especially on integrating local cultural practices and livelihood strategies into elephant conservation efforts.

10. Do you plan to submit a manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal? If you have already published a paper/s relating to this or a previous Rufford Small Grant, please include the DOI link here.

Yes, I plan to develop a manuscript based on the findings from this project and submit it to a peer-reviewed journal. The paper will focus on community-based conservation approaches, the role of alternative livelihoods in reducing traditional elephant hunting, and the contribution of local engagement to improving human–elephant coexistence. However, at this stage the manuscript is still in preparation, and no publication has yet been completed from this project. Moreover, I intend to build on

both this work and findings from the previous Rufford Small Grant to produce a publishable study that can contribute to broader conservation knowledge and practice.

11. Have you or do you plan to present your project findings at any conferences?

I have previously shared my other work at the TAWIRI conference held in December 2025, Arusha, Tanzania, where I discussed insights from my broader experience in Human-Elephant Conflict in the Ruaha landscape. Looking ahead, I plan to present the findings from this Rufford-supported project at the next TAWIRI conference, scheduled for December 2027. This will be an opportunity to showcase project results, lessons learned, and practical methods for integrating alternative livelihoods with elephant conservation, while also engaging with researchers and practitioners working in similar areas.

12. Did you develop any outreach materials, and have you shared your project on social media, websites or through other media? Please fill in the table below and, where possible, provide links or images.

| Item | Type of material | Target audience | Level of dissemination | Link (if relevant) |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|---|---|---|
| Social media post – project updates | Social media post | Local community, conservation practitioners, and the general public | 1000+ followers | instagram.com/p/DUJRRxIDR2h/?img_index=1 instagram.com/p/D0EKV-0CKUw/?img_index=2 youtube.com/watch?v=PLI1cD8MadI |
| Community meeting and workshop | Social media post | Barabaig community members, local leaders | Reaching about 310 participants | |
| Livelihoods training sessions | Social media post | Selected Barabaig beneficiary households and interested community members | Reached 16 households directly and additional indirect participants during demonstrations | facebook.com/photo?fbid=2457697794667896&set=pcb.2457718874665788 |

Going forward

13. Are there any plans to continue this work? Outline the important next steps.

Yes, I plan to continue this work beyond the current project. The next phase will focus on strengthening and expanding the activities that have already shown positive results. Priority will be given to scaling up alternative livelihood programs, particularly beekeeping and goat keeping, so that more households can benefit. This will include providing additional training to those households we weren't able to provide to, improving market access for honey and livestock products, and supporting existing beneficiaries to sustain and grow their activities. The project will also continue to strengthen community-based elephant monitoring by building the capacity of local "elephant guardians," improving data collection, and enhancing collaboration with conservation stakeholders such as MBOMIPA WMA and district wildlife authorities. Another important step is to deepen community engagement and awareness, especially among youth, by continuing conservation education and supporting trained ambassadors to lead local initiatives. In addition, efforts will be made to secure further funding and partnerships to sustain and expand the project. This includes exploring opportunities for integrating eco-tourism and other conservation-friendly income sources that can provide long-term benefits to the community.

14. Do you intend to apply for another Rufford Small Grant or funding from another donor?

Yes, I am considering applying for additional funding from the Rufford Small Grant (**booster grant**) to continue and expand this work. In the meantime, I have a pending application at the Conservation Leadership Program and am waiting to hear from them in a couple of weeks. Moreover, I am considering applying for another conservation Grant and seeking support from other donors aligned with community-based conservation and sustainable livelihood initiatives. This will help sustain the momentum already created and allow for a more lasting impact in improving human–elephant coexistence in the project area.

Personal capacity and professional development

15. Has the project helped you personally or in your career?

a) **Experience** (e.g., time in the field, stakeholder engagement):

This project significantly strengthened my field experience within the Ruaha landscape, which is also the focus of my MSc dissertation. Although the research

topics differ slightly, both centre on elephant conservation and human-Elephant Conflicts. This allows me to build a deeper and more practical understanding of the human-elephant coexistence I am studying in the landscape. Moreover, through regular fieldwork, I engaged closely with the Barabaig community, local leaders, and conservation stakeholders such as MBOMIPA and district wildlife officers. This improved my ability to work in culturally sensitive contexts, facilitate community discussions, and translate conservation concepts into locally relevant approaches.

