

## Final Evaluation Report

---

Your Details	
Full Name	LUCIA ROMWARD REVELIANI
Project Title	Initiatives to Conserve the White-backed Vulture, a case of Maswa Game Reserve – Tanzania
Application ID	41744-1
Date of this Report	26.04.2025

**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
To assess White – backed Vultures habitat Selection in Maswa Game Reserve.		V		Low Vultures detection during October Survey limited the assessment of White – backed Vulture's habitat Selection in that season as well as comparing seasonal variability.
To asses to attitude of community adjacent Maswa Game Reserve toward Vultures			V	The objective was fully achieved; however, I plan to cover large sample in the next project so as to reach wide community.
To raise community awareness on Vultures.			V	The objective was fully achieved, however few schools and villages were covered due to limited resource. I plan to cover more villages and schools in next projects.

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

**a).** Evidence-Based Identification of Key Habitat for White-backed Vultures: The project successfully identified wooded grasslands within Maswa Game Reserve as the preferred habitat for White-backed Vultures, based on statistically significant observational data. This outcome offers a scientifically grounded basis for prioritizing these habitats in future conservation and land-use planning efforts. The findings emphasize the ecological importance of wooded grasslands for supporting vulture foraging and roosting activities.

**b).** Measurable Improvement in Community Attitudes Toward Vulture Conservation: Through structured education campaigns and focused group discussions, the project achieved a significant positive shift in local community perceptions. Post-intervention surveys indicated that over 90% of participants expressed support for vulture conservation, compared to a more moderate awareness level at baseline. This outcome demonstrates the critical role of community engagement in conservation success and lays the groundwork for future community-driven conservation initiatives.

**c).** Establishment of a Robust Baseline for Vulture Population Monitoring: The ecological surveys conducted during the project generated baseline data on vulture's abundance, seasonal variation, and habitat usage. These data are essential for informing long-term monitoring programs and evaluating population trends over time. The establishment of such a baseline represents an essential step toward evidence-based conservation planning and adaptive management of vulture's populations within the Serengeti-Mara ecosystem.

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

a) Change of Study Area: The initial plan was to conduct research in Loliondo Game Controlled Area. However, due to the Tanzania Wildlife Research Authority (TAWIRI) ceasing research activities in the mentioned area, a new study site had to be identified. Maswa Game Reserve was selected because of its ecological relevance to the original site. This adjustment required a complete revision of the research proposal, particularly the research design.

b) Challenges in Acquiring Field Vehicles: Obtaining a reliable field vehicle proved to be a major challenge. A bajaji (small vehicle with three tires) was used for community-level activities, and a hired vehicle was secured for limited days for ecological surveys. This constraint reduced the number of field days, as activities had to align with the vehicle owner's availability.

c) Low Detection of Vultures: The ecological survey conducted in October 2024 recorded a low number of vulture sightings. This challenge limited the ability to assess seasonal habitat selection, as sufficient data could not be gathered for comparison.

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

Local communities participated through household surveys, Focused Group Discussions, and School-Based Training Sessions. These engagements improved understanding of the ecological role of vultures and raised awareness about threats facing Vultures, especially poisoning. Positive changes in community attitudes were observed, with increased willingness to support vulture conservation. Educational materials and interactive sessions benefited both students and locals, encouraging greater involvement in environmental conservation.

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

There are progressive plans to be implemented on vulture conservation efforts by enhancing community engagement and strengthening collaborations with stakeholders. Future initiatives will focus on dispelling harmful myths that contribute to vulture poisoning and hunting in order to promote sustainable coexistence between people and wildlife.

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

Research findings will be disseminated through the following channels:

- Submission of findings to the management of Maswa Game Reserve for use in conservation planning.

- Publication on the Women in Conservation Organization (WICO) website and Instagram page, along with personal social media accounts.
- Presentation at the 15th Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI) Conference in December 2025.

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

To build on the progress made, the following actions are planned:

- Community Engagement: Establish local conservation champions to raise awareness, report threats, and support vulture conservation efforts.
- Education: Launch school-based programs to educate students on the ecological importance of vultures and inspire future conservational leaders.
- Massive awareness Campaigns: promoting campaigns that will address harmful myths and reduce vulture poisoning through radio, posters, and social media.
- Ongoing Monitoring: Continuing with ecological surveys and train local rangers to monitor vulture populations and habitat use.

## **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 Rufford Foundation logo was prominently displayed on all T-shirts distributed to research team members, pupils, and community participants. This visibility contributed to public awareness of the Foundation's support throughout the course of the project.

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

- Lucia Reveliani – Team leader.
- Sarah Mshanga – Research Assistant.
- Leena Lulandala – Research Assistant.
- Papenye Lekoite - Ranger
- Mussa Mtani – Ranger
- Mfaume Mfaume – Ranger
- Joel Mkasanga - Ranger
- Malamala Masaka - Driver
- Alphonse Msingwa: Mentor/Advisor.

## **10. Any other comments?**

The successful implementation of this project underscores the critical role that The Rufford Foundation plays in empowering early-career conservationists and advancing biodiversity conservation. The support received enabled to bridge scientific research with community-driven conservation, resulting in both ecological insights and improved local stewardship. Importantly, the project has sparked a growing awareness and commitment among stakeholders toward the conservation of critically endangered vultures. I personally consider this achievement as a testament to Rufford's strategic investment in grassroots conservation, and I am inspired to continue building upon this with lasting impact.