2019 ANNUAL REPORT





DIRECTOR'S NOTE

A few years ago we sat down to draft a 10-year strategic plan for Big Life. I remember the lead consultant asking, "What are your targets for anti-poaching?" My instant answer was, "Zero poaching," to which the reply was "that's not possible." Well, I am happy to report that it is. In 2019, we lost not a single elephant to poachers in Big Life's area of operation, which spans over 1.6 million acres. We didn't lose any rhino either. Some herbivores were poached for bushmeat, but many of those responsible are languishing in custody. The message is out there: poaching is high-risk in this neck of the woods.

Coronavirus did not figure into our strategic plan, either. We could never have imagined the current scenario, keeping our rangers isolated at their outposts and letting those who can work remotely do so. In the face of a global pandemic, things feel unstable and bleak. But let me present some positive news in the midst of this hopefully temporary catastrophe.

In 2019, Big Life funded the education for 293 children ranging from primary school to university age, and we have completed 100 km of electrified fencing to address human-elephant conflict. We used to lose up to 15 elephants a year in conflicts with local farmers, but this past year had only one such death. What's more, farmers are now able to bring their crops to harvest. Our local lion population continues to thrive, bucking the continental trend despite living in a land of lion-hunters.

Namibia, and African conservation, has just lost a maverick, Garth Owen-Smith, a man I hugely admired and whom I would like to quote, "The long-term conservation of wildlife will not be achieved by military tactics, on computer screens or workshops, but by field conservationists who build relationships with the people living with wildlife or around our national parks."

Garth's philosophy very much mirrors that of Big Life, and as we move forward into what will be a very turbulent year, we know more than ever that we have to maintain the relationships with the communities with whom we work. Big Life must maintain our programs, keep our rangers in the field safely, and maintain our measurable successes across the ecosystem.

If we can stop poaching and continue to build a positive relationship with the people of this immense ecosystem, then we can certainly outride the coronavirus. We will definitely need your help to do so. Thank you, as always, for your faith in our mission to protect wildlife and wild lands in East Africa.

Kinha

RICHARD BONHAM

Co-Founder & Director of Operations







350+

Total Field Staff

7

Mobile Units

14

Patrol Vehicles

2

Airplanes

409

Aerial Patrol Hours

269

Trained Rangers

8

Female Rangers

41

Ranger Units

30

Permanent Outposts

2

Tracker Dogs

TOTAL KILOMETERS PATROLLED

On Foot: 122,362 km By Vehicle: 363,167 km By Plane: 58,815 km



WHERE WE WORK

Big Life Foundation's Area of Operation (AOO) covers approximately 1.6 million acres of 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 Park 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 establish coordinated cross-border antipoaching operations between Kenya and Tanzania.

Our AOO is divided into a core area with a permanent Big Life security presence, a non-core area that is actively patrolled by Big Life's mobile units, and adjacent areas where we provide support as needed.

Core AOO (permanent security presence): Eselengei Group Ranch, Kimana Area, Mbirikani Group Ranch, Rombo Group Ranch, Chyulu Hills National Park, and Enduimet Wildlife Management Area (Tanzania) Non-Core AOO (patrolled by mobile units):

Merrueshi Ranch, Taveta Area

Adjacent (support provided as needed): Kuku Group Ranch, Mailua Ranch, Tsavo West National Park



- * Headquarters
- BLF-Supported Ranger Outposts
- Mobile Ranger Units
- → Wildlife Migration Routes

- National Parks
- Agricultural Areas
- Crop Protection Fence Completed
- Crop Protection Fence Underway

4



Elephants

Elephants across Africa are in crisis, facing threats that include ivory poaching and human-elephant conflict. The number of African elephants once reached upwards of 30 million; today, only an estimated 350,000 remain. In Big Life's AOO, there are more than 2,000 elephants, including some of the largest remaining tuskers in all of Africa.

5

Elephant Mortalities

Within Big Life's Core AOO: 3

Causes

Natural: **1** Unknown: **1**

Human-Elephant Conflict: 1

Within Big Life's Non-Core AOO: 2

Causes

Unknown: 2

100%

Ivory Recovery Rate

0

Elephants Poached

2

Elephant Rescues

17

Elephant Injuries

Treated: **7**

Rescues and treatments are done in collaboration with our partners at the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust and Kenya Wildlife Service.

