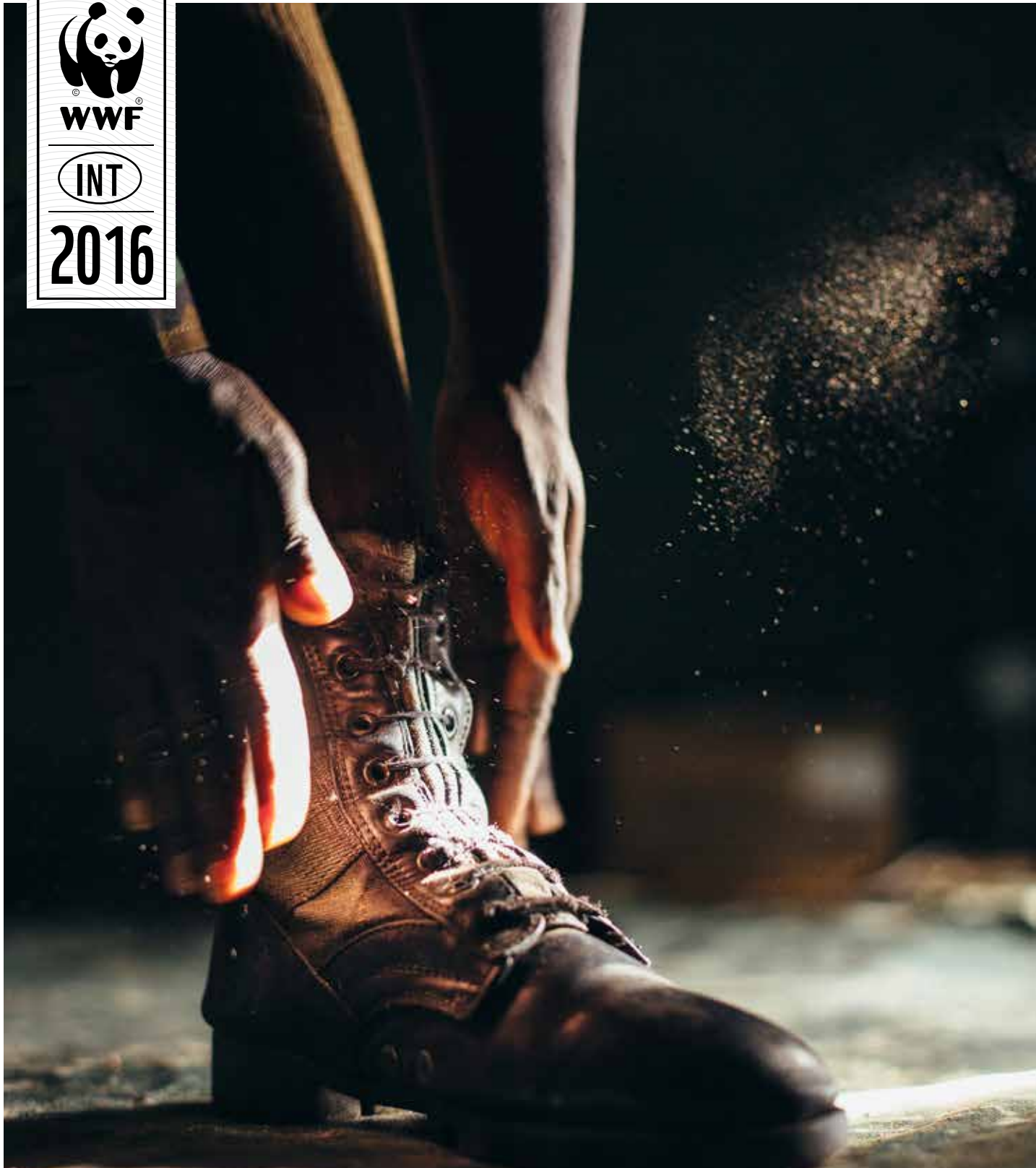




WWF

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2016



RANGER PERCEPTIONS AFRICA



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Prepared by WWF and TRAFFIC Wildlife Crime Initiative

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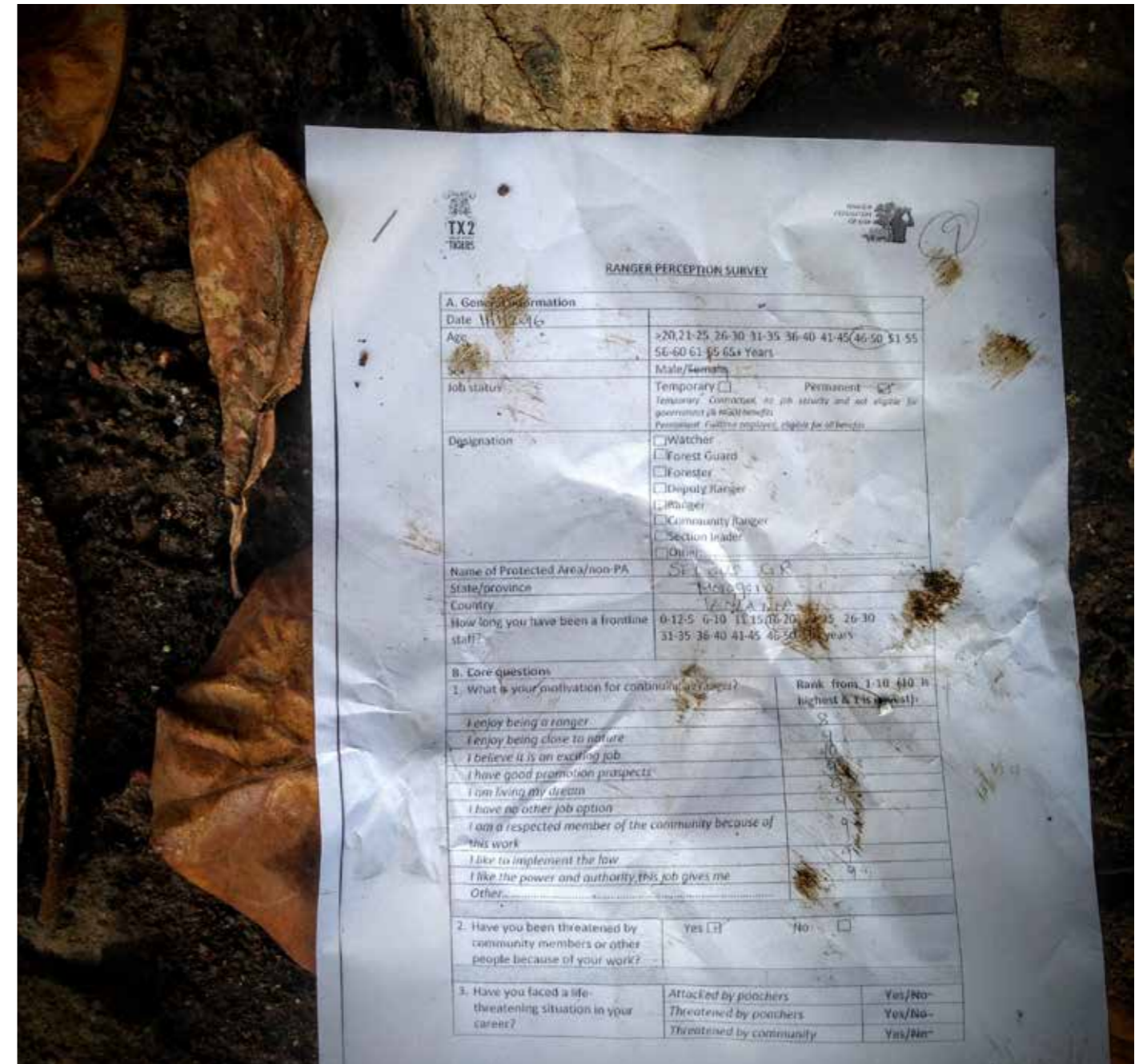
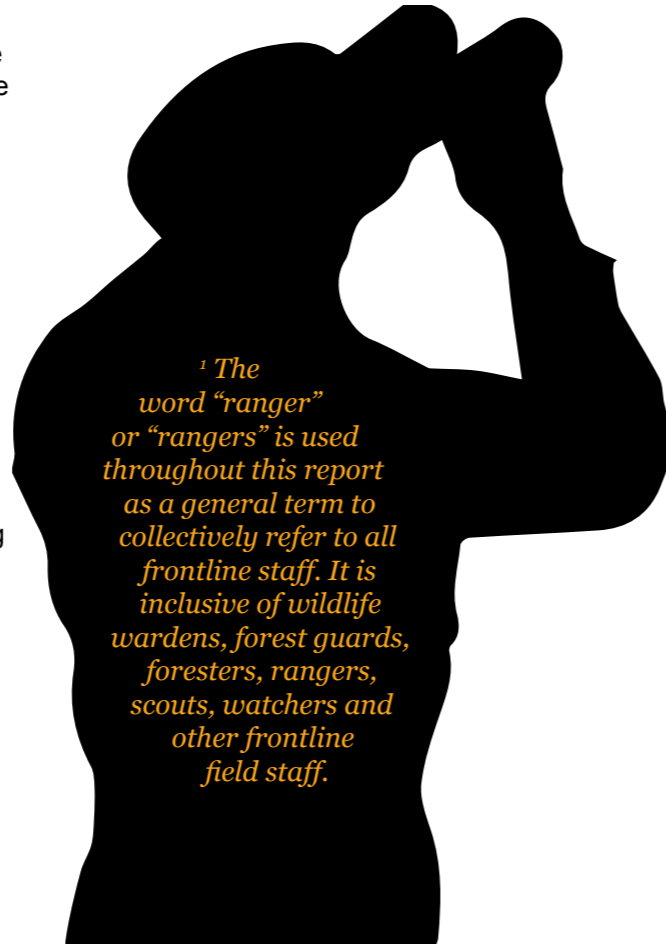
SURVEY RATIONALE

