

Charity number: 1179460



Southern Tanzania Elephant Trust
Annual Report and Accounts for the Year ended
31st December 2023

Charity Name: Southern Tanzania Elephant Trust

Registered Charity Number: 1179460

Principal Address:

30 Barn Road
Stirling
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United Kingdom

Trustees Report for the year ended 31st December 2023

Southern Tanzania Elephant Trust present their annual report and audited accounts for the period 1st January 2023 through 31 December 2023 and confirm they comply with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011, the Trust Deed and the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

Charity Trustees

Helen Pearson
Nathaniel Comber
Nick McWilliam

Name and Address of Independent Examiner

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Winsley's House, High Street, Colchester
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Governing document

The Charity was registered as a Trust on the 6th August 2018 and is governed by a Trust Deed dated 1st August 2018.

Trustee selection method

The first Trustees of the Charity were appointed for a term of three years at the time of registering the Charity. The Trustees were reappointed for another three-year term on 21st July 2021, and again on 21st July 2024. The current trustees may appoint new trustees by approaching individuals whom the trustees believe would bring necessary skills, knowledge, and experience to the Organization. If the individual is willing to put themselves forward, their appointment is put to the current Trustees for approval.

Objects of the Charity

The objects of the charity are to conserve and protect the African elephant in Tanzania and other African wildlife and habitats in Tanzania for the public benefit.

The trustees identified Southern Tanzania Elephant (STEP) in Tanzania as the organisation whose work the Trust is aiming to support, in accordance with the Trusts' objects, to facilitate the delivery of the UK Charity's objectives.

Vision

Creating a long and peaceful future for elephants in southern Tanzania and for the ecosystems and communities on which they inter-depend.

Mission

To secure a future for elephants in southern Tanzania by, directly and through partnerships, supporting elephant protection, enhancing coexistence between communities and elephants, strengthening community livelihoods, conducting research and monitoring, and awareness-raising.

Principal Activities

Southern Tanzania is a globally important region for elephant conservation, with elephant populations numbering some 30,000 individuals in 2015, and approximately 70,000 in 2009 before devastating declines from poaching for the ivory trade (Thouless et al. 2016). The region holds 35% of East Africa's elephants, and 7% of Africa's elephants (Thouless et al. 2016). The Ruaha-Rungwa and Udzungwa-Selous ecosystems of southern Tanzania are some of the few elephant strongholds and wilderness areas for large mammals left in the world. The ecosystems and elephant populations of southern Tanzania are a global treasure, requiring global support for their conservation. Elephant conservation in the region faces two main challenges:

Securing elephant populations and habitat: The combined efforts of the Tanzanian government, civil society and international community have greatly reduced the threat of poaching to elephants compared to previous years. However, ongoing protection efforts are needed to secure these important gains and ensure long-term recovery of southern Tanzania's elephant populations. In addition, protecting the integrity of the ecosystems that comprise elephant range is vital to the long-term survival of the elephant populations of this region.

Human-elephant coexistence: Farms and settlements adjacent to protected areas and in elephant corridors and dispersal areas are at risk of elephant damage, as some elephants learn to use crops as a 'high-risk, high-reward' food source. As more land comes under cultivation, elephant habitat and corridors outside of protected areas are also increasingly at risk. Every year people are killed by elephants, often because of accidental encounters. This is a complex challenge that requires long-term vision and a multi-faceted approach.

We work to conserve the elephant metapopulation of southern Tanzania through a landscape level approach. The charity's principal activities include:

1. **Supporting elephant protection in critical habitats:** supporting ground and air patrols and providing technical support to under-resourced protected areas in important elephant range, as well as building ranger capacity to map and analyse patrols and outcomes and monitor spatial and temporal trends in illegal activities.
2. **Enhancing human-elephant coexistence in communities living with elephants:** working with farmers' groups to protect farms and improve livelihoods through beehive fence projects which deter elephants from farmland and produce elephant-friendly honey; trialling novel crop protection strategies with farmers; providing farmers with access to financial services and improving household resilience through membership and training in Village Savings and Loans Associations; restoration of a critical wildlife corridor between the Udzungwa and Selous ecosystems; and awareness-raising and education activities.
3. **Conducting elephant research to inform conservation efforts:** monitoring elephants in the Ruaha-Rungwa and Udzungwa-Selous ecosystem; assessing spatial and temporal trends in human-elephant interactions and evaluating solutions; and monitoring of wildlife corridors.