Rhinos

There are eight known critically-endangered Eastern black rhinoceroses in Big Life's area of operation. They spend most of their time in the densely-forested Chyulu Hills, protected by dedicated Big Life rangers and Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS).

In addition to monitoring and protecting the resident rhinos, Big Life has been working to improve infrastructure in the rhino area, the goal of which is to maintain Intensive Protection Zone (IPZ) status, which allows for the future inbound translocation of rhinos from other territories. IPZ status is awarded by the Kenyan government for demonstrating that the area and the rhino population can be effectively protected. The infrastructure includes roads, fencing, and consistent water supply. The KWS Board of Directors has approved the translocation of 21 rhinos to augment the Chyulu Hills' population, subject to an approved site-specific management plan. The management plan is being completed through ongoing site visits and meetings with relevant stakeholders.

All anti-poaching and monitoring efforts are conducted in close collaboration with KWS. Specially-trained Big Life rangers use traditional tracking methods, camera traps, and live sightings to maintain an accurate record of all rhinos in the territory, and raise red flags if a certain period of time elapses between recording specific individuals.

8

Rhinos

N

Rhino Mortalities

Rhino Protection Rangers: 51
Dedicated Rhino Outposts: 7
Dedicated Rhino Units: 10
Water Points: 3

Direct Sightings: **7**

Indirect Sightings (via 37 camera traps): **73**

Spoor Sightings: 211





Bushmeat

People poach animals for bushmeat for two reasons: killing for subsistence, as a source of protein, or killing for profit, to sell meat in the commercial game meat trade. In Big Life's AOO, bushmeat poaching often spikes in the dry season, when resources are scarce and farm laborers are out of work. Species targeted for bushmeat in 2019 included: buffalo, bushbuck, dik-dik, eland, gazelle, gerenuk, giraffe, hippo, impala, oryx, wildebeest, and zebra.

100+

Animals Killed

48

Suspects Arrested in 30 Incidents

Prosecutions

Following arrest, suspects are formally charged by the Kenya Police Service. The judicial process can be anywhere from immediate to spanning months or years. Big Life tracks the progress of wildlife and habitat-related cases in the local justice system to ensure that laws are properly enforced and to encourage maximum penalties upon sentencing.

Big Life arrests suspects for poaching-related crimes, habitat destruction, trespassing, and more.

182

Ongoing Cases

361

Suspects

18

Concluded Cases

15

Suspects Sentenced

EarthRanger

Last year, Big Life partnered with WildAid, Vulcan Inc, and Kinetic Six on a complete overhaul and modernization of our radio communication systems, including a new 'nerve center' for controlling all Big Life ranger operations.

These improvements allowed Big Life to implement an exciting new computer software called EarthRanger,

a domain awareness system. This comprehensive platform allows us to see Big Life's world on one screen, including real-time locations of all of our ranger units, vehicles, aircraft, and tracker dogs. Now, when an incident occurs, the radio operators can control the response from start to finish, calling in the closest units and guiding them straight to where they need to be.