The poor and hazardous working conditions of Africa's wildlife rangers¹ are well known to anyone working in the field and are now appearing more frequently in the media, which is helping to raise public awareness and concern.

Yet little has been done to systemically study and report on ranger working conditions. Nor has there been an attempt to better understand how rangers feel about their work, their major concerns, challenges, and rewards, as well as their overall job satisfaction.

This Ranger Perceptions: Africa survey is the second in a series of reports that aim to shed light on these matters. The intent of this survey – like the previous one on Asia's rangers and the upcoming one on rangers in Latin America – is to provide a snapshot of rangers' personal views of their working conditions, and so gain a deeper insight into the factors that affect their motivation.

These surveys are just the start. They will be followed by two more in-depth reports: one on objective working condition indicators (pay, hours worked, access to equipment, etc.) and a second more detailed perception survey incorporating in-depth interviews with a larger number of rangers. Together these reports should spark greater interest in the working conditions of rangers and so influence and improve government policy towards those on the wildlife frontline.



METHODS

This survey used a similar set questions to the one employed for the previous Ranger Perceptions: Asia survey (see list of questions and complete results below) to gain an insight into the issues that may influence ranger motivation in Africa and ensure that the two studies could be compared. The survey incorporates elements of their work that rangers find most discouraging and ranks factors identified as important to a ranger's day-to-day work, such as facilities, equipment, training, infrastructure, hours worked, and pay. Other data collected look at broader issues such as degree of authority, work/life balance and perception by (or threats from) local communities.

A total of 570 rangers from 65 sites in 12 African countries were surveyed; participants included individuals from Cameroon, Central African Republic, Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

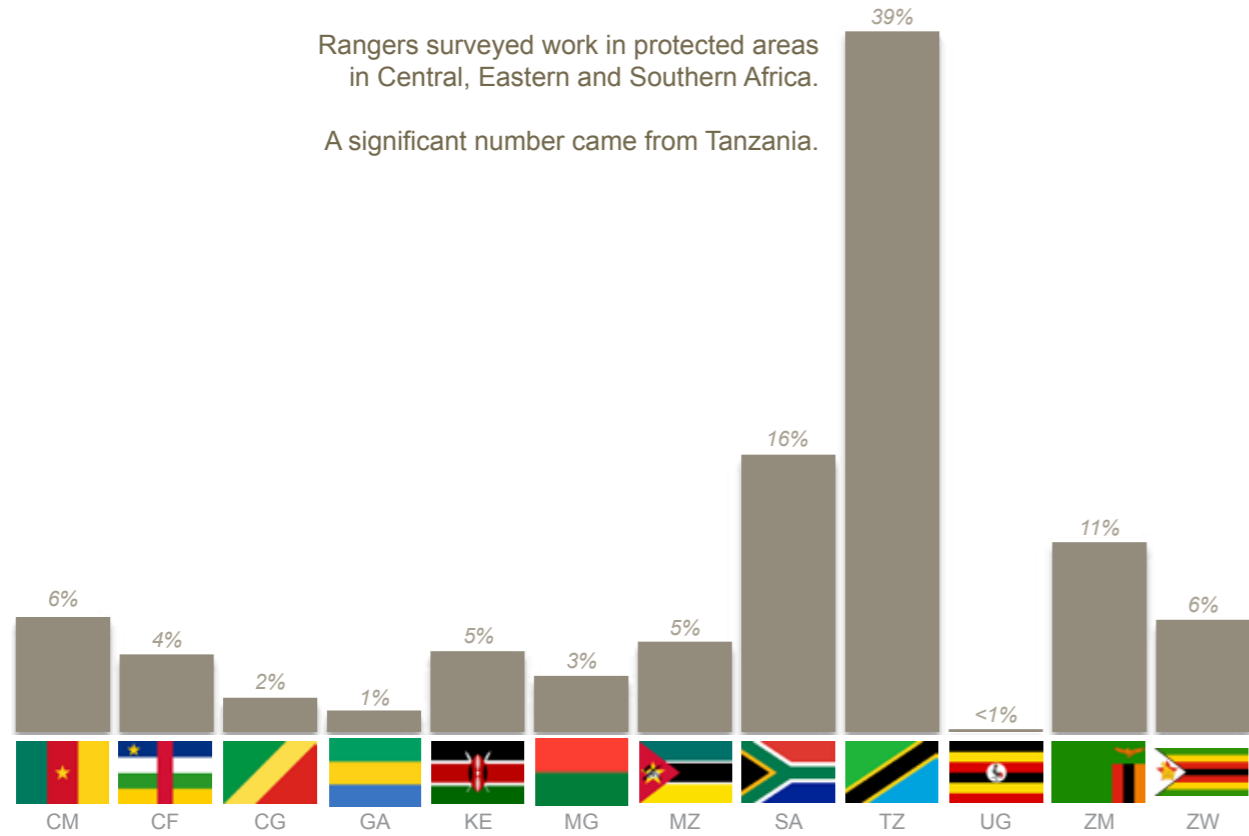
The vast majority of data inputs were gathered through personal interviews conducted by surveyors within each country. Each surveyor was briefed on the survey guidelines prior to conducting interviews to ensure that data were collected in a uniform and error-free manner.