Impact for the Year End 31st December 2023

The main activities during the year were increasing protection for elephants through support to wildlife rangers (Section 1), increasing community capacity for human-elephant coexistence through farm-based interventions, supporting farmer livelihoods activities, education and awareness-raising, and corridor restoration (Section 2), and research and monitoring of elephants and human-elephant interactions (Section 3). Capacity building was carried out in a number of ways through these activities.

All activities in Tanzania are carried out by our affiliate organization in Tanzania, Southern Tanzania Elephant (abbreviated and referred to from here on as STEP), a non-governmental organization registered on 17th July 2019 under the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Act, 2002 Section 12(2) of Act No. 24 of 2002, with registration number I-NGO/R2/00077. The Tanzanian affiliate Organization was previously registered as a company limited by guarantee having no share capital (i.e. a not-for-profit company). With the passing of The Written Laws (Miscellaneous Amendments) (No.3) Act, 2019 on 30th June 2019, all companies limited by guarantee having no share capital were required to register under the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Act, 2002 by August 30th 2019.

The Board of Trustees of Southern Tanzania Elephant Trust in the UK (from here on referred to as STET UK) and the Board of STEP Tanzania are responsible for overall management of the

organization, including setting and reviewing strategic plans and budgets, financial matters, reviewing the performance of management, and ensuring adherence to internal control policies and sound governance. and for compliance with sound governance principles. The organization is committed to the principles of effective governance, integrity, transparency and accountability. STET UK and STEP Tanzania agree on the yearly strategy and budget together. The Trustees of STET UK exercise their discretion when selecting which activities to support by having regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance as well as the following internal criteria:

1) The activity contributes to the conservation of the African elephant in Tanzania through any of the following:

- a. Increasing resources and/or capacity for law enforcement of elephant range
- b. Increasing public awareness of the value of elephants and elephant conservation
- c. Increasing the capacity of rural communities to coexist with elephants
- d. Improving the welfare of rural communities who coexist with elephants
- e. Increasing the availability of research and scientific outputs to inform elephant conservation

(2) It has been demonstrated that the activity provides good value for money

STET UK and STEP Tanzania maintain close contact with regards to implementation of activities. Each Board meets at a minimum twice per year.

Achievements and Performance

1. Supporting elephant protection in critical habitats

The goal of this programmatic area is to enhance protection efforts of rangers and village game scouts through support for ground and air patrols, provision of training and resources, and data optimization. Targeted support is provided to three protected areas selected for their importance to elephants, their biodiversity value, and funding and resource gaps assessed with respective wildlife management authorities. These include MBOMIPA Wildlife Management Area (WMA), a community-managed wildlife area; Uzungwa Scarp Nature Forest Reserve (USNFR), a forest reserve by Tanzania Forestry Services Agency (TFS); and Rungwa-Kizigo-Muhesi Game Reserves (RKM GR), managed by Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority (TAWA). The means by which we provide support include:

- Building the capacity of rangers and Village Game Scouts through training and equipment
- Supporting ground and air patrols
- Mapping and analysing patrol outcomes for strategic patrol planning

1.1 MBOMIPA Protection Project

STEP first began to work with the community-owned MBOMIPA Wildlife Management Area in 2018. MBOMIPA WMA is a critical part of the Ruaha-Rungwa ecosystem and especially important for elephants, as well as other endangered species such as wild dogs and lions. 2023 marked the sixth year of the fruitful collaboration between STEP and MBOMIPA WMA. STEP supported teams of Village Game Scouts (VGS) to conduct foot patrols each by supplying scout wages and providing fuel and food supplies. In 2023, VGS covered 11,736.8 km of foot patrols. STEP also facilitated 128.8 hours of aerial support for the WMA. All patrols were logged using GPS units with patrol data collected using a mobile app, with patrol coverage and outcomes mapped every month and analysed by STEP to enhance patrol effectiveness. STEP also continued with maintenance and operation of a field vehicle for the WMA to enable monthly rotation of VGS and vehicle patrols, and with provision of all necessary fuel.

2023 also saw the development of the WMA's first human-elephant conflict response unit. To develop this unit, STEP trained 12 VGS on effective response to HEC. We provided one vehicle for HEC response, a driver, fuel, HEC toolkits, and vehicle maintenance. This enabled MBOMIPA VGS to respond to 56 incidents of elephants being in village farms and successfully guiding the elephants back to the MWA in each case.