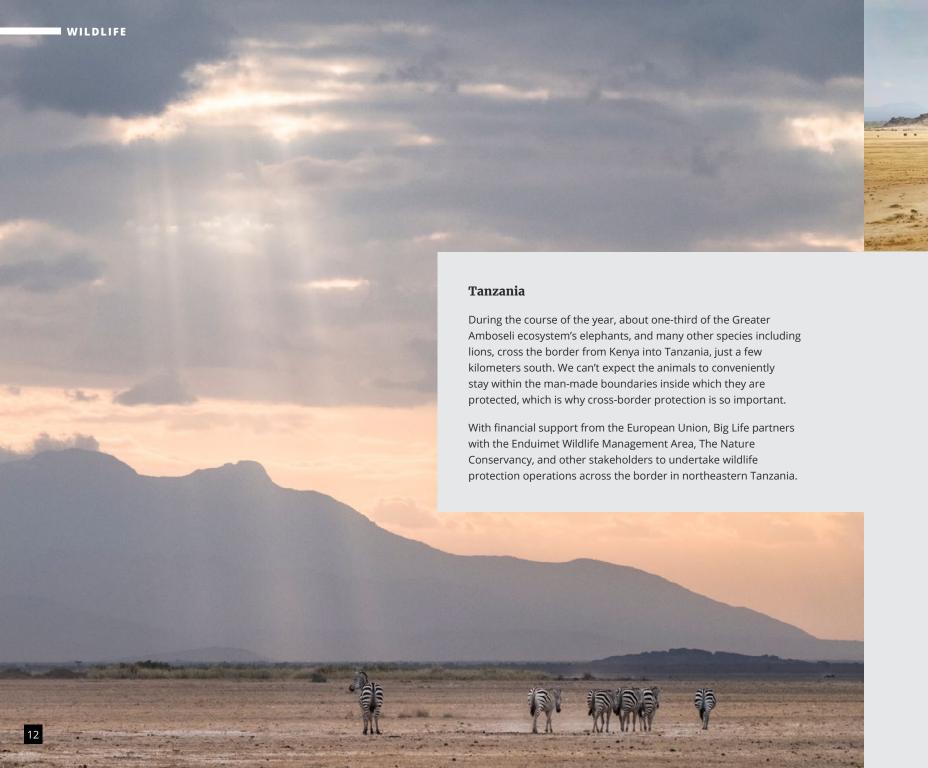




One of Big Life's most important wildlife protection strategies includes the use of tracker dogs. Once a team of three, the tracker dog unit today consists of two bloodhounds and six handlers. The unit is ready to respond anywhere in the ecosystem at a moment's notice, deploying by vehicle or aircraft. The dog unit's reputation has spread, and the dogs are often called in to national parks to support Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) operations, as well as various private wildlife conservancies and other NGOs in the region.

In 2019, we lost one of our beloved tracker dogs, Didi, to kidney failure. As a rescue from the Kenya SPCA, Didi surprised everyone with her stamina and focus. One of her most significant achievements was the 15+ km track that led to the arrest of two suspects who had killed five elephants in Tsavo West National Park. She was also a hero to members of our local communities, having tracked and found countless children lost in the wilderness, as well as an occasional thief.

Rest in peace, Didi.



Enduiment Wildlife Management Area comprises 350,000 acres of important wildlife habitat on the Tanzania side of the border.

4 CROSS-BORDER OPERATIONS

Rangers: 19

Anti-Poaching Commander: 1

Information Officer: 1

Mobile Response Teams: 2

New Informers Recruited: 40

KILOMETERS PATROLLED

Foot Units: 29,222 km

By Vehicle: 60,677 km

22 CROP RAIDS PREVENTED

Crop-Raiding Incidents: 89

Acres Damaged: 75+

132 ILLEGAL INCIDENTS

(Community Crimes – 8, Encroachment – 2, Habitat Destruction – 101, Bushmeat Poaching – 19, Trophy Possession - 1)

Trophy Poaching Related Incidents: 0

Suspects Arrested: 71

Items Recovered: 210

(including 2 pieces of ivory, 1 ostrich egg, and 50 snares)

4 ELEPHANT MORTALITIES

(1 euthanized, suspected natural injury, 1 human-related, fell into pit-latrine, 2 unknown)

Ivory Recovery Rate: 100%

Humans Killed (all by elephants): 5

Elephant Treatments: 1*

*Treatments are done in collaboration with MAKOA Farm,

TANAPA, and the TAWA

Lions Killed in Retaliatory Hunts: 4

Lion Hunts Prevented: 1





HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT

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.

Big Life works strategically to mitigate HWC, such as by deploying rapid response ranger teams to move elephants away from farms and building crop-protection fences to create a hard boundary between elephant habitat and agricultural areas.

Big Life also conducts predator protection initiatives to offset the impact of humans living in close proximity with apex predators like lions. These have been instrumental in the turnaround of the ecosystem's lion population, which is now one of the few in Africa that is growing, not declining.

Crop Raiding

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 development. As humans compete for limited resources like water, land, and grazing, we further reduce 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.