The survey is a rapid assessment, and as such the findings should not be viewed as representative for any individual country, nor should they be extrapolated to the African continent as a whole. The survey does not include armed forces posted on deputation in national parks and wildlife sanctuaries.

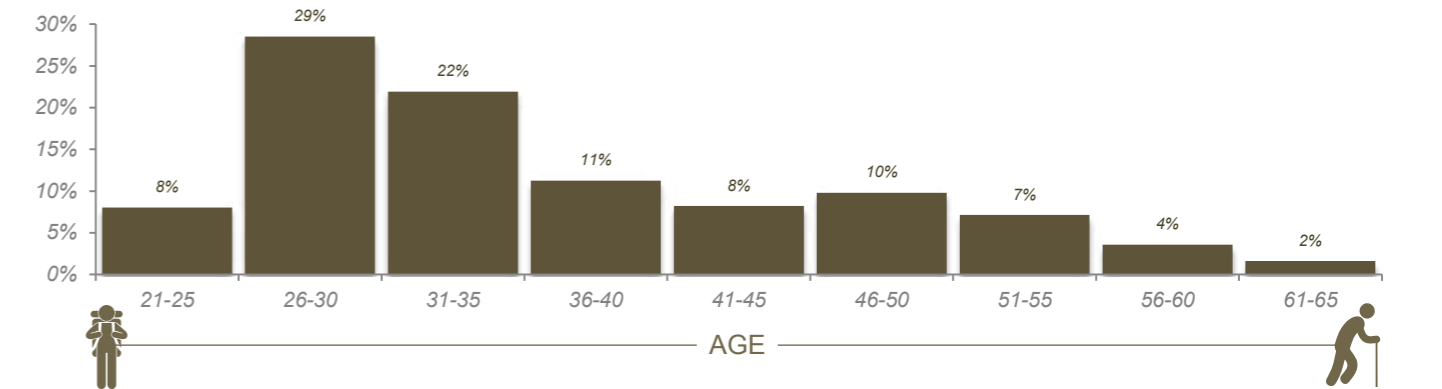
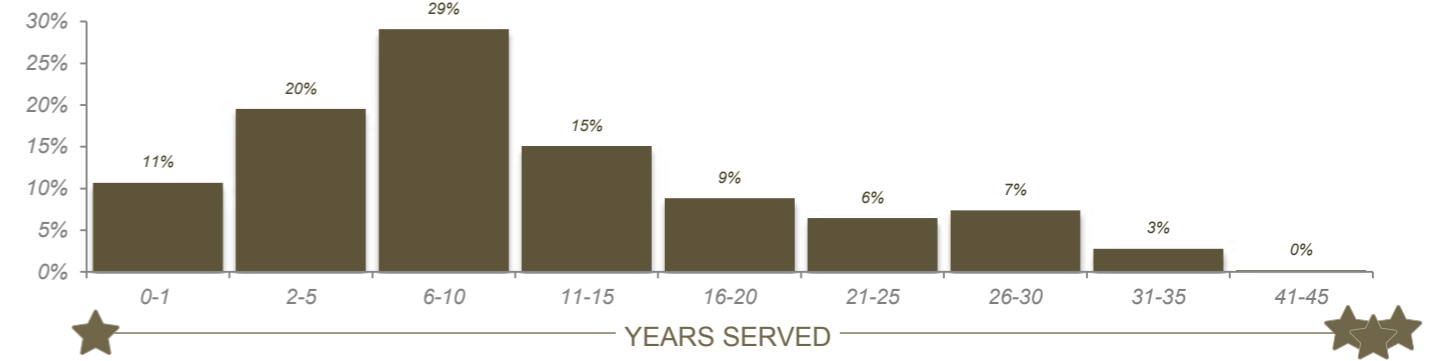
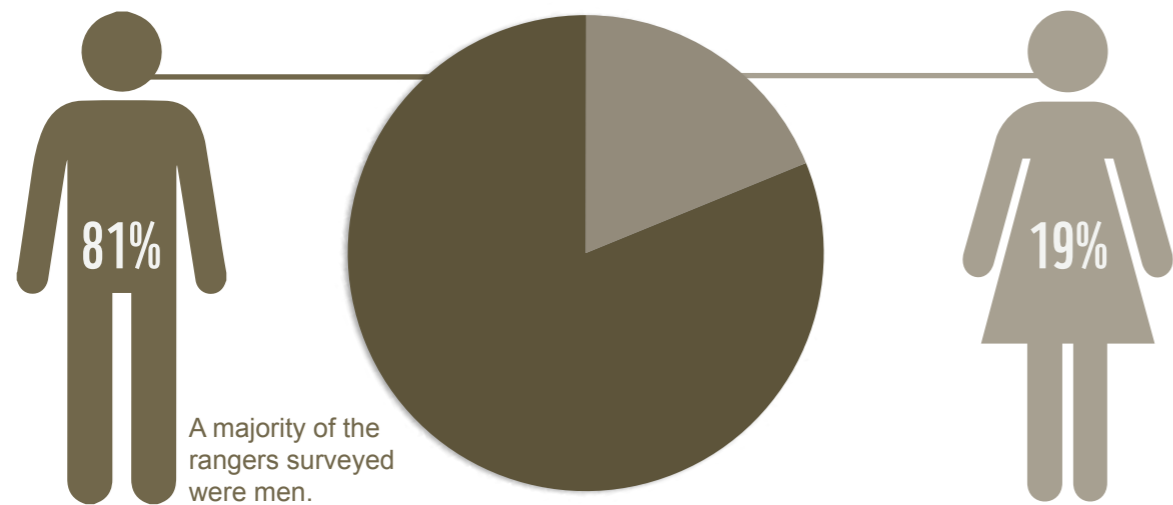
FIGURE 1: CONTEXT

570 TOTAL RESPONSES

Rangers surveyed work in protected areas in Central, Eastern and Southern Africa. A significant number came from Tanzania.



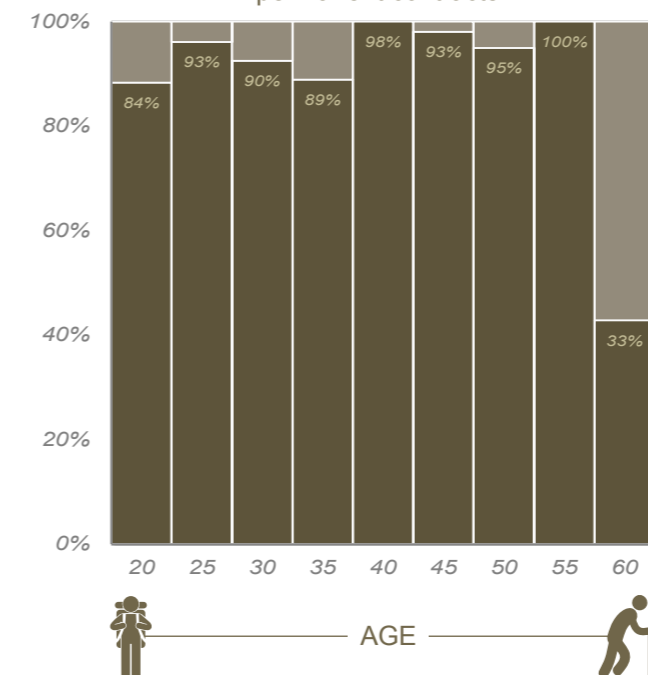
CM = Cameroon; CF = Central African Republic; CG = Republic of the Congo; GA = Gabon; KE = Kenya; MG = Madagascar; MZ = Mozambique; SA = South Africa; TZ = Tanzania; UG = Uganda; ZM = Zambia; ZW = Zimbabwe



Nearly all rangers surveyed were permanently employed.



