



**BIG LIFE**  
FOUNDATION

**QUARTERLY REPORT**  
OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2018



I won't forget the last quarter of 2018 anytime soon. It took us all on an emotional rollercoaster ride.

More than two years ago, Big Life started work on a series of electric crop-protection fences in the ecosystem. The goal was to reduce local farmers' losses to raiding elephants, which has always been a key source of conflict between the two species. With Phase 2 approaching completion, and over 75 km of fence line now constructed, we were faced with uncharted territory: the closing of the fence on either side of the Kimana Crossing.

It is at this point where elephants and other animals coming from Amboseli National Park have only a 250-foot gap to pass safely between the farmland areas on their way to the Kimana Sanctuary and the open spaces beyond. Furthermore, this same point crosses a heavily-trafficked paved road. To mitigate the impact, we constructed a series of speed bumps to slow traffic, but the whole experience is still very uncomfortable for any wild animal. I had no idea how the elephants would react: was it going to be chaos channeling them through a narrow and stressful gap?

Turns out, I needn't have worried. It took no time at all for these intelligent animals to adapt. A day after the crossing was completed, the first herd of elephants crossed in broad daylight. Since then, there has been steady use of the crossing by a variety of species, and our camera traps have even captured lion and aardvark using it.

On the subject of crop-protection fencing, I am deeply satisfied to see how well it's working. Two years ago, in the fourth quarter of 2016, Big Life rangers recorded a total of 112 acres of crops destroyed in 199 crop raids by elephants. Over the same period in 2018, rangers recorded only 30 acres destroyed in 49 incidents of elephant crop raiding. This is a 75% reduction in crop raids recorded by Big Life in the ecosystem, and the continuing problems are almost exclusively in the unfenced areas. More importantly, the community agrees with the success of the fence project. In a recent survey of 388 farmers, 97% of respondents said that the fence has been effective at eliminating human-elephant conflict.

There were scary moments this past quarter as well. Tim, probably Amboseli's biggest bull elephant and one that Big Life rangers spend a lot of time protecting, got stuck neck-deep in a muddy swamp. The chances of saving him were slim, and we were all prepared for the worst. But as has so often been the case, we were able to call on friends and partners, in this case Kenya Wildlife Service and the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, and work together in an almost unbelievable effort to get him out. Somehow, Tim survived to live another day and has recovered from his ordeal, recently seen in musth for the first time in a couple of years, which is fantastic as it means that he is strong and in good health.

There was news, too, for our predator protection efforts. We took an important step with the official signing of an agreement for Big Life to expand our Predator Compensation Fund on Eselengei Group Ranch, which forms the northern boundary of the Greater Amboseli safe zone for wildlife. We were reminded of this in December, after three lions were killed when they ventured north beyond Eselengei and preyed on community livestock. The lines have been drawn, and we will continue to do everything we can to support conservation in the spaces where wild animals still have a home.

The fourth quarter ended with a bang. An exciting component of Big Life's predator protection program, the Maasai Olympics reached its much-anticipated biennial peak on December 15. Two of the teams were tied going into the final event of the competition, an indication that this has become a sporting event in the

truest and most exciting sense and was a real nail-biter for all attending.

At the end of another year, as always, I extend a huge and heartfelt thanks to everyone who makes our work possible.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Bonham'.

