

EMPOWERERS.
AFRICA.





WHO WE ARE

EMPOWERS AFRICA is a U.S. public charity under IRC Section 501(c)(3) that supports programs in the areas of human empowerment, wildlife protection and land conservation in sub-Saharan Africa.

We partner with some of the most effective organizations on the ground in Africa that are creating lasting and sustainable change. Since 2013, we have granted over eight million dollars to over 50 organizations in 15 countries.

OUR FOCUS IS ON:

1. funding programs in communities that live in proximity to protected conservation and wildlife areas or World Heritage Sites
2. funding programs in urban communities where tourism is a strong source of development and
3. funding programs that support the protection of wildlife and land conservation

At Empowers Africa, we support community-led, measurable and sustainable programs that bolster communities by improving access to education, healthcare and business opportunities. We also support programs that protect wildlife and land conservation because we believe safeguarding Africa's natural wealth is critical to the empowerment of the surrounding communities.

Additionally, Empowers Africa serves as a fiscal sponsor to over twenty organizations working on the ground in Africa. Through our 501(c)3 status, we are able to efficiently collect and process donations for some of the most effective changemakers on the continent, allowing them to focus on what's most important—the work being done on the ground.



A group of African children, mostly boys, are looking out from a window. They are wearing light-colored shirts. The window frame is made of wood. The background is dark, suggesting an interior space.