Most rangers, regardless of age, were on permanent contracts.



Most rangers, regardless of number of years served, were on permanent contracts.

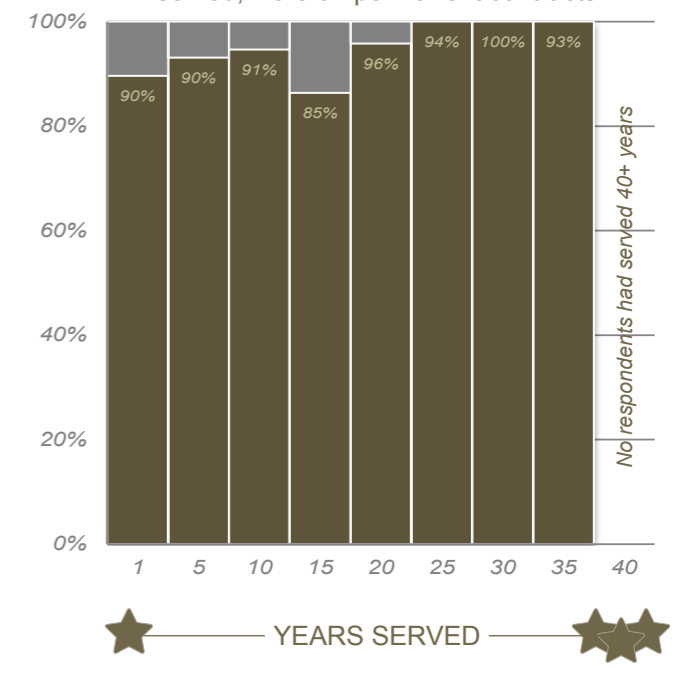
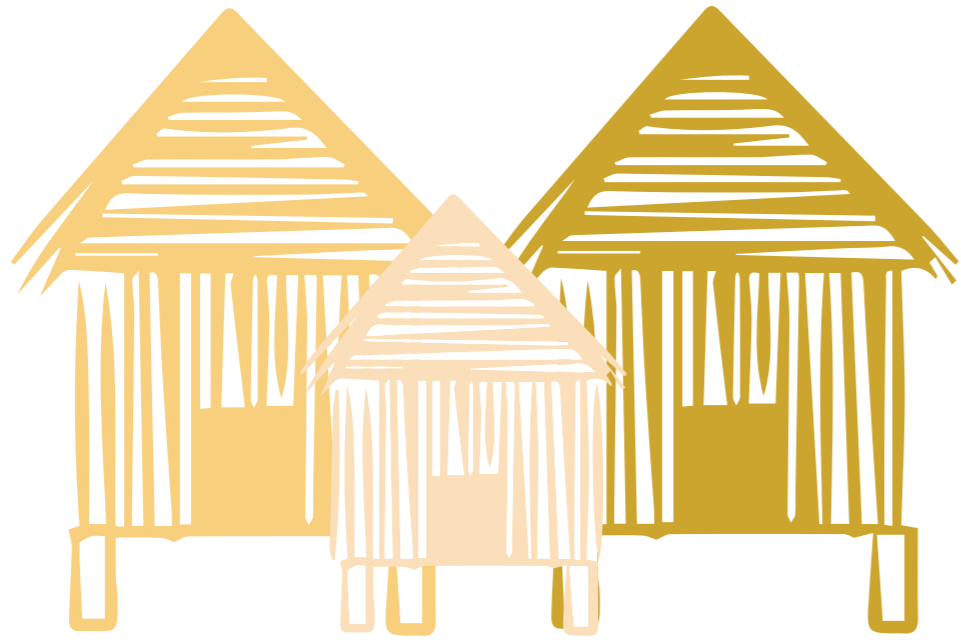
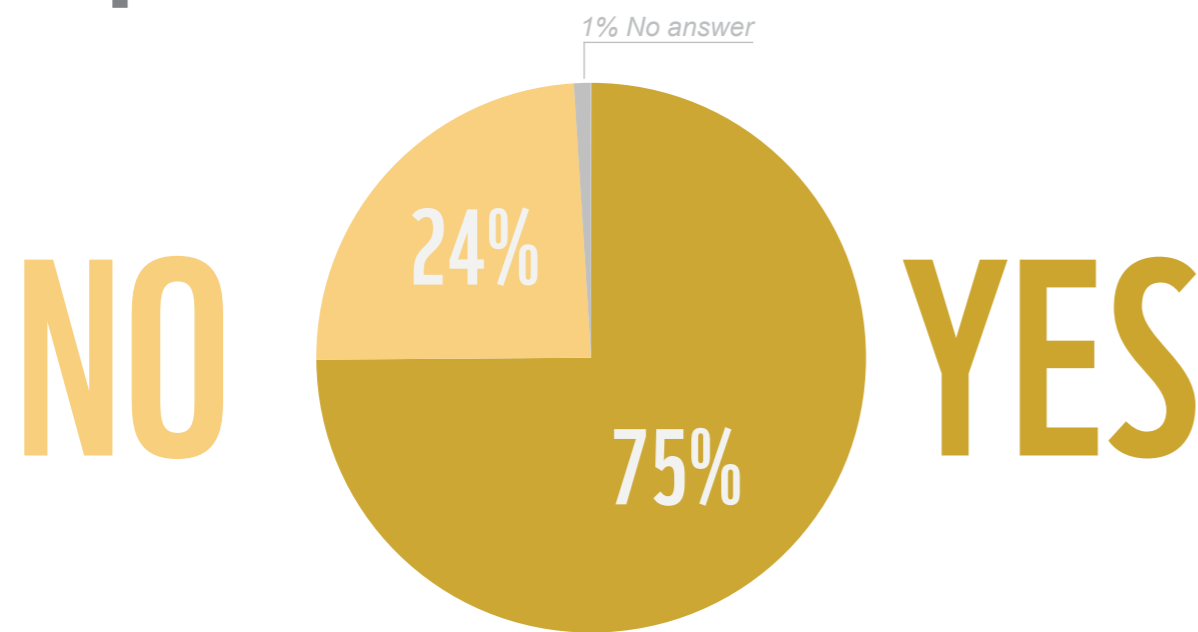


FIGURE 2: THREAT



Have you been threatened by community members or other people because of this work?



Have you faced a life threatening situation?