MBOMIPA WMA HEC Response unit and HEC toolkit

1.2 Uzungwa Scarp Protection Project

Uzungwa Scarp Forest Nature Reserve (USFNR) is a biodiversity hotspot that is home Udzungwa endemics and globally threatened vertebrate species (Rovero et al., 2014) including Sanje mangabey, Udzungwa red colobus, Abbott's duiker, 20 endemic and 14 threatened reptiles (Lyakurwa et al., 2019), and 19 endemic and threatened amphibians. The Reserve also serves as a critical water catchment. USFNR has been under threat from anthropogenic activities (Harrison 2006) such as wildfire, logging, forest encroachment for agriculture, and illegal hunting (Topp-Jørgensen et al., 2009). Severe population declines have been documented for several threatened species, attributed to hunting and trapping (Rovero et al., 2015).

With support from and in collaboration with Wild Planet Trust (WPT, formerly Whitley Wildlife Conservation Trust), Bristol Chester Zoo, and Association Mazingira, STEP has been supporting the protection of Uzungwa Scarp Nature Forest Reserve since late 2017. The Uzungwa Scarp Protection Project supports with funding of ground patrols, training of rangers, and provision of essential equipment. In 2023, mobile camping patrols by Village Scouts, rangers from Tanzania Forestry Services and the Southern Highlands Anti-Poaching Unit covered 891 km. As a result, 584 snares were removed, 17 poachers' camps, one farm, and 31 logging activities were shut down. Patrols were strategically planned and executed, with mapping, analysis and reporting of findings after each patrol.

STEP also facilitated meetings in 19 villages adjacent to Uzungwa Scarp Nature Reserve, bringing together 183 members of the Village Natural Resources Committee, 38 Village Leaders, Chita JKT representatives, and foresters. Participants received training on Participatory Nature Forest Reserve Management and fire management, shared lessons learned, and discussed the way forward in managing the Reserve.

1.3 Rungwa-Kizigo-Muhesi Game Reserves, Ruaha National Park and Lunda-Nkwambi Game Controlled Area

2023 marked the 10th year of STEP's aerial program, which has provided >900 hours of aerial support to the Ruaha-Rungwa ecosystem since 2014. In 2023, aerial operations with the new Savannah S aircraft were scaled up, with a total of 324 hours flown across six protected areas (MBOMIPA WMA, Rungwa, Kizigo, and Muhesi Game Reserves, Lunda-Nkwambi Game Controlled Area and Ruaha National Park). Aerial patrols are always done in collaboration with rangers and village game scouts, who are ready to respond to sightings of threats observed by the aircraft. In 2023, follow-up by ranger and VGS teams resulted in arrests of individuals engaged in ivory poaching, illegal logging and charcoal production, highlighting the vital role of coordinated air-ground patrols in addressing threats to the Ruaha-Rungwa ecosystem.



STEP's light aircraft

1.4 Capacity building

As part of the Uzungwa Scarp Protection Project, STEP provided monthly technical support to USNFR's staff and VGS in collection, storage, analysis, mapping, and reporting of patrol data. This support helps USNFR management to plan patrols in a strategic manner and to produce monthly patrol reports and annual reports. Patrol teams were also supported with the application of conservation technologies including Survey 123 Data Collector and GIS for patrol data analysis.

STEP also built capacity among rangers and Village Game Scouts to assist our pilot team as aerial observers. In 2023, we trained eight VGS from MBOMIPA WMA and one ranger from Ruaha National Park in accurate observation, data collection, use of handheld GPS units and cameras, species and carcass identification, and communication protocols.

MBOMIPA WMA Village Game Scouts were trained in camera trapping and the setup of the EarthRanger platform, enabling data collection during foot and vehicle patrols. STEP facilitated eight MBOMIPA WMA VGS to attend a 30-day basic tactical anti-poaching training run by PAMS Foundation, conducted according to International Ranger Federation standards.

