Combating Wildlife Trafficking Learning Group:
What We Have Learned

Guiding Question 1: What Does Effective Demand Reduction Look Like?

1.1 What are the best metrics and methodologies for monitoring demand reduction?

We learned that metrics should be tailored to the target audience and the context. For this reason, common metrics used in USAID CWT activities vary. Examples include:

- Change in use or intent to use wildlife or products
- Change in perception of social acceptability of use of wildlife or products
- Recall of social marketing campaign
- Pledges to stop using a certain species of wildlife or product

1.2 Are certain messaging strategies more effective than others?

We learned that understanding audiences and their motivations is essential.

- It's important to pick the right messenger—for example, social media influencers can greatly expand campaign reach.
- Consider messaging that relies on spiritual beliefs or functional messaging for audiences that may readily consider wildlife product alternatives.

We learned that for successful demand reduction, it's important to have a long-term strategy. Activities should build local capacity and ownership to increase campaign longevity.[1]

We found that building strategies for creative social marketing—such as using different media types, aiming for viral advertising, and engaging the right influencers—may reach new consumers.[2,3,4]

We were reminded that testing and adapting messaging prior to campaign rollout improves effectiveness and reduces risk.[2,3,5]

USEFUL DEMAND REDUCTION RESOURCES

- Social and Behavior Change Communication Guidebook
- Combating Wildlife Trafficking Learning Exchange: Meeting Report
- Combating Wildlife Trafficking Learning Exchange: Demand Reduction Posters
- Webinar: CWT Digital Deterrence Campaign In Thailand
- Webinar: Demand Reduction and COVID-19 Response
- Webinar: Wildlife Friendly Enterprise Network Webinar
- Webinar: Reducing Consumer Demand for Elephant Ivory and Tiger Parts and Products

References 1. Webinar: Law Enforcement and Prosecution of Wildlife Crime in Mozambique Presentation
2. Combating Wildlife Trafficking Learning Exchange: Demand Reduction Posters
3. Webinar: Reducing Consumer Demand for Elephant Ivory and Tiger Parts Land Products
4. Combating Wildlife Trafficking Learning Exchange: Meeting Report
5. Webinar: CWT Digital Deterrence Campaign in Thailand

Guiding Question 2: What are the Characteristics of Effective Law Enforcement Capacity Building?

2.1 How do institutional arrangements impact uptake of skills and knowledge?

We learned that networking and training help law enforcement officers learn from each other and build relationships and trust. Outside experts can further increase benefits; for example, embedded legal support in parks may give frontline staff and park officials the legal aid they need and boost morale.[6,7,8,9,10,11]

We noted that creating pride and identity for the institution encourages cohesion. For example, the logo for Namibia's Conservancy Rhino Ranger Incentive Program depicts a rhino inside a human eye with the slogan "Keeping an Eye on Our Rhino."[12] This messaging reinforces local ownership and generates pride.

We learned that clearly assigned roles (for individuals, institutions, or dedicated units) build ownership and accountability.[10,13,14]

We were reminded that an institutional culture that celebrates champions and offers incentives can encourage dedication to difficult jobs and goals.

Wildlife heroes can catalyze change, potentially overcoming complicated bureaucracy, weak commitment, and corruption.[15] Long-term, short-term, monetary, and non-monetary incentives may encourage improved performance of frontline staff.[8,12,16]

2.2 What are good examples of systems that improve CWT enforcement?

We learned that effective CWT enforcement systems integrate the entire law enforcement chain. A framework to support sharing intelligence and resources, from enforcement through prosecution, improves efforts. For example, Kenya's Eyes in the Courtroom program found that collaboration among all agencies handling wildlife crime is critical to success.[7]

We found that effective law enforcement systems may work across national borders.

- USAID's Supporting the Policy Environment for Economic Development (SPEED+) activity found that legal bilateral agreements and milestone-based government-to-government agreements between countries can help tackle wildlife crime, build trust, and share intelligence.[11]

- Alternatively, both SPEED+ and the FISH-i activity in East Africa found that, when appropriate, informal transboundary cooperation can facilitate information exchange and cooperation.[9,11]

Above all, systems in which people understand their roles and trust each other are most effective. Several USAID CWT activities note the importance of trust, from small training groups to intelligence-sharing across the enforcement chain to cross-governmental cooperation.[7,11,16]
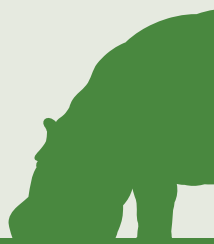
2.3 What factors enable cooperation among authorities in wildlife enforcement networks (WENs)?