Big Life's HWC ranger teams assist communities and protect elephants by chasing elephants out of farms. Crop-protection fences help to deter elephants from entering farmed areas in the first place.

Crop-Raiding Incidents: 264
Incidents Involving Elephants: 258

Acres Damaged: 308

Acres Damaged by Elephants: 304

Crop Raids Prevented: 183
Crop-Protection Rangers: 24

Crop-Protection Fence

Since 2016, Big Life has been working with local communities and partners on an ambitious solution to crop raiding: the construction of an electric fence that would establish a hard boundary between farmers' crops and hungry elephants. Approximately 130 km of fencing is needed ultimately, and we're well on our way. To date, 100 km has been constructed.

We now know that from 2015 to 2019, attitudes toward both wildlife and elephants have improved in the area where the fence was constructed. In 2015, 51% of those surveyed were positive about wildlife in general, and only 25% were positive about elephants. But in 2019, those numbers jumped to 84% and 72%, respectively. The number of respondents who said they felt fearful of elephants fell from 96% in 2015 to only 24% in 2019. This is certainly a direct result of improved ranger response to crop raiding and fewer human-elephant encounters in farming areas that have been fenced.

There has been around a 90% decrease in the number of elephant crop raids in the areas protected by the fence. 99% of those surveyed felt that the fence had reduced crop raiding by elephants specifically, and 98% felt that the fence was successful at protecting their crops.

Fence Constructed to Date: 100 km Fence Maintenance Workers: 28

Predator Compensation Fund

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 Verification Officers are dispatched to the scene to confirm all depredations, and penalties are

applied for poor animal husbandry practices. The community provides 30% of the total compensation paid, and payments are withheld if any predators are killed by members of participating communities.

Big Life currently manages the PCF on Mbirikani and Eselengei Group Ranches, and in the Kimana Conservancies. The lion population in Big Life's AOO is one of the few lion populations in all of Africa that is growing, not declining, and is now estimated at over 200 individuals.

Compensation Issued for Predation of:

320 Cows

2,593 Sheep/Goats

21 Donkeys

TOTAL LIVESTOCK KILLED: 2,934

TOTAL COMPENSATION VALUE: \$114,506

Depredation by Species



HYENA Total: 1,758 60%

LEOPARD

Total: 79

3%









CARACAL Total: 15 <1%

LION



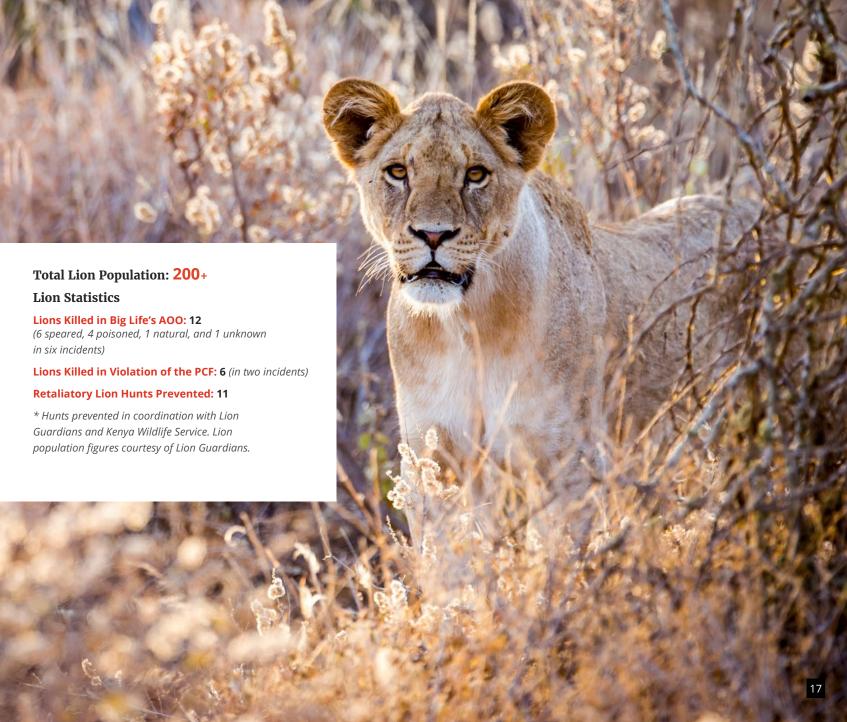
JACKAL

Total: 332

11%









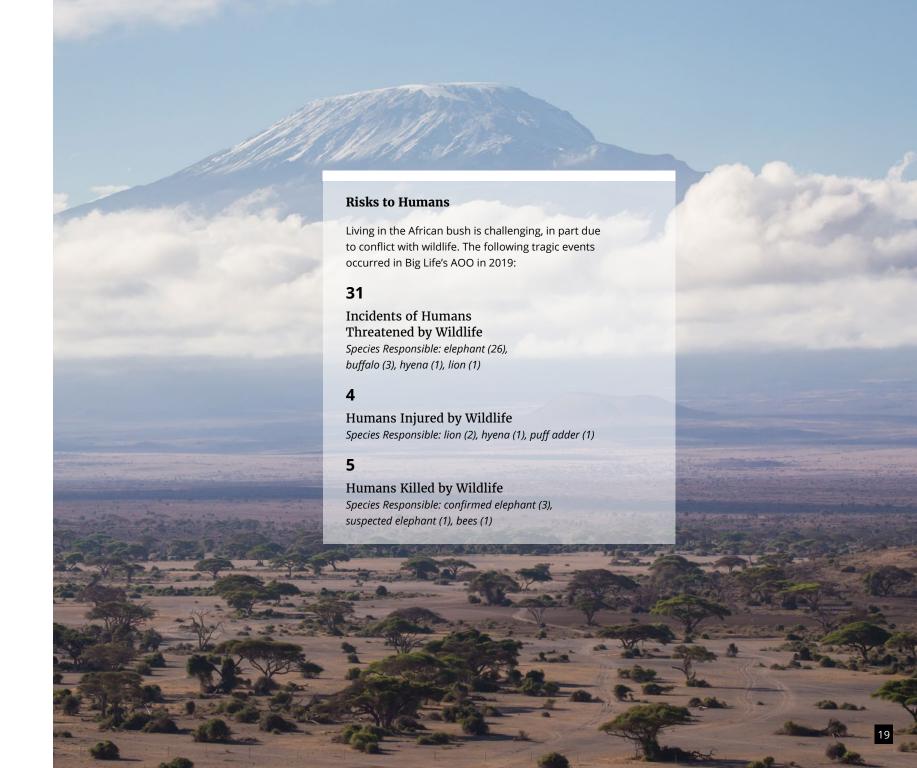
Maasai Olympics

In 2012, Big Life held the first organized sporting event based on traditional Maasai warrior skills to replace the long-held tradition of hunting lions as a mark of manhood, bravery, and prestige.

The games represent a history-changing shift from killing to conservation. Every two years, participating manyattas (warrior villages) select teams through a series of tournaments leading up to the finals across six events: rungu and javelin throwing, standing high jump, and 200m, 800m, and 5,000m races.

2019 was an off-year for the games, but two years is a long time for young, ambitious athletes to wait. An event was organized to fill in the gap and keep enthusiasm high. The local warriors have long told us that a football tournament would be a welcome addition to the Maasai Olympics, so this year we made it happen.

After a highly competitive tournament in September with warriors from four manyattas participating, the team from Mbirikani won. We have seen yet again that sports are the perfect way to engage the young people of the ecosystem, providing a broad-reaching platform for conservation outreach.



HABITAT PROTECTION The Greater Amboseli ecosystem is generally regarded as one of the richest wildlife areas left in Africa. Increasing 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, and is an increasingly urgent program focus for Big Life.

Kimana Sanctuary

The Kimana Sanctuary was one of the first community-owned and run wildlife sanctuaries in East Africa, but over time, it failed to thrive. At the request of the community, Big Life took over management of the Sanctuary in 2018.

Thanks to funding from the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, the lease for the Sanctuary was secured. With partner support, Big Life was able to rehabilitate a guesthouse in the Sanctuary and establish basic campsites, both of which now generate tourism revenue for the local community.

