USAID FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

TRANSBOUNDARY COOPERATION KNOWLEDGE HARVEST

USAID Combating Wildlife Trafficking Learning Group
October 19, 2021
9-10AM EST

This presentation was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development.
It was prepared by Environmental Incentives, Foundations of Success and ICF for the Measuring Impact II (MI2) Contract.

Today's Agenda

- Overview of CWT Learning Series (5 min)

- Knowledge Harvest (35 min)

- Discussion / Sharing (20 min)

This conversation will be recorded and available for future viewing.

Purpose of the CWT Learning Series

- Learning exchange to facilitate the sharing of knowledge among USAID staff that work on USAID CWT activities

- Opportunity to share lessons learned while implementing key CWT strategic approaches, develop stories of innovation and change, and create action plans to apply to learning from the exchange to their own programming

Join USAID's Combating Wildlife Trafficking Learning Group for a 2021 Virtual Learning Exchange

September 21
Demand
Reduction Peer
Assist
Webinar

October 19
Transboundary
Cooperation
Knowledge
Harvest

November 16
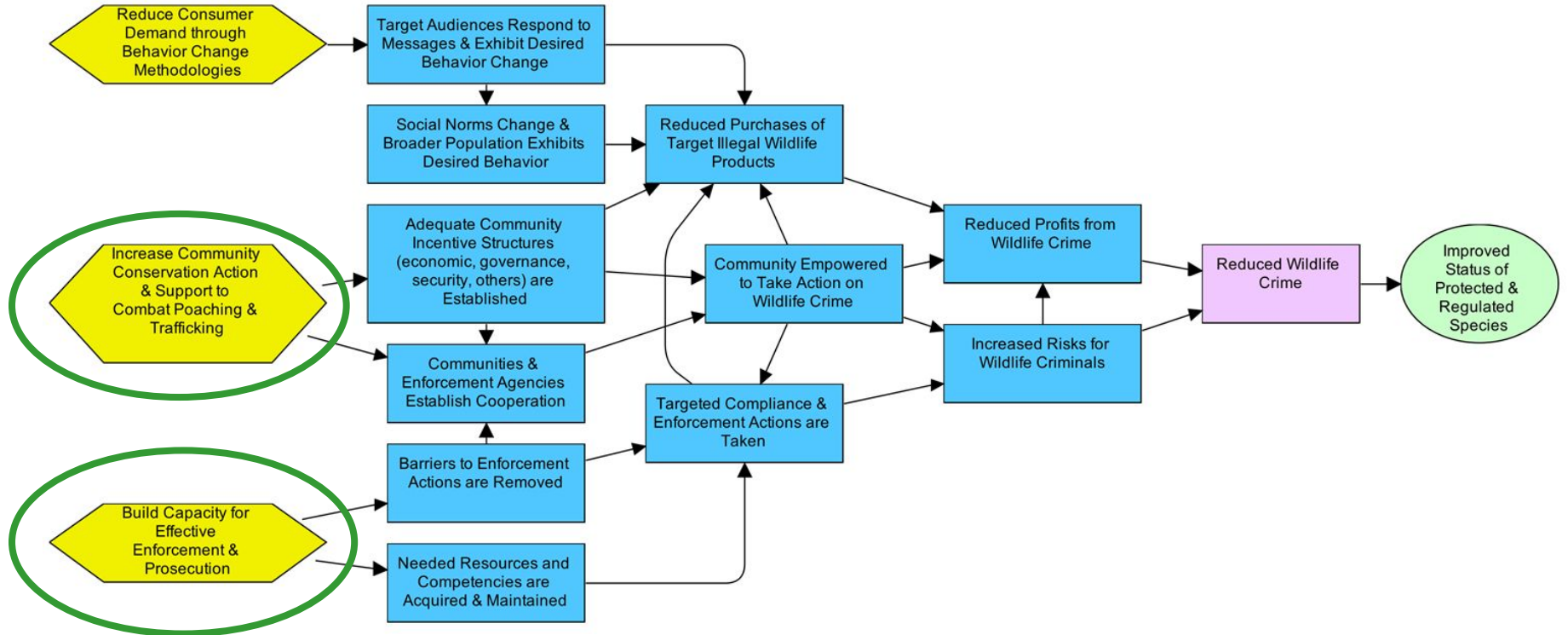Inter-Agency
Coordination
Best Practices

December 14
Strengthening
the Judiciary
Experience
Sharing

Each event will feature speakers from USAID and partners, with shared lessons learned about strategic approaches, discussions on the latest evidence, and opportunities to identify action plans for implementing learning. Learning briefs on each topic will also be developed and shared widely.