2. Enhancing human-elephant coexistence in communities living with elephants

The goal of this programmatic area is to enhance coexistence between people and elephants in communities living in and alongside elephant range. We support communities to coexist with elephants in two project area, the Kilombero Valley in Morogoro region, and the western boundary of Rungwa-Kizigo-Muhesi Game Reserves in Singida region. These areas are hotspots of elephant impact, with regular movement of elephants onto village land and frequent crop damage. The means by which we build capacity for coexistence include:

- Supporting farmers to implement farm-based mitigation methods to reduce crop losses to elephants.
- Conducting education and awareness-raising events in villages affected by human-elephant conflict to explain elephant behaviour, provide context for human-elephant interactions and provide advice on how to stay safe around elephants.
- Collect data on elephant movements and use this to inform education and trials of crop protection measures.

- Work with Village Governments to understand the drivers of HEC and work towards establishing Land Use Plans that facilitate human-elephant coexistence.
- Explore and support establishment of corridors to facilitate safe elephant movement.
- Immersive hands-on training and development opportunities for students and early career Tanzanian conservationists, many of whom go on to work for other organizations.

2.1 Kilombero Valley

The Kilombero Valley, in the Udzungwa-Selous ecosystem, is a densely populated, fertile matrix of villages, agriculture, and grazing land. Elephants regularly attempt to cross the short distance of ~10km across the valley, between Udzungwa Mountains National Park and Magombera Forest Reserve on the edge of Nyerere National Park (formerly Selous Game Reserve). Less than 50 years ago, there was continuous forest across the valley: today, the forest has been fragmented by rapid land conversion due to agriculture. The route is a critical connection between the western and southern elephant metapopulations of Tanzania (over 30,000 individuals) and the only link that can be maintained and restored. Intensive agriculture in the valley has created a hard edge between forest and farmland, making farms vulnerable to elephant crop damage. The multi-faceted land use challenges of the Valley have informed STEP's approach to building human-elephant coexistence in the Kilombero Valley through limiting elephant movement into farmland and settlement through farm-based interventions, facilitating safe elephant movement through a designated wildlife corridor, and supporting income diversification and awareness-raising events.

2.1.1 Farm-based interventions, Village Savings and Loans Associations, and Awareness-Raising

To date, STEP has supported seven farmers groups registered as Community-Based Organizations to establish seven beekeeping projects in the Kilombero Valley to protect agricultural fields from elephants. In addition to reducing elephant movement into farmland and settlement, beehive fences generate revenue for farmers' groups through the sale of honey. Economic resilience is an important factor in building human-elephant coexistence. If a household's economic resources are depleted by an incident of crop raiding by an elephant, it is unlikely that members of the household will be willing to tolerate the presence of that elephant. STEP continued to support its existing groups with field visits, in depth follow up and refresher training. STEP also continued to operate the Udzungwa Honey Collection Centre, of which all STEP beekeeping groups are members, to enable the processing and packaging of honey generated by beehive fences. Farmers harvested 235 litres of honey in 2023, which was processed and packed at the Honey Collection Centre.

STEP also works with farmers' groups to establish and support the operation of Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs), community-based financial systems in which members have access to credit and financial assistance through weekly contributions. Members can take loans from VSLAs and have access to emergency financial relief. By increasing community and household resilience to human-wildlife conflict, VSLAs can contribute to increasing coexistence. In 2023, we supported the establishment of six new Village Savings and Loan Associations (with 183 members, 74% women) and continued to support 14 existing VSLAs. A total of 447 loans were taken out by VSLA members in 2023 with a total value of TZS 92,665,500. Loans were used for agriculture, small businesses such as expanding and opening small shops, and small street food restaurants, and support with school fees. Such access to credit is highly valued by VLSA members in our project area.



VSLA meeting in the Kilombero Valley

2.1.2 Awareness-Raising and Education

In 2023, STEP conducted film nights in 11 villages, reaching 4,181 adults and youth. Local Elephant Monitors also reached 1,346 farmers with one-to-one training. During these film nights and trainings, the STEP team and LEMs share information about human-elephant coexistence, methods to stay safe when you come across an elephant, benefits of elephants, the life of elephants, and mitigation strategies to reduce human-elephant conflict. STEP also taught a 6-module course on human-elephant coexistence in 22 schools, reaching over 2500 students. The modules covered elephant behaviour, ecology, and biology, human-elephant coexistence, and wildlife connectivity. STEP also expanded its park visit program for primary and secondary students to national parks as an experiential supplement to educational outreach. 130 students and 42 teachers visited Udzungwa Mountains National Park and Mikumi National Park, learned about elephants lives in the wild and had the opportunity to experience Tanzania's rich natural heritage.