*Richard Bonham,  
Director of Operations, Big Life Kenya*

## WHERE WE WORK

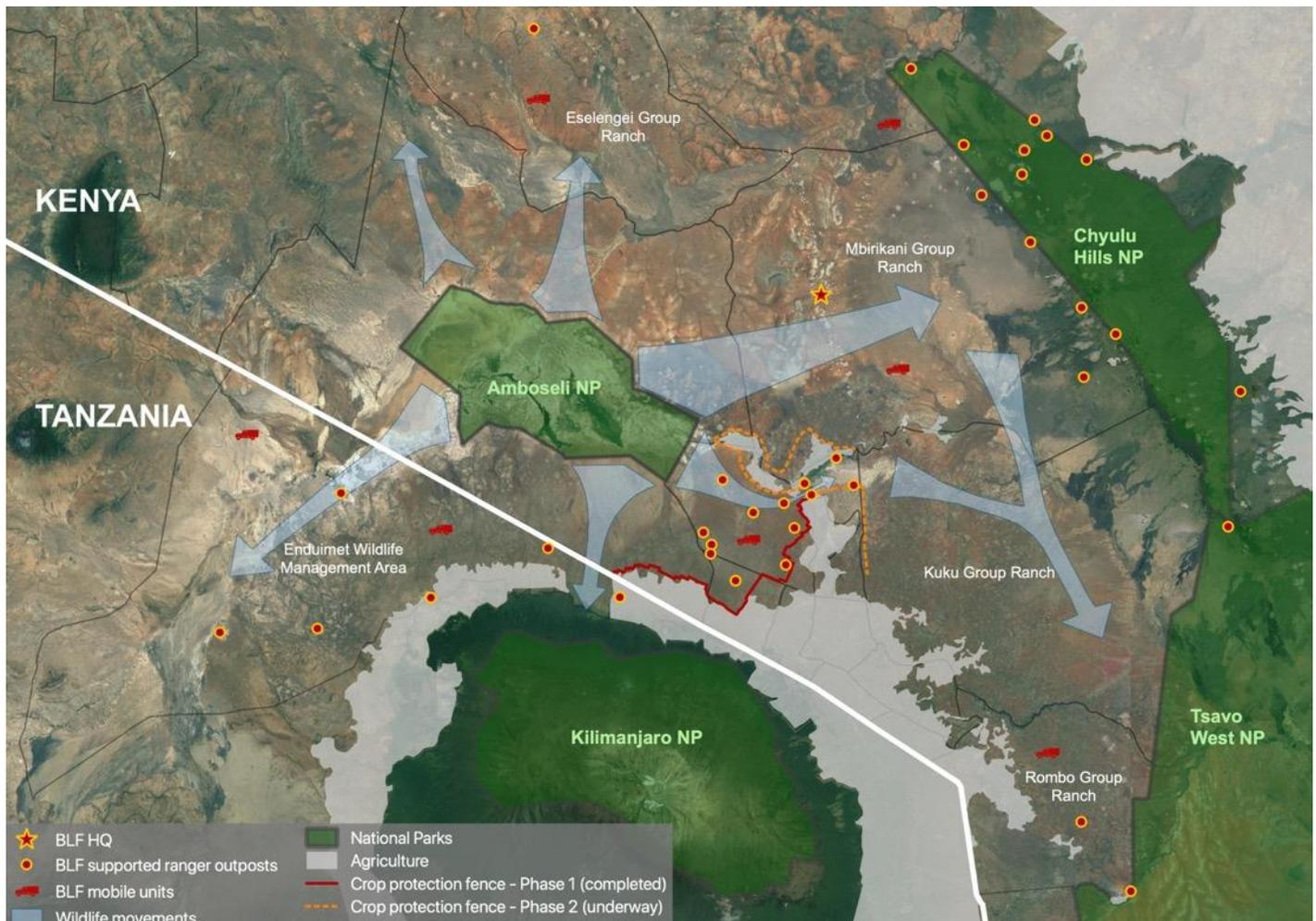
**Big Life Foundation's (Big Life) Area of Operation (AOO)** covers approximately 1.6 million acres across the Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro (Greater Amboseli) ecosystem in East Africa. Our rangers help to protect and secure wildlife and critical habitat stretching from the rangelands north of Amboseli to the Chyulu Hills and Tsavo West National Parks in the east, and south to Kilimanjaro National Park. The area is a central connection point for migrating wildlife and contains some of the most important habitat left in Africa. Big Life was the first organization in the region to conduct collaborative cross-border patrols between Kenya and Tanzania.

Our AOO is divided into a core area with a permanent security presence, a non-core area that is actively patrolled by mobile units, and adjacent areas where we provide support as needed. The level of Big Life support provided varies between outposts.

**Core AOO:** Eselengei Group Ranch, Kimana Area, Mbirikani Group Ranch, Rombo Group Ranch, Chyulu Hills National Park, and Enduimet Wildlife Management Area (Tanzania)

**Non-Core AOO:** Mailua Ranch, Merrueshi Ranch, Taveta Area

**Adjacent\*:** Amboseli National Park, Kuku Group Ranch, Tsavo West National Park



\* Incidents that occurred in adjacent areas or in Tanzania are not reflected in this report.