Join us on Tuesdays at 9am EST

USAID's CWT THEORY OF CHANGE

USAID's CWT LEARNING AGENDA QUESTIONS:

Build Capacity for Effective Enforcement and Prosecution + Increase Community Conservation Action and Support to Combat Poaching & Trafficking

Guiding Question: What are successful examples of community-government collaboration that have resulted in increased support for combating wildlife trafficking? **And specifically today, transboundary collaboration.**

Today's Speakers

J. Ashley Netherton
USAID/Southern Africa

Simon Munthali
VukaNow

Anjali Kumar
USAID/South America Regional

What do we mean by "Transboundary Collaboration Approaches"?

- **<u>Strengthening Transboundary Coordinating Institutions:</u>** Strengthen coordination institution's capacity to be a regional enforcement coordinating platform

- **<u>Legal Harmonization to Support Transboundary Cooperation / Enforcement:</u>** Work to harmonize policies, laws and regulations across boundaries

- **<u>Building Capacity for Transboundary Law Enforcement:</u>** Build capacity for effective detection, investigation, prosecution & adjudication of Transboundary Conservation Crimes.

- **<u>Transboundary Information Sharing:</u>** Identify & support the most suitable platform for secure communication on intelligence exchange

- **<u>"Soft" Skills:</u>** What makes for good transboundary collaboration?

How the Knowledge Harvest Will Work

- Anjali will ask Ashley and Simon questions about transboundary collaboration

- You will copy the knowledge harvest slide in the deck, add your name/email and then share insights from YOUR experience on the same questions

- During our discussion we will go deeper into some of the themes that emerge

Questions

1. What is the context you are working in? Why did you select the approaches you did?

2. What worked well in implementing this approach? What challenges did you encounter when implementing this approach?

3. How did you adapt the approach to address these challenges?

4. What knowledge gaps do you still have, that if addressed, would make programming for this approach stronger?

5. What outcomes did you achieve with this approach? Was there an observed effect on wildlife trafficking, and if so, what?

6. What personal (and personnel) characteristics make for a good transboundary coordinator/team?

7. What advice do you have for colleagues implementing this approach?

Please share your insights below!

J. Ashley Netherton (USAID/South Africa)

Context & Approach

Insights: Portfolio designed in BAA process; engaged in co-creation process to leverage expertise of non-gov and institutions around the region that were operating in the space. Included 5 landscape based awards and 1 backbone contract (VukaNow) with 4 target landscapes and 8 primary countries. Geographic focus TFCAs, rhinos and elephants. Portfolio designed to contribute to South Africa development communities and law enforcement strategies. Programs had common strategic approaches - strengthening enforcement and increasing community action. With many new players coming into the region - wanted to optimize across multiple donors. Realization of militarization of conservation as a solution. Mission recognition of conservation crime as a serious organized crime - no clear agreed upon solution.

Implementation of Approach

Insights: VukaNow can be seen as a coordinating contract - like to think of as backbone contract. Landscape based partners are largely conservation NGOs. Early days had lots of tension - landscape partners were reluctant to work with coordinating partners (like VukaNow) - worried about them directing or duplicating work. Had to take time to clarify the partnership and purpose of bottom-up support of the contract and its value added (enable learning and sharing across the geographic areas of the South Africa region and to be there to provide a customer service function - support the interventions that were demand driven - shaped the evolution of VukaNow and types of services they provide to landscape partners.