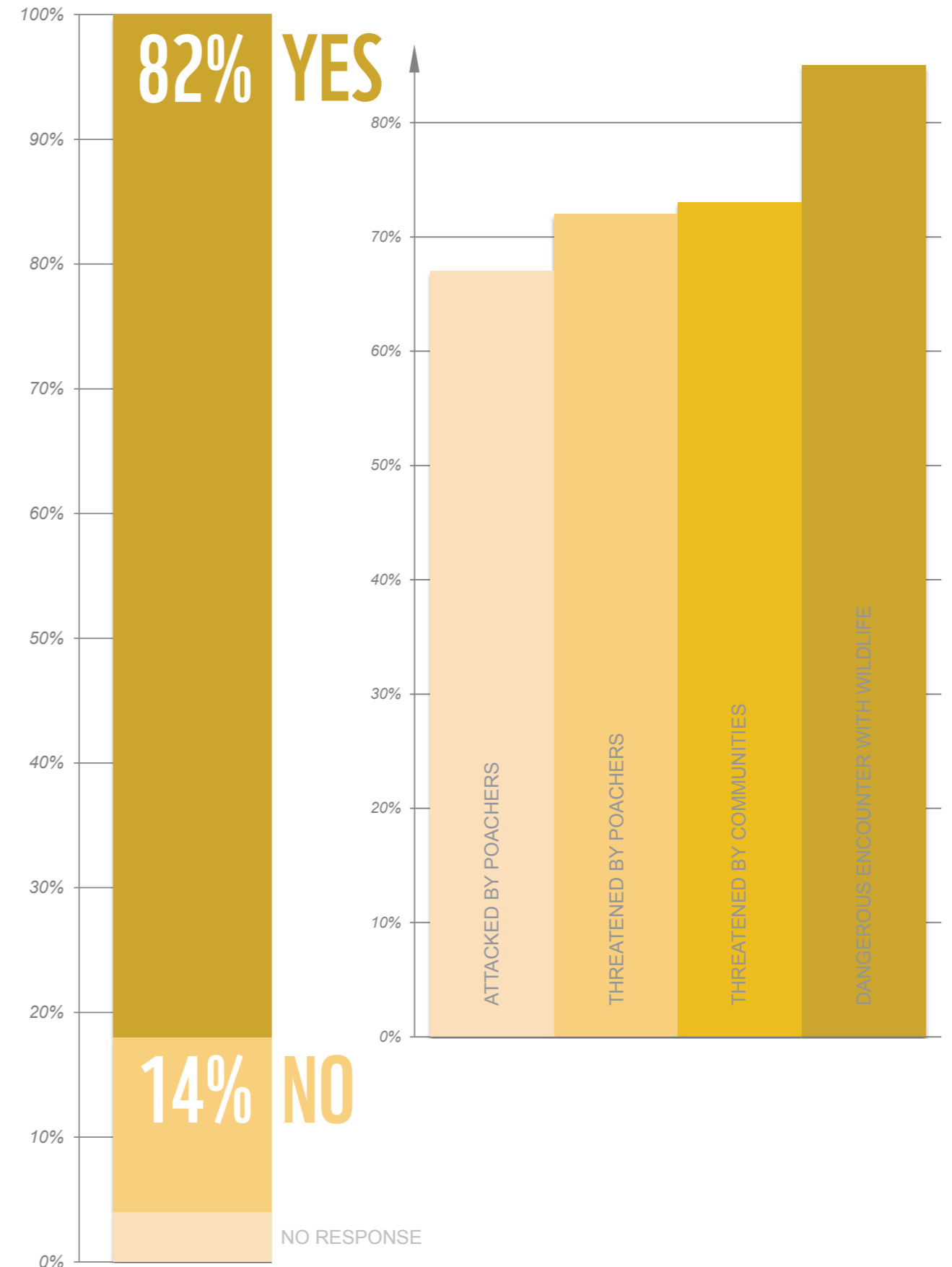


FIGURE 3: FAMILY

How many days a month do you get to see your family?

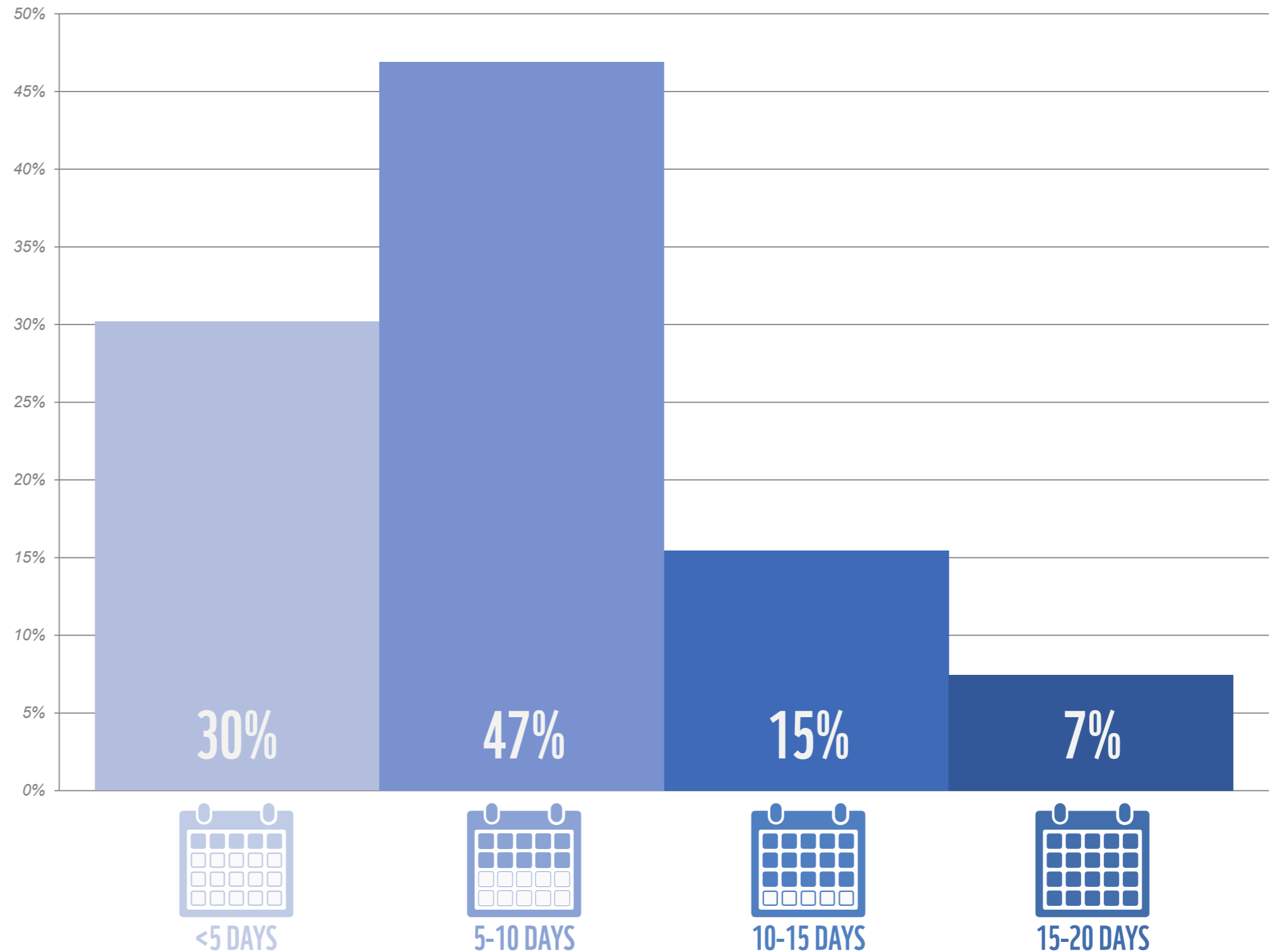


FIGURE 4: WORKING CONDITIONS

Have working conditions become better or worse?