## WILDLIFE PROTECTION

Big Life strives to prevent the poaching of all wildlife within our area of operation. We track and apprehend poachers and collaborate with local prosecutors to ensure that they are punished to the fullest extent of the law. One of the largest employers of local Maasai in the ecosystem, Big Life’s community rangers are expertly trained and well-equipped to tackle a variety of wildlife crimes.

Since our inception, poaching of all animals has dramatically declined in our area of operation.

Our **2018 Q4** activity is summarized below:

### ANTI-POACHING

Big Life employs Maasai rangers from local communities who work collaboratively with a vast informer network and a number of tools to undertake a variety of anti-poaching activities.

Total Field Staff: <b>300+</b>	Trained Rangers: <b>228</b>
Ranger Units: <b>40</b>	Tracker Dogs: <b>3</b>
Mobile Ranger Units: <b>6</b>	Permanent Outposts: <b>31</b>
Aerial Surveillance Hours: <b>103</b>	Snares Found and Destroyed: <b>5</b>
Kilometers Patrolled This Quarter: On foot: <b>21,789</b> By vehicle: <b>71,111</b> <b>Q4 TOTAL: 92,900</b> <b>YTD TOTAL: 372,159</b>	Total Kilometers Patrolled Since Inception: On foot: <b>667,513</b> By vehicle: <b>1,864,124</b> <b>TOTAL: 2,531,637</b>

### WILDLIFE CRIME & ANTI-TRAFFICKING

Following the arrest of suspects by Big Life rangers, our Prosecution Officer monitors court cases to ensure that maximum penalties are pursued. Meanwhile, Big Life’s intelligence team remains actively involved in investigating wildlife trafficking, both in the immediate ecosystem and beyond.

<b>SUSPECTS ARRESTED</b> Poaching - Trophy Possession: <b>18</b> Poaching - Bushmeat: <b>6</b> Poaching – Intention: <b>1</b> Wildlife Trafficking: <b>2</b>	<b>RECOVERED ITEMS</b> Ivory: <b>251.1 kg</b> Rhino Horn: <b>0</b> Animal Skins: <b>1</b> (leopard) Other: pangolin scales ( <b>12</b> ), ostrich eggs ( <b>6</b> ), ostrich chicks ( <b>2</b> )
<b>INCIDENTS</b> Trophy Poaching: <b>11</b> Bushmeat Poaching: <b>3</b> Poaching – Intention: <b>1</b> Wildlife Trafficking: <b>1</b>	<b>PROSECUTIONS</b> Cases - Concluded: <b>1</b> ( <i>acquittal</i> ) Cases - Ongoing: <b>273</b> suspects

<p><b>MORTALITIES - ELEPHANT</b>  Human-Elephant Conflict: <b>1</b>  Poaching: <b>0</b>  Natural Causes: <b>0</b>  Unknown: <b>1</b></p> <p><i>*Ivory recovered in both mortality incidents</i></p>	<p><b>MORTALITIES – OTHER</b> (<i>excluding large predators</i>)  Human-Wildlife Conflict: <b>0</b>  Bushmeat Poaching: dik-dik (<b>3</b>), eland (<b>1</b>), gazelles (<b>7</b>), giraffe (<b>4</b>), hartebeest (<b>1</b>)  Other (<i>human-related</i>): civet (<b>2</b>), gazelles (<b>6</b>), genet (<b>1</b>), giraffe (<b>2</b>), snakes (<b>2</b>), wildebeest (<b>1</b>), zebra (<b>3</b>)</p>
<p><b>INJURIES - ELEPHANT</b>  Elephants Injured: <b>3</b> (<i>reported but not found</i>)  Elephants Treated*: <b>0</b>  <i>*Thanks to our partners at the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust and Kenya Wildlife Service.</i></p>	<p><b>RESCUES - OTHER ANIMALS</b>  Elephant (<b>1*</b>), wildebeest (<b>1</b>)  <i>*Tim – see link to story below</i></p>

## RHINO INTENSIVE PROTECTION ZONE

There are **eight** known Eastern black rhinos in Big Life’s area of operation. They spend most of their time in the densely-forested Chyulu Hills National Park, protected by dedicated Big Life rangers and the Kenya Wildlife Service. In addition to monitoring and protecting the resident rhinos, Big Life has been working to improve and maintain infrastructure in the rhino area, the goal of which is to achieve Intensive Protection Zone (IPZ) status, which will allow for the future inbound translocation of rhinos from other territories.