We learned that these key factors enable cooperation in WENs:

Political will and government commitment

- Engaging leaders in trainings, getting buy-in from reforming agencies, and encouraging community pride in nature can build political will.[6,7,11,17]
- Government commitment may result in long-term funding, rather than reliance on stop-gap measures.[18]

Cultures of collaboration, learning, and communication

- WENs must share intelligence and coordinate activities to operate effectively; working together repeatedly and over time can help build trust. Virtual communication channels can also bring together regional players in real time at low cost, building transparency and trust.[6,9,11,19]

Technology and intelligence data-sharing across institutions

- For example, the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) program in Nepal and USAID's PREPARED activity in East Africa found that high-quality intelligence is often scarce but can strategically inform operations.[14,19] Technology to share this data should be appropriate for the user, institutionalized, and supported by proper training in collection and handling.

2.4 What are successful examples of partnerships used to deliver competency building activities?

In Nepal, ZSL built capacity through diverse partnerships and new skills and technologies. ZSL worked closely with Nepal's Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation to identify gaps in wildlife law enforcement capacity. With a range of partners—such as the army, local and national governments, NGOs, and communities—these capacity building efforts enabled knowledge exchange between groups, created opportunities to improve coordination, and enabled active partner participation in program design and implementation.

Mesa Técnica in Guatemala found that cross-border civil society partnerships strengthened enforcement, facilitated information exchange, and promoted collaboration on CWT. Through Mesa Técnica, three civil society organizations worked together to improve wildlife trafficking enforcement, including coordinating with government and civil society partner institutions and delivering specialized training workshops. In Mesa Técnica's first two years, the consortium's investigations led to three court cases related to scarlet macaw trafficking offenses, all of which were successfully convicted.

By partnering with the judiciary, the Eyes in the Courtroom activity advanced information uptake and ownership of wildlife crime analysis. Eyes in the Courtroom was a public-private partnership between WildlifeDirect and the Judiciary of Kenya that analyzed outcomes of Kenyan wildlife crime trials to assist policymakers in identifying priority areas for capacity building. As a result, Kenya's wildlife crime judicial reform has been a notable success, resulting in a new law with the harshest penalties in the world for wildlife trafficking, the development of new resources on wildlife law, and the establishment of a wildlife prosecution unit that now handles 93 percent of wildlife prosecutions.

2.5 Which competency-building methods and content work best, especially for maintaining skills and retaining staff?

For law enforcement capacity building, we learned that:

The best methods and content are tailored to the local context. [7,16]

- Activities can use capacity assessments to identify needs, adapt training to the local context, and determine focused goals. Consider key competencies and capacity gaps when conducting a capacity assessment. [11]

- In particular, new technologies must be appropriate for the context, resource availability, and abilities of those that will use it. [6,7,10]

Continuous professional development is key to retaining knowledge and advancing staff capacity. [6,7]

- Indonesia's Wildlife Crime Unit suggests each trainee undergo four training components: initial training, first refresher, second refresher, and evaluation to complete the process. [20]

- New technologies especially need to be supported by long-term training and integrated into existing structures. [6,7,10]

On-the-ground support and mentoring can improve success and retention.

- Building strong, ongoing relationships with trainers and key government actors may help to expand impact. Local trainings of trainers can also improve staff retention. [11,21]

Good engagement often moves beyond traditional approaches.

- Expand training to promote the values and attitudes needed for good enforcement practice. For example, training in how law enforcement personnel should engage with community members can help increase effectiveness. [18]