Visitors started to trickle in again, and then flow. 604 people visited the Sanctuary in 2018. During 2019, 2,738 people visited, a remarkable 450% increase.

In September 2019, the Kimana Sanctuary was 're-launched' in a celebration run by the Kimana Community, and attended by the guest-of-honor and Governor of Kajiado County, H.E Hon. Joseph ole Lenku.

The Kimana Sanctuary is more important than ever. It provides the promise of wildlife-related income to community members, as well as water and freedom of movement for wildlife moving to and from Amboseli National Park.

Sanctuary Statistics Total Visitor Entrance Days: 2,738 Tourism Revenue Generated for the Community: \$28,969 Lease Payments Made to Community Members: \$94,528 Rangers Protecting the Sanctuary: 22 Support Staff: 4 Sanctuary Members: 844 Sanctuary Size: 5,700 acres



Kimana Conservancies

Big Life is actively working to secure natural habitat in the Kimana Corridor, where a number of land owners came together to form six conservancies, governed by an umbrella body called the Amboseli Land Owners Conservancy Association (ALOCA). Big Life, with support from SWT, has entered into conservation lease agreements with 269 land owners in five of these conservancies, and is currently negotiating with others in the sixth conservancy.

Together with land leases that are held by tourism operators, there are 356 land parcels leased for conservation in the corridor.

The leases restrict land conversion and fragmentation, and prohibit fencing and farming. Land owners have full access to their land for livestock grazing, and mechanisms are being developed to ensure that any tourism revenue benefits all conservancy members.

Work in this area will be ongoing, as we strive to maintain open migratory corridors through the conservancies to connect Amboseli National Park with Kimana Sanctuary, and beyond.

REDD+

Two years ago, Big Life joined with local community, government, and NGO partners to implement a potentially life-saving project. The Chyulu Hills REDD+ Project is part of a global network of interventions aimed at helping communities to conserve forests and other important carbon stores, and in so doing keep carbon out of the atmosphere. This benefits not only the people living around the Chyulu Hills, but the entire planet and the stable climate upon which we all depend.

By protecting the Chyulu Hills, local communities and partners (Big Life included) will benefit from the sale of two million carbon credits being marketed by Conservation International. The revenue will be invested in local community development projects and conservation efforts, such as the employment of rangers protecting this precious resource.

Carbon credits for the area have already been purchased, including by Tiffany jewelers and Gucci. In 2019, Big Life received roughly \$5,000 from the sale of these credits, which will fund security operations in the area, and significantly more is expected in 2020.

Habitat Destruction & Encroachment

Big Life rangers enforce laws to prevent and deter habitat-related crimes, such as illegal charcoal production, arson, sand harvesting, water extraction, and logging, (including high-value protected species like sandalwood). Rangers also enforce protected area rules, in conservancies and national parks, that make encroachment activities like trespassing, settlement and grazing, among others, illegal, as such activities are indirectly harmful to critical ecosystem habitats.

173

Suspects Arrested for Habitat Destruction in 116 Incidents

50

Suspects Arrested for Encroachment into Protected Areas

42

Incidents of Protected Area Enforcement

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The Greater Amboseli ecosystem is home to the Maasai—one of the foremost indigenous ethnic groups in East Africa.

Winning the hearts and minds of the local 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 developed a number of programs to benefit the community, aligned with Big Life's ethos: if conservation supports the people, then people will support conservation.

These programs include education and healthcare initiatives, and also lesser known activities, such as using ranger vehicles as ambulances, responding to crimes within the community, conducting search and rescue operations, and more.



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.

The latest UN statistics cite that over 1 million children are not attending school in Kenya and lists education as one of the three most critical needs, besides clean water and access to healthcare, within the Maasai regions in

Kenya. The desire for education is so strong that families will bankrupt themselves, often selling their livestock (the main livelihood and subsistence commodity) to put their children through school.

To help, Big Life offers merit- and need-based scholarships, both in the short-term (one-time scholarships) and long-term (multi-year scholarships), to qualifying students, as well as covering the salaries of several local teachers.