Adaptations

Insights: Adaptations of VukaNow that have been implemented - being demand driven (customer service function for landscape partners), already working in transboundary level; VukaNow asked how we can address problems you're dealing with now and talk about common challenges; SPARCC platform - innovation for sharing information/best practices, get exposure, apply to own work, fill niche areas (i.e. forensic science), being able to identify VukaNow's position and how they can fill special niche levels for raising judicial awareness, supporting law enforcement and anti-poaching awareness.

Knowledge Gaps

Insights: Many knowledge gaps in wildlife crime. Transboundary cooperation and role of VukaNow - continue to struggle with relative value and importance of enabling conditions (trust, motivation, capacity, legislative/policy frameworks, tools, operational financing). Working in different areas - all factors come to play at relative degrees - need to know relative importance of each and how to focus in on what aspects can help move the needle.

Outcomes

Insights: VukaNow is a learning and sharing activity - difficult for us to attribute interventions for changes on the ground.

Personal Characteristics

Insights: Understanding that a lot of effective coordination/collaboration is so personality driven. We want to be able to institutionalize collaboration but will always have some push and pull. Collaboration is based on trust and relationships - cannot discount the value of getting the right people in the room together to guide those relationships. Based on open communication, trust, relationships, mutual respect - foundation of effective collaboration. Issues around sharing information - building trust and mutual interest needs to be established (shared values and interests and recognition) to advance both priorities and interests. Person/personnel characteristics are important for us to recognize the push and pull between individual and personality driven effectiveness achieved but also need to try and establish some institutional parameters to facilitate that coordination.

Advice

Insights: From USAID perspective - important to understand partner landscape - need to be realistic. Understanding potential pitfalls and relationships - did not initially anticipate the tension that happened with VukaNow and landscape partners. Need to understand influence and role as well as the restrictions that may be in place with different donor landscapes (e.g. what USAID can do that others have restrictions) - understanding where you can complement one another in the broader design.

Please share your insights below!

Simon Munthali (VukaNow)

Context & Approach

Insights: Supporting combating wildlife trafficking effort - regional in South Africa. Focused on 2 objectives - catalyzing learning and increasing cooperative action. Have a collective impact model to address problems like wildlife trafficking and poaching requires transnational cooperation and coordination to achieve expected impact. Specific approach - do not operate at ground level, implement what landscape partners at a high-level. Focused at mission based - forensic science (across region), evidence quality, increase penalties of poaching and trafficking (with qualified lawyers). Awareness of broader impact of wildlife crimes. Focus on supporting South Africa communities. Promotes interagency cooperation at national level and transboundary scale. Supporting establishment of task forces (coordinate law enforcement at national level) and developing 5 year action plan. Provided support to information gaps - filling a niche of gaps that are missing (uncoordinated efforts); developed special platforms to coordinate (i.e. SPARCC)

Implementation of Approach

Insights: What went well - introduction of special platform for action and collaboration of online learning platform SPARCC. Enabled us to clarify and avoid duplication. Able to generate a lot of knowledge products - people understood gaps by commissioning STDAs. Platform also used for training. Worked well for catalyzing and sharing information. Main success - support provided and development of 5 year strategy plan. Initiated process amending legislation processes - ease transboundary enforcement. Challenge - overcoming many difficulties of transboundary enforcement; assumption - harmonize enforcement & legislation.

Adaptations

Insights: Challenge of pushback from landscape partners, came as a competitor and worried about duplication of efforts - needed further clarification. Monthly catch up meetings were important - able to discuss work plan and build trust. Bring together on platform - discussed many issues over SPARCC. Eventually, VukaNow worked as a mediator within the landscape partners to ease internal disputes. Lots of effort in combating wildlife crime but not a lot in transboundary issues - strong need to harmonize legislation. VukaNow facilitated establishing judiciary working group on transnational wildlife crime - developed action plan for working group.

Knowledge Gaps

Insights: Institutionalized collaboration - challenge; usually individual/champion for that. How do we ensure collaboration sustains long-term; haven't figured out a formula for longevity or sustainability for collaboration.