Rhino Mortalities: <b>0</b>	Rhino Snares Found: <b>0</b>
Rhino Protection Rangers: <b>51</b>	Dedicated Rhino Outposts: <b>7</b> Dedicated Rhino Units: <b>9</b>
<p><b>RHINO MONITORING</b>  Direct Sightings: <b>2</b>  Indirect Sightings (<i>via camera trap</i>): <b>10</b>  Spoor Sightings: <b>40</b></p>	<p><b>INFRASTRUCTURE</b>  Fencing: <b>40 km</b> constructed by DSWT  Water Points: <b>3</b> maintained  Camera traps: <b>30</b></p>

### NOTABLE UPDATES (click to read):

- [UNEARTHING TIM: A BATTLE TO RESCUE AN AMBOSELI ICON](#)
- [TOUGH LOVE TRACKER DOGS](#)



**HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT MITIGATION**

Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) takes three primary forms across Big Life’s area of operation: crops raided by wildlife, particularly elephants; livestock killed by predators, such as lions; and humans injured or killed due to living in close proximity with wildlife.

Our **2018 Q4** activity is summarized below:

**HUMAN-ELEPHANT CONFLICT MITIGATION**

Poaching continues to pose a significant threat, but many elephants face an even bigger challenge: conflict with humans. As the human population increases, so do competing land uses, such as farming and cattle grazing. As humans compete for limited resources like water, land, and grass for livestock, we further encroach onto what were once wild lands. With less space to share, people and animals now come into direct contact at an alarming rate and often with deadly results.

Crop-Raiding Incidents: <b>51</b> Crop-Raiding Incidents Involving Elephants: <b>49</b>	Acres Damaged: <b>30.5</b> Acres Damaged by Elephants: <b>30</b>
Crop Raids Prevented by Big Life: <b>47</b>	Elephant Retaliatory Hunts Attempted: <b>1 (stopped)</b>
Crop-Protection Rangers: <b>24</b> Crop-Protection Fence Constructed to Date: <b>75.2 km</b> Crop-Protection Fence Maintenance Workers: <b>22</b>	Non-crop-raiding, elephant-related incidents: <b>7</b> <i>*including water tanks/pipes damaged by elephants, boma destruction, etc.</i>

**PREDATOR PROTECTION**

Big Life protects vulnerable predators in the ecosystem in collaboration with partners and local communities. The core component of Big Life’s predator protection program is livestock compensation, which reduces the motivation for retaliatory killing in response to livestock depredation.

The Predator Compensation Fund (PCF) pays Maasai livestock owners a portion of the value of their livestock lost to predators, on the condition that no predators are killed in retaliation. Big Life previously managed the PCF on Olgulului Group Ranch and continues to manage the PCF on Mbirikani Group Ranch, and is actively expanding the program to Eselengei Group Ranch and the Kimana Conservancy. Given the success of this program, the goal is to expand the PCF across the entire ecosystem.

The second part of Big Life’s predator protection program is the Maasai Olympics, which was established in 2012 as an alternative for the traditional killing of lions. At the Maasai Olympics, young warriors can compete for recognition, prove bravery, and attract girlfriends through a sports competition based on traditional warrior skills. The Maasai Olympics Finals happened on **December 15, 2018** (details linked below). The next games will occur in 2020.