2.1.3 Corridor Restoration

2023 saw continued progress towards our long-term vision of restoring the Kilombero Elephant Corridor between the Udzungwa Mountains and Nyerere National Parks, via the Magombera Forest Nature Reserve. The goal is to peacefully manage the regular movements that elephants make across the Kilombero Valley, even though their once forested routes have been turned into farmland over the last 50 years. STEP has been facilitating this multi-stakeholder restoration project since 2018, involving communities, civil society, Government and the private sector to restore this ecological connectivity, and enhance food and personal security for the local farming population. At the heart of the corridor project are the communities of the three villages of Sole, Mang'ula A and Kanyenja, who have agreed to setting aside ~7% of the village land to enable the Corridor.

In early 2023, a second round of valuation and compensation by the Government of Tanzania of the remaining plots inside the corridor was carried out, bringing the total number of households fully compensated to 320. In October, 19 Village Game Scouts (VGS) were recruited from the three corridor villages, of whom 42% are female. Following training for one month at Likuyu-Sekamaganga

Ranger College, STEP provided advanced training on human rights and safety around elephants, as well as uniforms and field equipment. Training is continuing to empower the VGS with a diverse range of skills to act as ambassadors for the corridor restoration. Also in 2023, through our partnership with Reforest Africa, the first 40,000 trees were planted under the restoration plan for the corridor.

2.2 Rungwa-Kizigo-Muhesi

Bordering Ruaha National Park to the north and west, Rungwa-Kizigo-Muhesi Game Reserves comprise 15,200 km² of wildlife habitat. Historically an elephant stronghold within East Africa, the area lost 60% of its elephants between 2009 and 2015 to poaching (Thouless et al. 2016). Between 2015 and 2018, the elephant population remained stable. However, human-elephant conflict is a rapidly emerging threat to elephants in the area. Human settlement along protected boundaries, in conjunction with a lack of land use planning, has led to more frequent human-elephant interactions. STEP works to mitigate human-elephant conflict through a combination of farm-based interventions, establishment of Village Savings and Loans Associations, and awareness-raising and education activities.

2.2.1 Livelihoods activities and Village Savings and Loans Associations

2023 saw the continued growth of our VSLA work with communities around Rungwa-Kizigo-Muhesi Game Reserves. STEP supports 32 VSLAs benefiting 778 community members (43% women). In 2023, these VSLAs issued a total of 598 loans, amounting to a total value of TZS 109,305,000. These loans were used for various purposes, including small-scale business ventures, agricultural activities, and covering educational expenses such as school fees. VSLAs are having tangible outcomes for communities, with over 60% of members reporting that the VSLA helped them to gain a new source of income – most of which were non-agricultural. Furthermore, 83% of members reported an increase in household income since joining the VSLAs.

VSLAs also play a critical role in mitigating the impact of elephant crop damage, by providing a safety net for affected families and enhancing their ability to cope with losses. VSLA members that experienced elephant crop damage said that they had used a loan from the VSLA to purchase food or to invest in another income-generating activity, thereby helping them to be more resilient to crop loss.

Importantly, VSLA members exhibit greater tolerance to elephants, indicating a positive shift in community attitudes and perceptions. Our VSLA projects are, therefore, not only improving livelihoods but also strengthening community capacity for coexistence with elephants.

STEP also works to diversify household livelihoods, increase incomes, and enhance farmer resilience to elephant impacts through poultry vaccination trials. Many households in the Ruaha-Rungwa landscape keep chickens as a source of food and income, but face the challenge of chickens dying from disease. Through our poultry vaccination trials, we offer households one year of subsidized access to the vaccine for Newcastle disease, which is a significant cause of chicken mortality, as well as training in poultry management. We focus on households that did not previously vaccinate their chickens with the goal of demonstrating the benefits of vaccination.

In 2022-2023, STEP vaccinated 15,220 chickens in 215 households across six villages. Vaccination resulted in a substantial reduction in chicken mortality rates due to disease, with 96% of participating households reporting a decrease in chicken mortality and 84% saying they highly recommend the use of the vaccine. Households also reported an increase in the number of chickens, and increased income and access to meat. There was also a positive impact on resilience, as farmers said that keeping chickens helped them to manage the impacts of elephant crop damage, as they sold chickens to purchase food or to meet other household needs.