Outcomes

Insights: Now ground level support agency - what we've done is help with hosting SPARCC on corruption and challenge of lack of capacity of stakeholder engagement on combating wildlife crime. Established steering committee and identified evidence based approaches. Also identified a number of key indicators that were highlighted to help with the revision of the strategy.

Personal Characteristics

Insights: Open communication, trust, respect, willingness to share information, intelligence, willingness to share and support others when aligned/necessary, ability to maintain long-term collaboration, mechanisms for resolving conflict.

Advice

Insights: Long-term collaboration strategies - what happens after VukaNow finishes? Need to take into account longevity and sustainability, understanding partner landscape and be intentional about coordination desires.

Please share your insights below!

Andrea Pavlick, apavlick@usaid.gov

Context & Approach

Insights: I think I just have questions. How much effort was invested pre VukaNow on transboundary coordination? Were all of the landscape based partners receiving USAID awards? If so, could this type of approach work with partners who are not receiving USAID funding?

I also agree that broadening the focus beyond law enforcement as a solution is important. Has it been hard to get non conservation focused partner to see that?

Implementation of Approach

Insights: I think getting legislative changes can be so difficult. Did the backbone project work on this? Or did the landscape based projects work on this?

Adaptations

Insights:

Knowledge Gaps

Insights: To what extent can broader wildlife trafficking and other conservation crime be decreased by focusing on an iconic species like rhinos? Or to go even farther, how does broader biodiversity conservation benefit from addressing poaching and trafficking of charismatic megafauna? Clearly if those species are still present, they are still contributing to functioning of the ecosystem, but is that enough to protect biodiversity more broadly?

Outcomes

Insights:

Personal Characteristics

Insights:

Advice

Insights: I wonder if having regional associations like ASEAN would be helpful with this type of transboundary approach or if it would just move too slowly.

Please share your insights below!

Anne Dix, USAID/Botswana

Context & Approach
Insights:
Wildlife trafficking takes place inside national borders and then wildlife is taken across borders. Local capacity is weak at the organizational level. Collaboration tends to be weak and there are a lot of embedded interests to manage.

Implementation of Approach
Insights:
From what I can see, Park Management and creating benefits for local actors is quite week, especially in Botswana. Without an improvement in this area, it will be difficult to engage local people in protecting wildlife. Wildlife, instead is seen as a source of conflict for their economic interests.

Adaptations
Insights:
Integrated work plans both with regards to the interagency and whole of government effort as well among partners is important.

It is also important to map and share how what you are doing relates to other donors work This helps improve communications across all actors.

Knowledge Gaps
Insights:
It would help to have visuals to demonstrate the movement of wildlife and share with our counterparts in the wildlife trafficking context. There appears to be a lot of training being done but generally experiencing success in following through an incident, results in better and permanent learning. We need to improve the knowledge of political decision makers such as parliament with regards to what is going on. There also appears to be little media on the subject of wildlife trafficking.

Outcomes
Insights:

Personal Characteristics
Insights:
You need individuals who naturally share information and are not stretched to thin so that they have the bandwidth to share information. They should be ground level operators, combined with political actors and individuals who have the power to do something about the problem.

Advice
Insights:
-Colombia has ample experience addressing transnational crime from the work done dealing with historical insurgency related to drug related crime. There are some key people in Government there we used to advise us in Guatemala on how to do integrated interventions using all types of enforcement actors on the ground, including the military.
-DO NOT underestimate how much time your team will spend on coordinating and communicating. The LOE in this area goes way up and you need to count on your bilateral counterparts to address issues.
-You need to be situationally aware of structural differences between countries. In Central and South America challenges encountered in communication crime across borders stemmed from being small countries such as Ecuador or Guatemala trying to communicate with the right people in Mexico or Brasil. By the time crimes were communicated back down from central government going country:country it was too late to deal with local problem at the border
-You need to make sure that you don't do the work for partners such as SADC, but support them and put in place the tools so that they can continue the effort themselves.
-We should consider working more closely with countries to look at how funding derived from natural resources is reinvested into the resource and the people in the areas in question. The least empowered people in decision making, as a result, are those living in the area. Without their active participation, in places like Botswana it will be difficult to impact wildlife trafficking.