- Outside of classrooms, interactive, hands-on training may help engage staff. [11,16] See How Does Developing Enforcement Capacity Reduce Wildlife Crime? for an overview of different approaches.
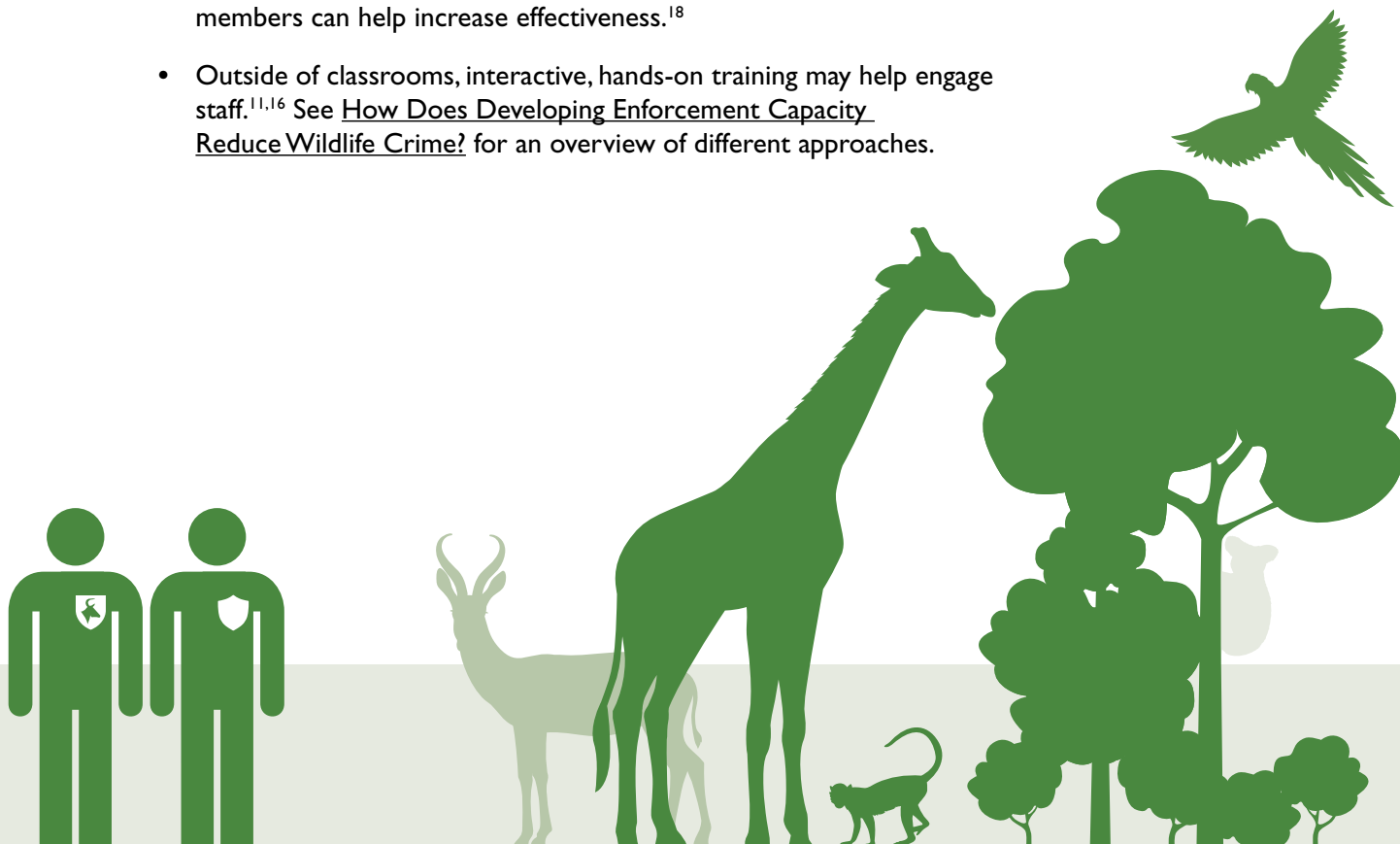
USEFUL DEMAND REDUCTION RESOURCES

- How Does Developing Enforcement Capacity Reduce Wildlife Crime?
- Combating Wildlife Trafficking Learning Exchange: Meeting Report
- CWT Case Study – Synthesis of Lessons
  - Conservancy Rhino Ranger Incentive Program in Namibia
  - Eyes in the Courtroom in Kenya
  - FISH-i in East Africa
  - Tiger Protection & Conservation Units in Kerinci-Seblat National Park, Indonesia
  - Mesa Técnica in Guatemala
  - National and Transnational Serious Crimes Investigative Unit in Tanzania
  - Space for Giants in Kenya
  - tenBoma in Kenya
  - USAID PREPARED Project in East Africa
  - Wildlife Crimes Unit in Indonesia
  - Wildlife Trust of India
  - Zoological Society of London in Nepal
- Webinar: Law Enforcement and Prosecution of Wildlife Crime in Mozambique

References
6. Case Study: National and Transnational Serious Crimes Investigative Unit in Tanzania
7. Case Study: Eyes in the Courtroom in Kenya
8. Case Study: Wildlife Trust of India
9. Case Study: FISH-i in East Africa
10. Case Study: tenBoma in Kenya
11. Law Enforcement and Prosecution of Wildlife Crime in Mozambique Presentation
12. Case Study: Conservancy Rhino Ranger Incentive Program in Namibia
13. Case Study: Tiger Protection & Conservation Units in Kerinci-Seblat National Park, Indonesia
14. Case Study: Zoological Society of London in Nepal
15. Case Study: Wildlife Crimes Unit in Indonesia
16. How Does Developing Enforcement Capacity Reduce Wildlife Crime?
17. Combating Wildlife Trafficking Learning Exchange: Meeting Report
18. Case Study: Mesa Técnica in Guatemala
19. Case Study: USAID PREPARED Project in East Africa

3.1 When are certain community incentive structures more important, relative to others, to engage local communities in CWT?