<p>Lion Mortalities: <b>4</b> - <i>HWC (3), unknown (1)</i>  Lion Mortalities in Violation of the PCF: <b>0</b>  Lion Retaliatory Hunts Prevented*: <b>0</b>  <i>*In collaboration with our partners at Lion Guardians and Kenya Wildlife Service.</i></p>	<p>Maasai Olympics Engagement:  Meetings/events: <b>2</b>  People engaged: <b>900</b> <i>(some more than once)</i></p>																						
<p>Compensation Issued for:</p> <table> <tr> <td><b>26 Cows:</b></td> <td>\$3,294</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>518 Sheep/Goats:</b></td> <td>\$13,989</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>1 Donkey:</b></td> <td>\$53</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Q4 TOTAL:</b></td> <td><b>\$17,336</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>YTD TOTAL:</b></td> <td><b>\$102,502</b></td> </tr> </table>	<b>26 Cows:</b>	\$3,294	<b>518 Sheep/Goats:</b>	\$13,989	<b>1 Donkey:</b>	\$53	<b>Q4 TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$17,336</b>	<b>YTD TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$102,502</b>	<p>Livestock Killed by Predators:</p> <table> <tr> <td>Caracal:</td> <td><b>7</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cheetah:</td> <td><b>40</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hyena:</td> <td><b>389</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jackal:</td> <td><b>51</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leopard:</td> <td><b>13</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lion:</td> <td><b>45</b></td> </tr> </table>	Caracal:	<b>7</b>	Cheetah:	<b>40</b>	Hyena:	<b>389</b>	Jackal:	<b>51</b>	Leopard:	<b>13</b>	Lion:	<b>45</b>
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<p>Additional Predator Mortalities:</p> <table> <tr> <td>Hyena:</td> <td><b>3</b> - <i>vehicle (2), unknown (1)</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jackal:</td> <td><b>1</b> - <i>vehicle</i></td> </tr> </table>	Hyena:	<b>3</b> - <i>vehicle (2), unknown (1)</i>	Jackal:	<b>1</b> - <i>vehicle</i>	<p>Other:</p> <p><b>1</b> incident of problematic lions moved away from bomas to avoid depredation.  <i>* In collaboration with Lion Guardians.</i></p>																		
Hyena:	<b>3</b> - <i>vehicle (2), unknown (1)</i>																						
Jackal:	<b>1</b> - <i>vehicle</i>																						

## ADDITIONAL WILDLIFE CONFLICT

Humans Injured: <b>4</b>	Wildlife Responsible for Injuries: elephant ( <b>2</b> ), ostrich ( <b>1</b> ), rhino ( <b>1</b> )
Humans Killed: <b>1</b>	Wildlife Responsible for Deaths: elephant ( <b>1</b> )

### NOTABLE UPDATES (click to read):

- [MAASAI OLYMPICS WINNERS CLAIM GLORY \(AND PRIZE BULL\)](#)
- [SPACE \(TO CALL THEIR OWN\)](#)



## SECURING WILDLIFE HABITAT

The human-wildlife conflict in the ecosystem is a direct result of wildlife and local communities competing for limited resources on the same shrinking land areas. In order to reduce conflict, wildlife habitat must be strategically protected, an increasingly urgent program focus for Big Life.

Our **2018 Q4** activity is summarized below:

## CONSERVANCY DEVELOPMENT

Big Life's engagement in conservancy development is composed of two specific parts. The first is paying annual leases to owners of 60-acre parcels of land located in the Kimana Corridor. These lease payments are intended to limit destructive development of the land, other than that which is compatible with conservation and pastoralism. The second involves working with local communities to protect land that is strategically important either as wildlife movement corridors or dispersal areas, but is also valuable to the local livestock economy as a grazing resource. This protection can be achieved through the establishment of conservancies, including the legal and management systems necessary for their effective functioning, and assisting to develop income-generating opportunities such as tourism.

**Kimana Sanctuary**, at the easternmost part of the Kimana Corridor, is an area frequented by Amboseli's biggest bull elephants, including known tuskers like Tim. Thanks to support from the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust and the D.N. Batten Foundation, Big Life rangers are working to [secure this special place](#).



## RANGELANDS MANAGEMENT

The Maasai are traditionally a pastoralist society, their wealth directly associated with their livestock. Large herds of cows, sheep, and goats graze across the ecosystem continually. Managing the impacts of grazing on the rangelands for the overall health of the ecosystem has become a major program focus.

Our **2018 Q4** activity is summarized below:

### LAND

Big Life has helped to establish a sustainable farming program, in addition to helping develop a grazing plan to manage livestock movements and improve the condition of existing pasture. Rangers also actively protect the land by fighting against habitat destruction such as illegal logging or charcoaling. Lastly, we've partnered with local communities, partner NGOs, and local government to implement a [carbon credit program](#) in the Chyulu Hills to protect it from deforestation and overgrazing.

Suspects Arrested* for Habitat Destruction: <b>59</b> Habitat Destruction Arrest Incidents: <b>12</b> <i>*sometimes released depending on severity of crime</i>	Sustainable Farms: <b>2</b> Sustainable Farming Manager ( <b>1</b> ) & Apprentice ( <b>1</b> )
Non-Arrest Habitat Destruction Incidents: <b>6</b>	Incidents of community grazing and conservancy rules enforcement: <b>7</b>

### WATER

Water is one of the most precious resources in the African bush. Big Life rangers actively work to reduce illegal water extraction and ensure that river systems are free and flowing.