Please share your insights below!

Melody McNeil, mmcneil@usaid.gov

Context & Approach	Implementation of Approach	Adaptations	Knowledge Gaps	Outcomes	Personal Characteristics	Advice
Insights: Ongoing conflict issues that impact high value landscapes (Eastern DRC/Uganda and Rwanda, Northern DRC/South Sudan, Cameroon/ROC/CAR) Significant capacity gaps across the board leading to inconsistency in enforcement and other approaches, corruption, etc.	Insights: Building out--working with each partner to build the local networks and capacities and then building that out. Looking for ways to make connections among partners as those capacities increase. There's so little investment around PAs across the region, that there is incredible pressure on conservation actors to be everything to everyone. It makes focusing on core areas difficult.	Insights:	Insights: Often even the most basic information is lacking. Species surveys for example	Insights:	Insights: Competition among IPs on transboundary landscapes can create issues. Additionally the political competition between countries can cause tension. Creating a shared vision is key. However, organizational culture and practice can be difficult to overcome. As well, inconsistency of approach can compound issues.	Insights:

DISCUSSION AND Q&A

- How does this track with work of ILEA and others providing training to enforcement agencies, etc here in region?

- Is VukaNow serving more USAID and the five landscape activities or SADC priorities and sharing/learning across the region?

- Do we have educational programs for those who lead and commit CWT? Another approach to stop CWT is by educating people and bringing value of wildlife to ecology, environment, and economy (tourism) of countries.

USAID BIODIVERSITY
Combating Wildlife Trafficking
COLLABORATIVE LEARNING GROUP

CWT Learning Group Tools and Resources

LEARNING GROUP RESOURCES
- CWT Learning Group Site
- CWT Learning Agenda
- CWT Crime Toolkit

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Combating Wildlife Trafficking Learning Group

The CWT Learning Group is focused on building a knowledge base around how best to build capacity, reduce consumer demand, and improve community engagement to combat wildlife crime.

USAID has a long history of support for efforts to combat wildlife trafficking (CWT). These efforts are currently being prioritized due to a dramatic increase in the volume and scope of the threat in recent years and the February 9th, 2017 Executive Order on enforcing federal law with respect to transnational criminal organizations and preventing international trafficking.

Among the many strategic approaches employed by USAID to combat wildlife trafficking and outlined in the Agency's Measuring Efforts to Combat Wildlife Crime Toolkit, USAID's Biodiversity Division chose three for special attention for the CWT Learning Group based on their frequency in USAID programming: (a) reducing consumer demand through behavior change methodologies, (b) building capacity for effective enforcement and prosecution, and (c) increasing community conservation action and support to combat wildlife trafficking. These three strategic approaches are defined by development hypotheses (theories of change), as well as a combined hypothesis that, if implemented, these strategic approaches will increase the risks for wildlife criminals and reduce profits from wildlife trafficking, which will then reduce overall wildlife crime, leading to improved conservation results.

While used across many countries, there is often little supporting information available to practitioners regarding the effectiveness of these approaches or the validity of key assumptions. As USAID begins or ramps up efforts, there is an important opportunity for this Learning Group to support cross-mission collaboration to capitalize on previous experiences, share the latest information, and build the evidence base for these approaches.

Combating Wildlife Trafficking
CASE STUDY COMPILATION

What's Happening

Combating Wildlife Trafficking Learning Exchange: Demand Reduction Posters
In November 2019, USAID hosted a regional CWT learning exchange in Bangkok, Thailand. The exchange featured poster presentations on demand reduction campaigns ...
Read More

Adaptive Management in the USAID CWT Portfolio: Current Practice and Opportunities
USAID's combating wildlife trafficking portfolio offers an opportunity to understand how adaptive management is practiced across a discrete portfolio. To this ...
Read More

What You Can Do Here

See What We've Learned | Read the Latest Research | Ask the Group | Meet Other Members | Attend an Event

THANK YOU!

—

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PHOTO: NORTHERN RANGELANDS TRUST

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