SINCE BECOMING A RANGER

OVER THE LAST 3 YEARS

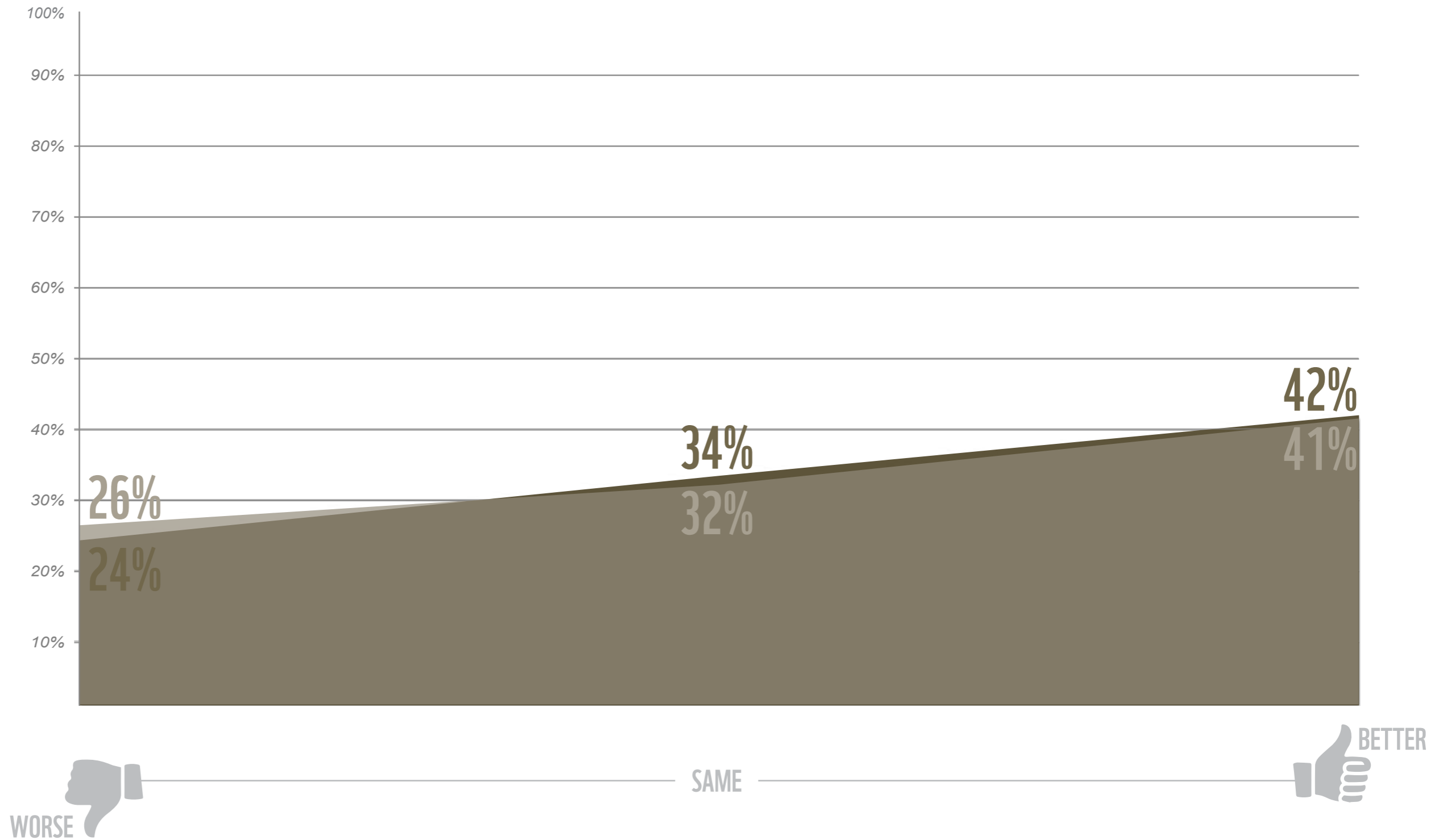
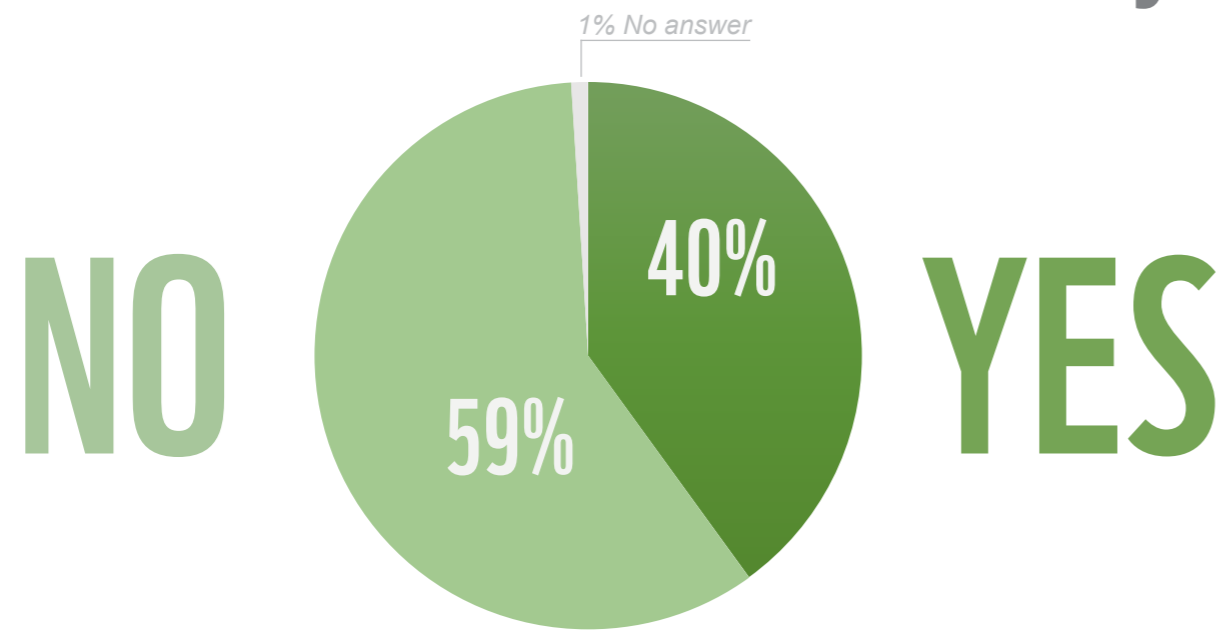


FIGURE 5: ENABLING CONDITIONS



Do you feel you are provided with proper equipment and amenities to ensure safety?



Do you feel you are adequately trained to do your job?