Notably, 78% of households said that they would be able and willing to pay for vaccination after trial end. A key challenge that remains, however, is the lack of a reliable local supply chain for the vaccine. Establishing a dependable vaccine supply chain will therefore be a crucial next step in ensuring continued access to vaccination for poultry farmers in this rural and remote area.

2.2.1 Awareness-Raising and Education

In 2023, we continued and expanded community outreach and education efforts. In collaboration with Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority and Itigi District Council, STEP's Human-Elephant Coexistence team hosted the fourth instalment of the *Tembo Cup* Football Tournament (Tembo is Swahili for elephant). In partnership with the NGO Lion Landscapes and MBOMIPA WMA, STEP also played a role in organizing the second MBOMIPA Cup football tournament. These tournaments aim to raise awareness about human-elephant coexistence, the benefits of protected areas, and to create a positive association with elephants through an engaging community activity. During the tournament, spectators attended matches as well as film nights and school outreach events. These events focused on building a culture and norms of loving and respecting elephants, as well as on safety around elephants to handle potential encounters with elephants on foot on village land. Over 74,000 people were reached through these football tournaments and associated events.

Our team of local elephant monitors (LEMs) also conducted awareness-raising with communities outside of these large-scale events. LEMs reached 2,265 community members with one-on-one training and 614 with household-level film shows. In these visits, LEMs share information about safety measures around elephants and ways to protect their food stores and farms from elephants.

2.3 Capacity building

In 2023, two Tanzanian interns participated in human-elephant coexistence activities and learned fieldwork and community engagement methods.

STEP also expanded our efforts to build capacity for timely and effective response to human-elephant conflict incidents by trained and well-equipped rangers. In 2023, STEP facilitated specialized training in human-elephant conflict response for 58 rangers from Rungwa, Kizigo, and Muhesi Game Reserves, significantly enhancing rangers' capabilities to protect both communities and wildlife. This training focused on elephant behaviour and safety around elephants, situational awareness, and the use of an elephant deterrent toolkit (designed by the Honeyguide Foundation), which uses LED torches, air-horns, chili crackers, and roman candles. STEP also rehabilitated a Landcruiser pickup for Kizigo Game Reserve to enhance rapid response to human-elephant conflict incidents and rescues, and provided HEC toolkit supplies to rangers. Elephant rescue training was provided to a further 48 rangers. Training focused on safe removal of elephant calves trapped in wells or mud, rehydration, and safekeeping of elephant calves. These efforts led to nine successful rescues of elephant calves trapped in village wells by rangers from Muhesi Game Reserve, in which calves were reunited with their families.



Training of VGS and rangers in elephant behaviour and safety around elephants, facilitated by KEEP

3. Conducting elephant research to inform conservation efforts

The goal of this programmatic area is to collect and analyse data to inform the formulation of meaningful and sound conservation strategies, as well as to monitor the impact of our conservation work. The geographic focus of this program comprises the Ruaha-Rungwa ecosystem and the Kilombero Valley. The main activities under this program include:

- Running a long-term elephant research project in Ruaha National Park to assess population status and to investigate tusklessness, ecology and behaviour.
- Monitoring elephant distribution and status in the forests of the Udzungwa Mountains.
- Monitoring wildlife corridors.
- Assessing spatial and temporal trends in human-elephant interactions and evaluating solutions.
- Collaboration and development opportunities for early career researchers from inside and outside of Tanzania.

3.1 Monitoring elephants in the Ruaha-Rungwa ecosystem

The Ruaha-Rungwa elephant population declined by over 50% between 2009 and 2015 due to poaching for the ivory trade (Thouless et al., 2016), and STEP's long-term research and monitoring aims to understand the consequences of poaching for elephants in the ecosystem, as well as to study recovery from poaching. Since 2015, STEP has collected data on over 2,900 elephant sightings. Elephant sightings are matched against an elephant ID database of known individuals for Ruaha, which includes over 200 family groups and 400 bulls. In 2023, STEP collected data on 401 elephant sightings over 98 days of monitoring, 51% of which have been identified against our database. We are also in the process of compiling detailed histories for 20 known family groups, so that we can investigate births and calf survival in this population recovering from poaching.

In May 2023, at the invitation of the Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute, STEP was invited to contribute to and provide technical assistance to a 2023 rapid demographic assessment (RDA) of the Ruaha-Rungwa ecosystem elephant population. During this exercise, STEP provided 5 days of training to observers and data collectors and helped to develop data collection tools and protocols for the RDA. STEP also conducted 11 days of data in June 2023, alongside two other teams, and contributed to the survey report.