Total Rainfall (at HQ) This Quarter: <b>81.5 mm</b>	Water-Related Incidents: <b>0</b>
Liters of Fuel Provided for Pumping Water to Both Community and Wildlife (to reduce conflict): <b>1,177 L</b>	Water Points Constructed or Repaired: <b>1</b>

#### NOTABLE UPDATES (click to read):

- [WORKING WITH NATURE – ONE HEART FARM](#)
- [THE RAINS DOWN IN AFRICA](#)
- [THE EQUATION THAT DOESN'T SLEEP](#)

## COMMUNITY

Winning the hearts and minds of the community and providing a mutual benefit through conservation is the only way to protect wildlife and wild lands far into the future. To that end, Big Life provides a number of services in support of the community generally, including education and healthcare initiatives, and also lesser-known activities, such as using ranger vehicles as ambulances, arresting criminals for community crimes (e.g., theft), conducting human and/or livestock search and rescue operations, and more.

Community Crime Incidents: <b>6</b>	Suspects Arrested: <b>12</b>
Human Search and Rescue Incidents: <b>0</b>	Livestock Search Incidents: <b>1</b>
Community Support Incidents: Assisted community searching for stolen property ( <b>4</b> ), transported people injured in car accident to hospital ( <b>1</b> ), transported people home after scared by an elephant encounter ( <b>3</b> ), found body of person caught in flash flood ( <b>1</b> )	

## EDUCATION

Big Life invests in the future of participating communities by funding teachers' salaries, providing scholarship funds for local students, and implementing conservation-specific curriculum in classrooms and communities.

Our **2018 Q4** activity is summarized below:

Teachers' Salaries Paid: <b>30</b>	Student Scholarships Sponsored: <b>208</b> Boys: <b>108</b> Girls: <b>100</b>
Tertiary-Level Graduates: <b>0</b>	Students Reached by Conservation Curriculum: <b>0*</b> Student Amboseli Park Trip: <b>1</b> <i>*Students completed a program evaluation in October; schools were not in session in November &amp; December</i>



**HEALTHCARE**

Big Life works in partnership with the Kenya Ministry of Health to implement mobile health clinics focused on healthcare and family planning. Additional services provided include cancer screening, HIV testing, and counseling.

Our **2018 Q4** activity is summarized below:

Mobile Health Clinics Conducted: <b>2*</b>	Patients Seen: <b>345</b>
<i>*A new referral system for family planning was implemented in December.</i>	Children Vaccinated: <b>48</b>
	Children De-wormed: <b>328</b>
	Long-term Family Planning Provided: <b>98</b>

**NOTABLE UPDATES (click to read):**

- [THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ONE YOUNG WOMAN'S 7 KM WALK](#)



We are grateful for the support of our partners, including:

## **Field Partners**

- African Conservation Centre
- African Wildlife Foundation
- Amboseli Ecosystem Trust
- Amboseli Landowners Conservancy Association
- Amboseli Trust for Elephants
- Association of Private Land Rhino Sanctuaries
- Chyulu Hills Conservation Trust
- Conservation International
- Enduimet Wildlife Management Area
- European Development Fund
- For Rangers
- Global Environment Facility
- Honeyguide Foundation
- International Fund for Animal Welfare
- Kenya Wildlife Service
- Kilimanjaro Community Conservation and Development Trust
- Kinetic Six
- Lion Guardians
- Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust
- Porini Eselengei Camp
- Ranger Campus
- Satao Elerai Safari Camp
- Save the Elephants
- Save the Rhino International
- Sheldrick Wildlife Trust
- Space for Giants
- The Thin Green Line Foundation
- Tusk Trust
- US Agency for International Development
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- WildAid
- Wildlife Conservation Network
- WildlifeDirect
- Zoological Society of London

## **Corporate Partners**

- 1% for the Planet
- BIOPARC de Doue la Fontaine
- Beauval Nature (Zoo Beauval)
- Chester Zoo
- Elephant Gin
- Great Plains Conservation / ol Donyo Lodge
- LUSH Fresh Handmade Cosmetics
- Oakland Zoo
- Tawi Lodge
- Zoo Basel

**Together we can save wildlife and wild lands - now and for future generations. Please consider making a life-saving [donation](#) to support the critical programs mentioned in this report. Thank you for your support.**