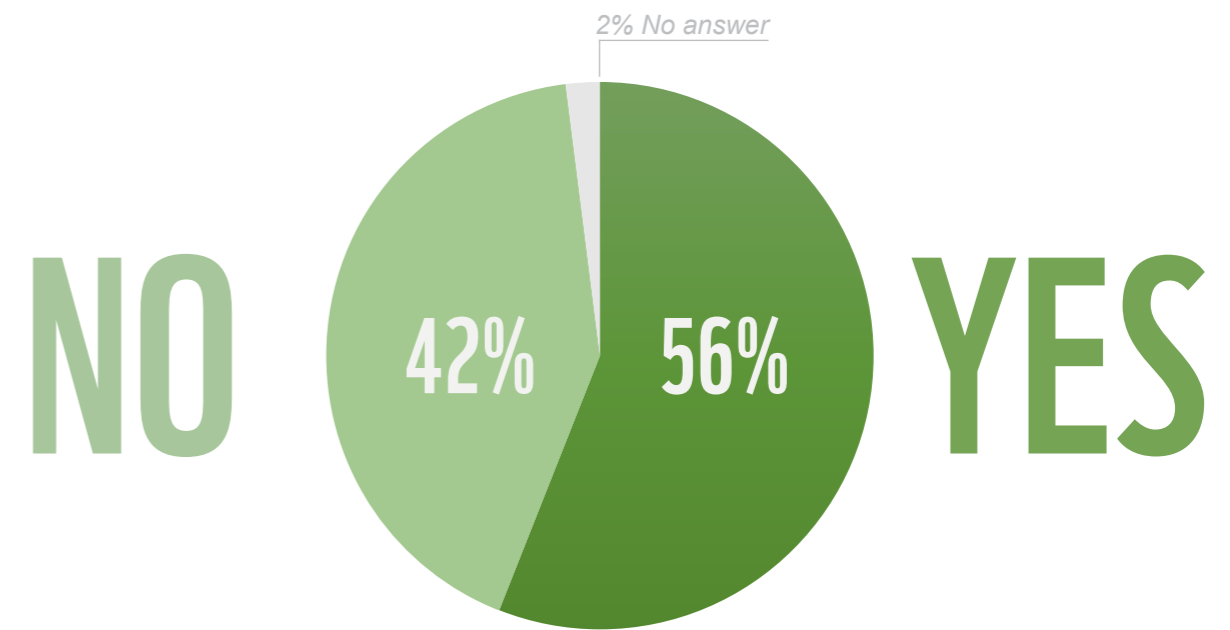


FIGURE 6: MENTALITY

What is your motivation for continuing as a ranger?

What is the worst aspect of being a ranger?

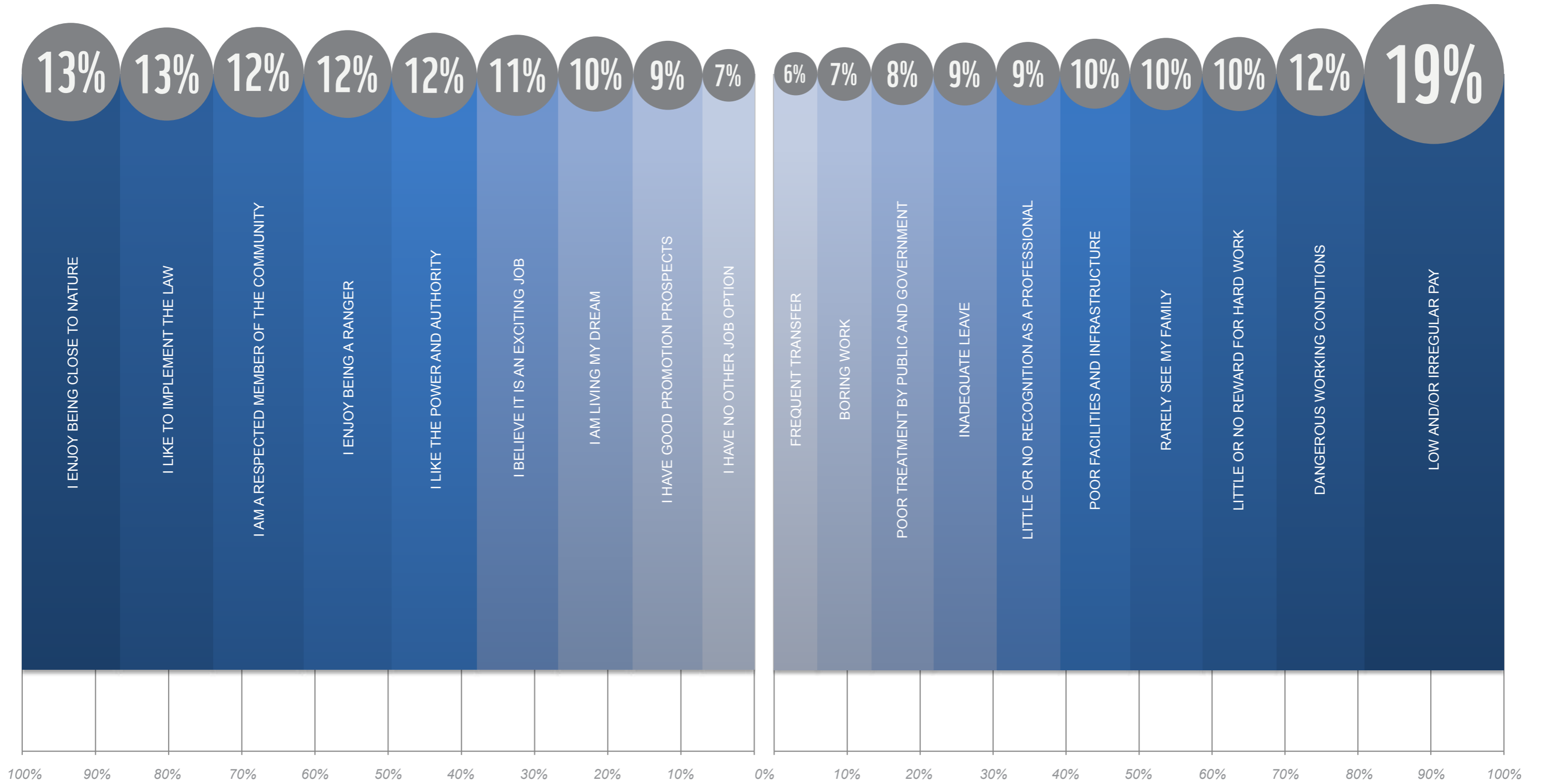
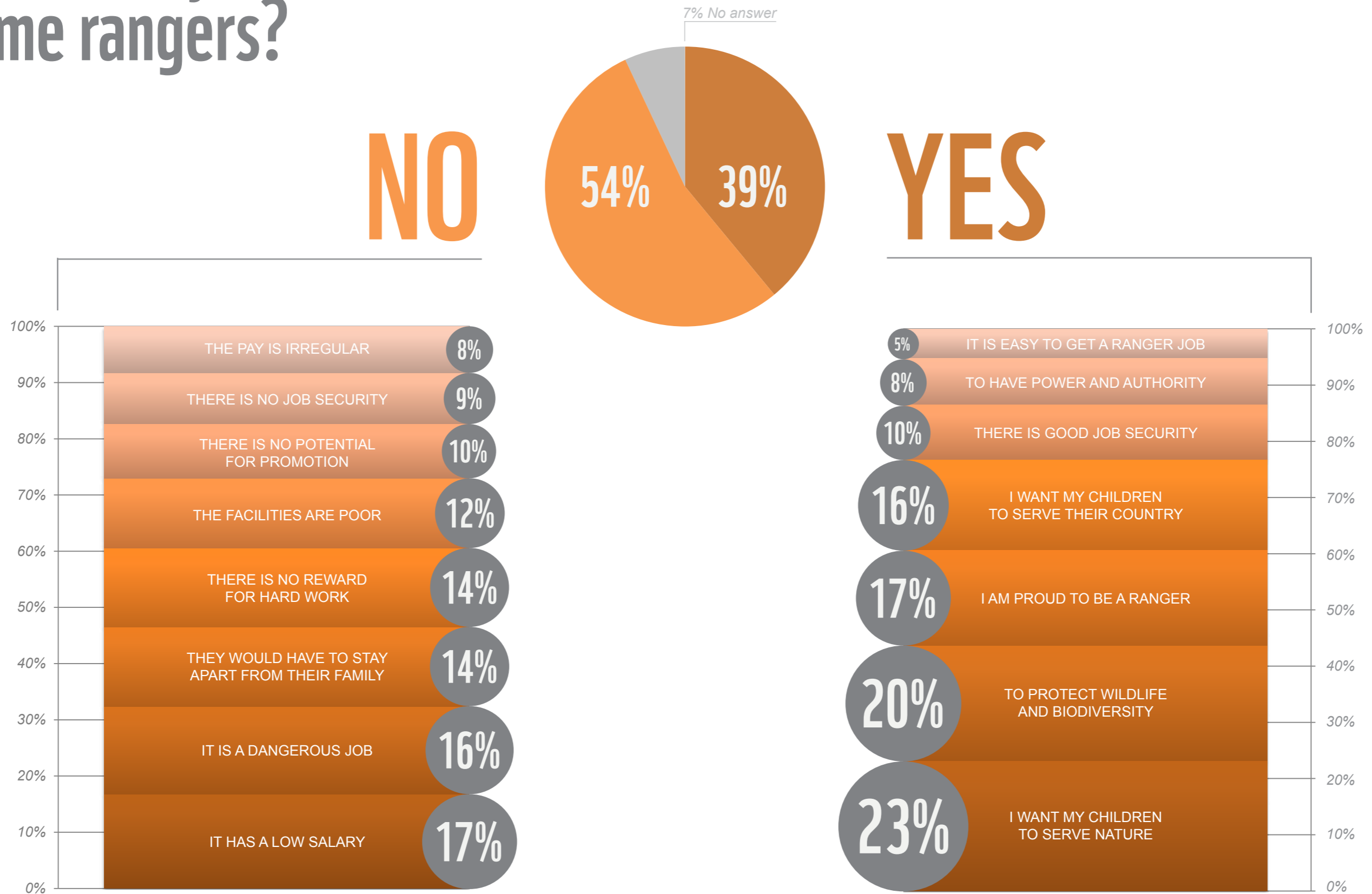