STEP researcher in the field monitoring elephants in Ruaha National Park

3.2 Monitoring elephants in the Kilombero Valley

A key objective of STEP's work in the Kilombero Valley is to support the recovery of the Udzungwa-Selous elephant population and to secure long-term connectivity for elephants between Udzungwa and Selous through restoration of the Kilombero Elephant Corridor, a historic corridor that spans the Kilombero Valley. In November 2023, STEP deployed a camera trap grid comprising 32 stations along the Kilombero Elephant Corridor to monitor use of the corridor by elephants and other wildlife. This work is a collaboration between STEP, Lion Landscapes, and the Udzungwa Ecological Monitoring Centre. Between November 2023 and January 2024, these corridor camera traps detected 19 mammal species, including elephants, serval, side-striped jackal, honey badger, buffalo, red duiker, bushbuck, and large-spotted genet. STEP will also identify individual elephants from camera trap images and create a database of elephants that have been detected in the corridor, allowing for an estimate of the number of elephants using the corridor.



Bushbuck detected by a camera trap in the corridor

3.3. Monitoring human-elephant interactions

To help plan and evaluate human-elephant coexistence strategies, we continued monitoring of elephant activity and crop losses on village land with a team of community enumerators known as Local Elephant Monitors. Our monitoring data suggest that crop damage levels were lower in 2023 relative to previous years. Our data also helped us to identify key predictors of crop damage, including distance to village centre, human population density, distance to river, and recency of conversion from natural habitat to cropland.

3.4 Trialling farm- and household-based interventions

Finding affordable and effective ways to protect farms from elephants is one way that we aim to enhance coexistence between people and elephants. The development and trialling of elephant deterrents with farmers continued to be an important area of innovation and learning for STEP. In 2023, we trialled whether combining existing beehive fences with a second deterrent would enhance their efficacy at keeping elephants away from farmland. This trial was done in collaboration with a Tanzanian MSc student (see section 3.5). We also continued our work with village governments and farmer's group to maintain existing crop protection fences using solar-powered strobe lights and metal strips in two villages.

In villages around Rungwa-Kizigo-Muhesi, elephants are known to damage food stores. In 2023, we expanded our trial (begun in 2022) of an alternative food store design (first developed in Zambia) to determine whether it is more effective at protecting crops from elephants. We constructed a further 12 food stores with households participating in the trial and, to date, none of these stores have been damaged by elephants. In the upcoming year, we will interview households to understand their views on these food stores and to gauge whether people in the community are willing to contribute financially to alternative food stores.

3.5 Capacity building

One of our goals is to build capacity for research in Tanzania and, in doing so, facilitate scientific studies that inform our elephant conservation work. In 2023, we supported three Tanzanian Master's students in the conservation field. This support included helping students to design a research project and provision of mentoring and training in data collection methods and data analysis, and a bursary to support fieldwork.

Irene Laizer, one of our first students under this program, submitted her dissertation to the Sokoine University of Agriculture in October 2023 and graduated in May 2024. Irene's MSc study focused on human-elephant interactions around water sources in villages around Rungwa and Kizigo Game Reserves. Her dissertation provides new insights into how elephants and people share water sources in this semi-arid area, as well as concerns that communities have, that can inform efforts to ensure that people have access to safe water supplies and enhance coexistence.

The research project of another student under this program, Grace Mchome, focused on understanding the efficacy - as well as farmers' views of – three types of mitigation fences: solar-powered strobe lights fencing, beehive fencing combined with solar lights, and beehive fencing combined with metal strips. Grace completed her fieldwork in mid-2023, investigating elephant responses to these mitigation fences by observing elephant behaviour using camera traps and ground surveys, and by conducting interviews with farmers to learn more about how farmers view these mitigation methods. This research indicates that elephants approaching farms were deterred by solar-powered strobe lights >60% of the time over a three-year period, and that combining beehives with a second deterrent enhances their efficacy. Grace presented her findings at the TAWIRI Scientific Conference in Arusha, Tanzania in December 2023, and expects to submit her dissertation in mid-2024.



MSc student Grace Mchome presenting at the TAWIRI Scientific Conference in December 2024

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Policy on Reserves

The Charity operates with limited cash reserves. The Trustees' objective is to maintain a sufficient balance to meet committed expenditure on current projects and cover foreseeable administration expenses.