Furthermore, my role in supporting project coordination provided valuable exposure to organisational responsibilities at Wildlife Connection (NGO). While working with Wildlife Connection, I also contributed to guiding field activities in support of the organisation's broader conservation goals, strengthening my experience in project implementation and stakeholder collaboration.

b) **Skills** (e.g., technical skills, leadership skills, fundraising, proposal and report writing):

The project helped me develop a broad set of practical and professional skills. Technically, I gained hands-on experience in community-based data collection and managing conservation interventions such as livelihood programs. I also strengthened my leadership and coordination skills by organising workshops, supervising community activities, and working with local conservation ambassadors. These responsibilities improved my ability to plan, communicate clearly, and manage field teams effectively.

Importantly, the project enhanced my fundraising and proposal development skills. Building on this experience, I have started applying for additional conservation funding, including from programmes such as the Conservation Leadership Programme (CLP), to expand and sustain the project. My report writing skills have also improved through preparing donor reports and documenting project outcomes in a structured and evidence-based manner. Through this experience and skills in reporting the project outcomes and documenting the expenditure, I have been assigned a task to prepare an interim report for donor funds of three years from the International Elephants Foundation to the Wildlife Connection

c) **Qualifications** (academic or other):

The project has directly supported my academic development, particularly my MSc in Ecosystem Science and Management at Sokoine University of Agriculture. Working in the same landscape as my dissertation research allowed me to integrate practical field experience with academic work, strengthening both the quality and relevance

of my study. Moreover, beyond formal qualifications, the project has contributed to my professional growth as a conservation practitioner. It has positioned me to pursue further research, publish scientific findings, and continue building a career in community-based wildlife conservation, with a strong focus on elephant conservation.

Other

16. Which of the Global Biodiversity Framework [2030 Targets](#) does your project address? List as many as applicable (e.g. Targets 2 and 4).

Targets 4, 9, 14, 20, 21, 22 and 23

17. Did you use the [Conservation Evidence](#) website when planning your project, and was this helpful? If your project provides useful information about what worked or did not work, please consider sharing it through Conservation Evidence.

Yes, the Conservation Evidence website was consulted during the early stages of project planning, especially to review approaches to community-based conservation and alternative livelihoods aimed at reducing human-wildlife conflict. The platform offered valuable examples of interventions tested in similar contexts, which helped shape aspects of the project design. While not all strategies could be directly applied due to the specific cultural and ecological context of the Barabaig community, the resource contributed to a more informed and evidence-based approach. Moreover, I plan to share the findings through Conservation Evidence to help expand the broader knowledge base on what works in similar settings.

18. Did The Rufford Foundation receive any publicity during your project (such as including the Foundation logo on outreach materials)? If yes, please describe how.

Yes. The project provided several forms of visibility for The Rufford Foundation across both community-level activities and public communication channels. The Foundation's support was clearly acknowledged during all conservation workshops, community meetings, and livelihood training sessions. During the engagements, participants were informed that the project was funded by The Rufford Foundation, and some of the materials, including beehives for livelihood, were put stickers with the Rufford logo, which helped build recognition and appreciation among the Barabaig community and local stakeholders.

The Rufford Foundation's logo was included on selected outreach and training materials used during workshops and field activities, ensuring that participants were directly associated with the project's activities with Rufford's support. The project was also shared through social media platforms, particularly Facebook and Instagram and YouTube www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLI1cD8MadI, where updates on conservation activities, livelihood initiatives, and community engagement were posted. These posts reached a wider audience (1000+ followers) beyond the immediate project area and explicitly acknowledged The Rufford Foundation as the funding partner. This combination of direct community engagement, branded materials, and online communication ensured that The Rufford Foundation received consistent and meaningful visibility throughout the implementation of the project.

19. Provide a list of all the members of your team and briefly describe their roles in the project.

Zablon Fredrick Fataely (Project Leader): Led the overall coordination and implementation of the project. Responsibilities included planning activities, engaging stakeholders, supervising fieldwork, and ensuring that project objectives were achieved. He also oversaw reporting and communication with the donor.

Dr. Rose Kicheleri (Project Supervisor): Provided technical and academic guidance throughout the project. Her role focused on advising on community-based conservation approaches, strengthening the methodological aspects of the project, and supporting the dissemination of findings.

Fenrick Msigwa (Project Coordinator): Managed day-to-day field operations, including organising workshops, coordinating logistics, and supporting community engagement activities. He played a key role in ensuring the smooth implementation of project activities at the local level.

Hillary Mrosso (Field Support – acting in a coordination role): Joined the team to support field coordination tasks alongside Fenrick Msigwa. He assisted in organising community activities, facilitating communication with stakeholders, and supporting monitoring and training sessions.

Darem Philipo (Local Barabaig Representative): Served as a key link between the project and the Barabaig community. He supported the mobilisation of community members, facilitated local communication, and ensured that project activities were culturally appropriate and well understood within the community.