FIGURE 7: FUTURE

Do you want your children to become rangers?



RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of this survey, which covered 65 sites in 12 African countries, the following priority recommendations should be implemented by those responsible for staffing, planning, delivering and supporting ranger work on the continent. In the vast majority of cases, responsibility will rest with government agencies or departments, particularly Environment, Forestry, Natural Resources, and Finance.

Recommendation 1: Make targeted interventions to improve basic employment conditions for rangers

With dangerous working conditions, low salary, and inadequate leave frequently topping the list of the worst aspects of ranger work, one of the greatest challenges is to improve basic labour indicators throughout this sector. Additionally, there is not enough recognition by governments and the public of either the importance or the daily difficulties of ranger work.

Poaching is a serious crime that should be a national priority since it:

- (i) degrades or irrevocably destroys valuable biological resources and ecosystems;
- (ii) renders ineffective the millions of dollars governments invest annually in conservation spending;
- (iii) weakens the local perception of rule of law; and
- (iv) allows foreign criminal syndicates to violate the territorial integrity of the state and poses a serious threat to frontline staff.

Considering this, rangers should be treated similarly to other valued public employees who risk their physical wellbeing to protect the interests of the state – such as police, border officials, fire fighters, military, and emergency response specialists. Rangers should be professionalized to the same extent as others performing comparable functions.

Recommendation 2: Ensure equipment levels and training are adequate to improve ranger effectiveness

With nearly half of African rangers indicating that they do not feel adequately trained to do their job, and almost two-thirds believing they do not have the proper material support to stay safe in the field, there is clearly a pressing need to rectify these shortcomings. With so many rangers having lost their lives while on duty in recent years, this problem needs to be approached with the gravity and urgency it deserves.

There are two critical components;

(1) Institutionalize capacity building programmes for rangers: Based on the survey results, there is a clear need to implement systemic changes that improve the quality and frequency of ranger training. The most efficient way to achieve this is through the establishment of specialized



colleges and institutions, which can develop and deliver a tailor-made curriculum based on best available practices, as well as adapt it to any emerging threats. While a few colleges exist in Africa, more need to be established to provide training for new recruits as well as on-job-the training.

(2) Improve ranger access to critical equipment: Although many NGOs have been trying to fill this gap, there still remains a considerable shortfall in the provision of the health supplies, vehicles, weapons, boots, shelter and potable water required to keep rangers safe and ensure their effectiveness. Countries themselves will need to allocate greater budgets for such items in the vast majority of landscapes where rangers work.

It is worth noting that international momentum to tackle poaching has grown in the past two years through high-level meetings in the UK and Botswana, the development of regional and continental strategies to tackle wildlife crime in Africa, the historic United Nations General Assembly resolution against illegal wildlife trade, and a specific poaching outcome in the Sustainable Development Goals. Unfortunately, a huge gulf still exists between the discourse at this level and the material support being provided to the frontline agents in the fight against poachers. If this inconsistent approach persists, hopes for a far more effective, collaborative and ramped-up global approach to the poaching crisis will be largely squandered.

Recommendation 3: Conduct further studies to improve ranger welfare, job satisfaction and motivation, and help facilitate attempts by other organizations to do the same

Additional surveys that go into greater detail have the potential to provide a more complete picture of the challenges and conditions that impact rangers and their effectiveness. In particular, there is an urgent need to conduct a detailed survey on employment conditions of rangers working in Africa.

Along with a more comprehensive analysis, there is a need to involve a larger number of rangers. As governments often have the final authority to approve such studies, they should do so, and without hesitation – viewing them as an opportunity to gather more actionable information that their wildlife conservation operations can benefit from. WWF has recently initiated a detailed phase II survey on rangers in Asia in collaboration with University of Central Florida. A similar survey in Africa should be a priority of governments and wildlife authorities across the continent.

Additionally, governments should do what they can to enhance awareness among the public and civil society about wildlife conservation issues in general and ranger welfare in particular. Governments should also consider incentive systems for frontline staff for their hard work.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many institutions and individuals contributed to this survey. WWF would like to thank all WWF programme offices in Africa. We would also like to thank the Southern African Wildlife College, Game Ranger Association of Africa, United For Rangers, PAMS Foundation, Tanzania Ranger Association, International Ranger Federation and Ranger Federation of Asia. The survey team is also grateful to Wayne Lotter, Ruben De Cock and David Yunza for their support in implementing the survey.

We are also highly indebted to the hundreds of frontline staff from Cameroon, Central African Republic, Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe who kindly contributed to this survey.

Report in Numbers

100%
RECYCLED



2014

Launch of WWF
and TRAFFIC
Wildlife Crime
Initiative

12

Responses came
from 12 countries



570

Number
of rangers
surveyed

65

Rangers from 65
sites participated



Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and
to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

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