Financial Review

Accounts in separate document

Approved by the trustees on 12/08/2024 and signed on their behalf by:

Helen Pearson



Dated: 12/08/2024

SOUTHERN TANZANIA ELEPHANT TRUST

Charity registration number 1179460

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023**



SOUTHERN TANZANIA ELEPHANT TRUST

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SOUTHERN TANZANIA ELEPHANT TRUST

LEGAL & ADMIN INFORMATION FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Status

The trust was formed as an incorporated charity on 1st August 2018.

Trustees

Nicholas McWilliam
Helen Pearson
Nat Comber

Charity number

1179460

Independent Examiner

Community360
Winsley's House
High Street
Colchester
CO1 1UG

Business address

30 Barn Road
Stirling
FK8 1EP

Bankers

Natwest
Cleveleys Branch
Lancs
FY5 2AL

SOUTHERN TANZANIA ELEPHANT TRUST

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

I report on the accounts of Southern Tanzania Elephant Trust for the year ended 31st December 2023 which are set out on pages 3 to 5.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144 (2) of the Charities Act 2011 (The Act) but that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's Statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes considerations of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Shelley-Marie Rudling FMAAT AATQB for and on behalf of:
Community360

Winsley's House, High Street, Colchester, Essex



Date 25/09/2024

SOUTHERN TANZANIA ELEPHANT TRUST

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Receipts					
Donations, legacies and other similar receipts	2	2,084	50,595	52,679	32,910
Total receipts		2,084	50,595	52,679	32,910
Charitable payments					
Charitable activities	3	-	20,288	20,288	66,970
Governance		-	400	400	400
Total payments		-	20,688	20,688	67,370
Net of receipts/(payments)		2,084	29,907	31,991	(34,460)
Cash funds as at 1 December 2022		5,218	54,085	59,303	93,763
Cash funds as at 31 December 2023	4	7,302	83,992	91,294	59,303

Notes on pages 5 form part of these accounts

SOUTHERN TANZANIA ELEPHANT TRUST

STATEMENT OF ASSET AND LIABILITIES AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
<u>Monetary assets</u>			
Cash at bank and in hand:		91,294	59,303
Total monetary assets		91,294	59,303
<u>Funds</u>			
Unrestricted	4	7,302	5,218
Restricted	4	83,992	54,085
Total Funds		91,294	59,303
<u>Other monetary assets</u>			
<u>Liabilities</u>			
Independent examiner fee	5	400	400
		400	400

These accounts were approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by :

Signed: 

Date: 25/09/2024

Helen Pearson

SOUTHERN TANZANIA ELEPHANT TRUST

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

- These accounts are prepared on a receipts and payments basis, following best practice as laid down in the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (SORP 2019) issued in 2019, with all revenue and expenses shown on a cash basis.
Non-monetary Assets and Liabilities are shown as actual values at the end of the year.

Period

These accounts cover a 12 month period from 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023.

2. Donations, legacies and other similar receipts	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund	2023 Total	2022 Total
	£	£	£	£
Donations	2,084	50,595	52,679	32,910
	2,084	50,595	52,679	32,910
3. Charitable activities	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund	2023 Total	2022 Total
	£	£	£	£
Insurance	-	265	265	247
Return of funds	-	20,000	20,000	-
Donation	-	-	-	66,670
Bank charges	-	23	23	53
	-	20,288	20,288	66,970
4. Cash Funds	Balance at 01/01/23	Incoming	Outgoing	Balance at 31/12/23
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted				
General fund	5,218	2,084	-	7,302
	5,218	2,084	-	7,302
Restricted Funds				
Wild Planet Trust	452	25,000	- 665	24,787
Bristol Chester Zoo	-	5,000	-	5,000
Association Mazingira	-	10,391	-	10,391
MBOMIPA Protection Project	23,534	-	(20,023)	3,511
Corridor restoration	17,083	-	-	17,083
Pro Wildlife	13,017	10,204	-	23,221
Totals	54,086	50,595	(20,688)	83,992

- The Independent Examiners Fee will be £400.00.
- No remuneration was paid to any trustee or to any person(s) known to be connected with any of them.
- There were no related parties within the year.
- The charity is operating on a going concern basis.
- During the year, there were Nil employees (2022: Nil).