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U.S. DEPARTMENT  
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DOI-ITAP

EAST AFRICA

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## Partnership to End Wildlife Trafficking



### USAID/DOI-ITAP Partnership in East Africa

Wildlife crime threatens the security, economy, and biodiversity of East Africa. International networks for the poaching, transit, and sale of illegal wildlife products target wildlife populations across borders, destabilizing security efforts and creating a complex problem that transcends national boundaries. To protect the region's wildlife in line with the U.S. National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking, USAID Missions in Africa—currently Tanzania, Kenya and East Africa, Uganda, and Zambia—have created the Partnership to End Wildlife Trafficking with the U.S. Department of the Interior's International Technical Assistance Program (DOI-ITAP). This agreement leverages DOI expertise in support of USAID's work in the region to counter widespread, pervasive, and well-organized wildlife trafficking activities. The partnership provides an opportunity for collaboration between the U.S. Government, governments of range states, the private sector, international organizations, and civil society. To date, work has included conducting assessments, delivering training courses, supplying data and maps to implementers, and creating financial and technical partnerships with local organizations.

For more details on the partnership, [click here](#).

## Leveraging DOI Expertise



### **Strengthening Partnerships with the Northern Rangelands Trust**

The USAID supported Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) program in Kenya, partners with communities to build peace and improve livelihoods through conservation. Kenya is home to incredible landscapes where iconic species such as elephants, zebras, and lions move freely through vast expanses of rural lands. The Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) has been helping local communities form conservancies to protect and manage the natural resources on their lands that are critical to sustaining livelihoods. NRT supports 35 community-led conservancies throughout Kenya. In January 2016, then-Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell signed a memorandum of understanding with NRT to formalize DOI's commitment to providing technical assistance aimed at enhancing the successes of NRT's natural resource management and community partnerships. This year, DOI sent a team of five specialists from the National Park Service, Fish & Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management to work with NRT to determine how DOI can assist in the areas of rangeland management, research and monitoring, modeling, geographic information systems, security/law enforcement, and tourism development. A multi-year workplan has been developed highlighting agreed areas for technical support.



## Crime Scene Investigation Training in Uganda, Malawi, and Tanzania

Through DOI-ITAP, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service experts carried out Crime Scene Investigation training in Tanzania, Malawi, and Uganda. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service trainers with expertise in criminal investigation, forensic science, concealment methods, and digital evidence recovery instructed, demonstrated, and evaluated hands-on crime scene investigation techniques with government and NGO partners. The course included furnishing ten evidence collection kits in each country, which were then used in training and continue to be used in the field by wildlife law enforcement agencies. The course taught proper collection, storage, and handling of evidence and information to 55 trainees, and strengthened the capacity of officials to process crime scenes and maintain evidence for its use in court.

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The **Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS)** has an existing agreement with USAID and utilizes both financial and technical assistance under the inter-agency agreement to enhance efforts to protect wildlife. With input and assistance from USAID and DOI-ITAP, KWS is in the process of developing a new strategic plan to fulfill its mandate under the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act of 2013. The plan will address major challenges arising from accelerated threats to wildlife from poaching and wildlife crime, human encroachment from urbanization and infrastructure projects in protected areas, climate change impacts, and increased human-wildlife conflict.

DOI-ITAP is engaging the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Forensics Laboratory to advance the capacity at the KWS Forensic and Genetic Laboratory. Standard Operating Procedures for the lab have been developed according to international standards, and technical assistance on the ground in Nairobi will begin in early 2018.



In cooperation with Kenya's Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources and with technical and financial assistance from DOI-ITAP, the **African Conservation Centre** is helping to formulate the National Wildlife Conservation Strategy. The strategy will support a framework for inclusive wildlife conservation and improve land use planning to create space for wildlife.



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## Advancing Priorities at the USAID/Kenya and East Africa Mission

With the increased urgency to address wildlife crime, USAID Missions have needed additional technical support. DOI-ITAP stationed a Project Manager in the USAID/Kenya and East Africa

Environment Office to work with USAID on project (PAD) development and the identification of natural resource conservation challenges and strategies for the region. In late 2016, ITAP deployed additional staff and an American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Policy Fellow to Nairobi to assist with project design. In 2017, two more ITAP staff were stationed in Nairobi to monitor implementation of ITAP projects and USAID PEER Grants, and assist in the planning and execution of high-level visits to Kenya by U.S. government personnel.