293
Long-Term Scholarships
Awarded

Girls: 155 // Boys: 138



74One-Time Scholarships
Awarded

Girls: 19 // Boys: 55



18Teachers' Salaries Paid



6
University/College Graduates
Supported Through
to Graduation



2,708
Students Reached by
Conservation Curriculum



Healthcare

In partnership with CHASE Africa and the local Kajiado South Department of Health, Big Life facilitates mobile health clinics and backpack nurse visits in remote communities to provide desperately needed healthcare services. During the clinics, there are clinical officers and nurses available for consultations, HIV testing and prenatal care, immunization services, a basic pharmacy, and access to short and long-term family planning services.

Backpack Nurse visits consist of a nurse traveling by motorbike to different remote villages four times per month to provide immunizations, family planning, and prenatal care, all with supplies in their backpacks.

Big Life also manages a team of Community Health Volunteers (CHVs), supported by CHASE Africa and the Leila and Mickey Straus Family Foundation. Their role is to provide comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights education to help couples make informed choices about the size and spacing of their families.

Mobile Healthcare Clinics Facilitated: 11

Backpack Nurse Visits: 32

Patients Who Received Primary Healthcare Services: 2,708

Patients Who Received Family Planning Support: 1,635

Patients Who Received De-Worming Medicine: 4,798

Patients Who Received Immunizations: 1,087

Community Crimes

29 Suspects Arrested in 13 Incidents

For crimes involving assault, illegal alcohol or drug possession, vandalism, or theft.

Community Assistance

Big Life rangers and tracker dogs often help to search for people who have become lost in the bush, and assist in numerous other ways.

Lost People Found: 24

Incidents of Livestock Recovery: 8

Emergency Medical Transports Provided: 4

Searches for Stolen Property: 4

26

FINANCIALS

Organization: Big Life Foundation USA | Report: Financial Report | Period: January to December 2019 | Country: USA | Currency: US Dollars

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

INCOME	2019	2018
Contributions & Grants	\$3,217,722	\$3,289,817
In-Kind Contributions	\$149,925	\$152,450
Other Income	\$23,602	\$25,460
Total Income	\$3,391,249	\$3,467,727
EXPENSES		
Programs	\$3,145,404	\$3,431,490
General/Admin	\$214,940	\$193,869
Fundraising ¹	\$261,974	\$263,004
Total Expenses	\$3,622,318	\$3,888,363
(Change in Net Assets)	(\$231,069)	(\$420,636)
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$1,798,630	\$2,219,266
Net Assets, End of Year ²	\$1,567,561	\$1,798,630

Big Life receives up to \$120,000/yr of free online advertising from a Google Ad Grant. Auditing standards require us to categorize this donated advertising as a fundraising expense, which inflates our numbers slightly, but we do not spend a penny of your donations on Google AdWords.

² Big Life maintains a Board-designated reserve fund to be drawn upon in the event of financial distress or an immediate liquidity need resulting from events outside typical operations of the organization.

Our Form 990 tax filings and audited financial statements are available online at: biglife.org/about-big-life/financials

At Big Life, we **maximize every penny** of your contributions.

87¢ out of every **\$1** donated goes directly towards our mission of protecting wildlife and wild lands for the benefit of all.

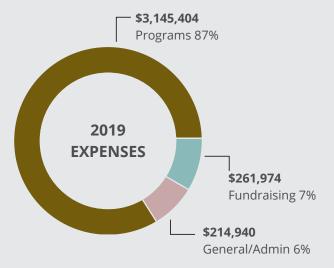


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Amboseli Trust for Elephants
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Association
Association
Association of Private Land Rhino Sanctuaries
Born Free
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Enduimet Wildlife Management Area Honeyguide Foundation

International Fund for Animal Welfare Kajiado South Sub-County Department of Health

Kenya Wildlife Service

Lion Guardians

Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust

Oikos

Porini Eselengei Camp

Ranger Campus

Satao Elerai Safari Camp Save the Elephants

Seedballs Kenya

Sheldrick Wildlife Trust

Tanzania National Parks Authority (TANAPA)

Tanzania People and Wildlife

Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority (TAWA)

TZ Wildlife Division's Anti-Poaching Unit

The Nature Conservancy

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\$100.000+

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\$1,000+

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