We found that the following structures are important for engaging local communities:

When local ownership and leadership is ensured: This takes patience and persistence, but when communities select their own rangers who are employed by and accountable to the community, this connection empowers community members and builds ownership.[12]

When communities directly benefit from conservation and wildlife management activities: Direct benefits incentivize communities to engage in anti-poaching activities. Benefits can go beyond money to include food security, physical security, and cultural identity.[21]

When community–law enforcement relationships build trust and minimize risks: Trust in law enforcement and the legal system helps community members to feel safe when cooperating with anti-poaching activities.[22] It helps when community members see that agencies can collaborate to ensure swift patrol responses that result in prosecutions, without risking the community's safety.[13]

3.2 What are successful examples of community–government collaboration that have increased support for CWT?

The Conservancy Rhino Ranger Incentive Program in Namibia found that meetings with stakeholders during planning and support from trusted law enforcement were essential.

Rhino Ranger staff met with local game scouts to understand patrol gaps and met with local leaders to discuss community values. These efforts must be supported by law enforcement; communities cannot combat poaching alone.[12] The CWT learning group's Learning Exchange validated the Rhino Ranger experience: partnering with local communities and national wildlife agencies can increase law enforcement capacity and make progress toward peace and security objectives.[17]

Tiger Protection and Conservation Units in Kerinci-Seblat National Park, Indonesia, found that local involvement was key to success.

Community rangers have been essential in cultivating collaboration and local informant networks. The group found that soliciting stakeholder perspectives ensured program approaches met and complemented the goals of various groups.[13] The CWT learning group's report Rewards and Risks Associated with Community Engagement in Anti-Poaching and Anti-Trafficking validated the units' experience. Trust in law enforcement and the legal system is a key factor that motivates local communities to engage in anti-poaching.[22]

USEFUL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESOURCES

- Rewards and Risks Associated with Community Engagement in Anti-Poaching and Anti-Trafficking
- Combating Wildlife Trafficking Learning Exchange: Meeting Report
- CWT Case Study – Synthesis of Lessons
    - Conservancy Rhino Ranger Incentive Program in Namibia
    - Tiger Protection & Conservation Units in Kerinci-Seblat National Park, Indonesia
    - Wildlife Crimes Unit in Indonesia
    - Wildlife Trust of India
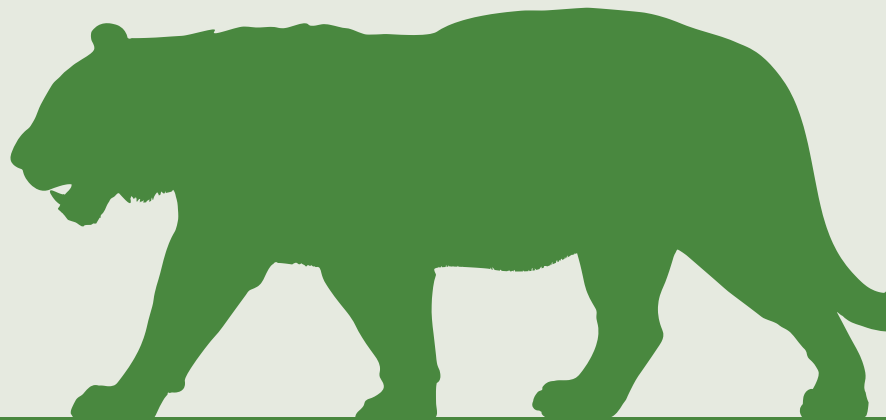
References 12. Case Study: Conservancy Rhino Ranger Incentive Program in Namibia
13. Case Study: Tiger Protection & Conservation Units in Kerinci-Seblat National Park, Indonesia
21. Case Study: Space for Giants in Kenya
22. Rewards and Risks Associated with Community Engagement in Anti-Poaching and Anti-Trafficking