## Advancing African Leadership and Learning Internationally

USAID and DOI supported the attendance of government and civil society representatives at a number of significant international fora to support African leadership and learning. DOI has facilitated participation for African leaders at the following events:

- **World Ranger Congress in Colorado**, where ten Kenya Wildlife Service rangers observed community engagement and the effective, cost-saving deployment of volunteers in protected areas in the United States.
- **IUCN World Conservation Congress**, at which five government representatives from Uganda, Rwanda, and Kenya joined discussions with African IUCN member delegations, participated in a number of organized events showcasing successful African conservation stories, and offered opportunities for the delegates to address wildlife trafficking on a global level.
- **CITES Conference of Parties (CoP)**, where representatives from the non-governmental organization, Conservation Alliance of Kenya, participated in drafting texts under various working groups at the CoP and chaired a side event that showcased the success of Kenya's conservancy model. This was the first time an umbrella NGO was accredited to join the Government of Kenya at the CITES CoP. The CoP acknowledged for the first time the role of communities, and formed a community sub-committee as a result of the meeting.

## Strategic Partnerships

Wildlife trafficking and anti-poaching must be addressed with the help of local organizations and institutions if it is to be responsive and effective. These strategic partnerships were identified by USAID Missions in Africa as critical in accelerating and building on priorities of the U.S. Government at Post. Through DOI-ITAP, USAID Missions in Africa committed nearly 1.5 million dollars to support rapid mobilization of NGOs for innovative responses to wildlife poaching and trafficking.



NTV Wild is a public-private partnership among USAID, **WildlifeDirect**, Nation Media Group, the Kenya Wildlife Service and National Geographic that uses traditional television and social media to transform public attitudes towards wildlife conservation. This weekly televised program reaches two million households, is the first such program of its kind in Kenya, and is building strong public awareness of environmental and conservation issues with the goal of achieving a nationally engaged conservation constituency.

To help project designers and implementers understand the motivations and assumptions of local communities with regard to wildlife crime, **IUCN** is examining and piloting methods of effective engagement. Engaging communities as partners is a critical component in combating wildlife crime, but it is difficult to operationalize in a meaningful and sustainable way. The resultant framework for engagement with local communities will strengthen existing anti-wildlife crime strategies and use lessons learned to improve policy and practice in Kenya and across the region.



The **Natural Resources Conservation Network** is critical to the investigation and prosecution of wildlife crimes in Uganda. To provide better resources to prosecutors and the judiciary, NRCN is developing tailored resources and providing training for Ugandan prosecutors, magistrates, and judges with funding from USAID/Uganda.

In partnership with Save the Elephants and the Wildlife Conservation Network, the **Elephant Crisis Fund** (ECF) provided emergency funding to partners working in the areas of anti-poaching, anti-trafficking and demand reduction. ECF has the speed and efficiency to react to on-the-ground threats to vulnerable populations of elephants, providing for rapid responses and collaboration among organizations. To date with USAID funds, ECF has provided Big Life Foundation support for aerial patrols to protect the elephants traveling within the Amboseli and Tsavo ecosystems.



Support to the **Laikipia Wildlife Forum** has improved the skills of rhino scouts, anti-poaching efforts, and intelligence gathering through enhanced community engagement at private rhino conservancies in the region. In 2017, 53 rangers received training to improve the management of Borana, Ol Jogi, and Ol Pejeta conservancies. This is a considerable help to the rangers of these rhino conservancies, particularly during a period of heightened insecurity, livestock theft, and conflict by armed pastoralists in Laikipia.

For additional information about these programs, contact [Juniper Neill](#) or [Mikala Lauridsen](#) in USAID/Kenya & East Africa's Environment Office. For background on DOI-ITAP and its work around the world, contact [Colleen Castle](#) or [Barbara Pitkin](#).