WHAT



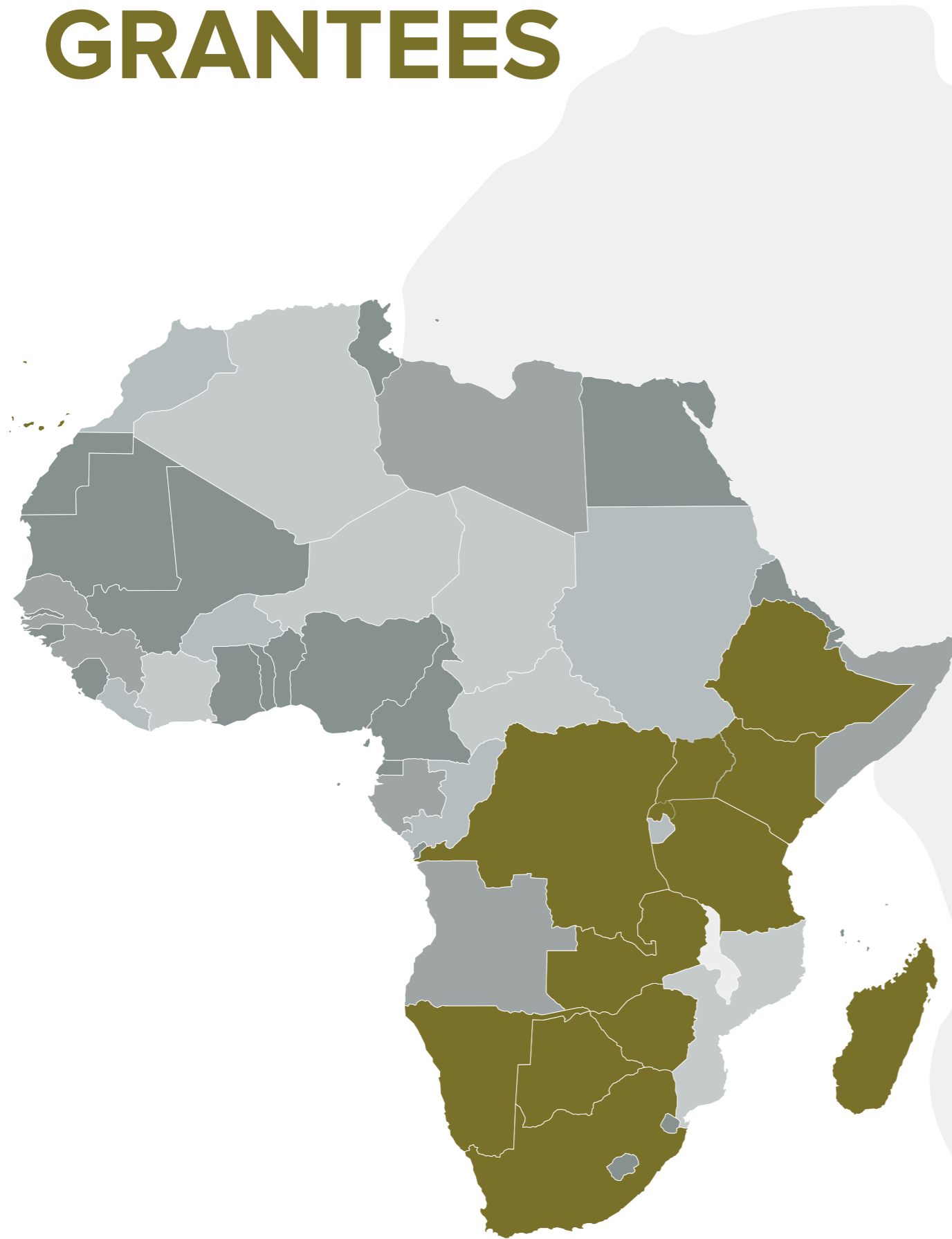
WE DO

According to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, by 2050 the number of people in Africa aged 24 or younger will increase by 50 percent. It makes Africa the only region in the world where the youth population is increasing. This poses serious risks—by the same year, the report says that 86 percent of the global population living in extreme poverty could be in Africa—but also tremendous opportunities. Key to those opportunities is grassroots economic empowerment, arming the continent's youth with entrepreneurial tools and removing the obstacles to progress. At Empowers Africa, we are committed to supporting local projects that are doing that, not by parachuting in with boilerplate solutions, but by being part of the communities they serve.

At the same time as Africa is experiencing a rapid growth of its youth population, its wild areas are under threat from poaching, destructive land management practices and global warming. At current poaching rates, some of Africa's most iconic residents, like the elephant and the rhino, could be extinct in our lifetime. It's a tragedy for biodiversity, but conservation is also key to empowerment and prosperity. Redefining the interactions at the places where communities come into contact with Africa's animals is paramount to progress, as well.

The organizations and projects that Empowers Africa supports through annual grants and our Fiscal Sponsor Program tackle issues of education, economic empowerment, health and wilderness conservation with the understanding that they are all inextricably linked to one another.

GRANTEES



- 1. AFRICAN LEADERSHIP UNIVERSITY*** - RWANDA / MAURITIUS
Founded as an evolution of Fred Swaniker's groundbreaking African Leadership Academy, the African Leadership University (ALU) is a network of tertiary institutions committed to educating the next generation of African leaders and entrepreneurs. It currently has two campuses, in Rwanda and Mauritius respectively, but hopes to expand to 25 campuses across the continent in the next 50 years. ALU's unique approach to learning includes a focus on developing real-world skills, a commitment to peer-to-peer education, and an emphasis on students declaring a personal mission along with a major to confront the issues faced by the continent head on.
- 2. AFRICAN BUSH CAMPS FOUNDATION** - ZIMBABWE / BOTSWANA
African Bush Camps Foundation is a non-profit organization working in communities on the outskirts of wildlife reserves in Zimbabwe and Botswana. The foundation is committed to empowering rural communities and is involved in a wide variety of community and conservation efforts from education, to healthcare and clean water projects.
- 3. AFRICAN PARKS** - ACROSS AFRICA
African Parks is a non-profit conservation organization committed to the protection, management, and rehabilitation of national parks in partnership with governments and local communities. As of 2018, African Parks manages 15 national parks in nine countries—Benin, Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Malawi, Mozambique, the Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Zambia.
- 4. AFRICAN PEOPLE AND WILDLIFE** - TANZANIA
African People and Wildlife supports sustainability projects in rural communities that preserve healthy human-wildlife interactions and contribute to better livelihoods for those that live in proximity to animals. This year, donations through Empowers Africa went to a women's beekeeping initiative in Tanzania that not only provides sustainable livelihoods for over 1,000 women, but does so while protecting the local wildlife.
- 5. AFRICAN WILDLIFE FOUNDATION** - ACROSS AFRICA
African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) has a unique approach to conservation that empowers local people to look after wildlife and wild areas. This strategy incentivizes conservation of national resources by ensuring local communities benefit from wildlife and land protection. Since their inception 50 years ago, the dynamic work to bring sustainable change in the areas of education and conservancy sets AWF apart from many in this field.
- 6. ASILIA CHARITABLE CORPORATION*** - KENYA / TANZANIA
Asilia Charitable Corporation supports community empowerment and conservation initiatives in the parts of East Africa where Asilia Africa operates its safari lodges. This year we've continued supporting scholarships at the SILA Vocational College in Arusha, Tanzania, which trains community members for careers in hospitality.
- 7. BIG LIFE FOUNDATION** - KENYA / TANZANIA
With an emphasis on anti-poaching, Big Life Foundation was founded to conserve the wildlife and the lands of East Africa. As the only organization operating on both sides of the Kenya/Tanzania border, Big Life's teams are in a unique position to coordinate the pursuit of poachers who previously escaped arrest. Because Big Life recognizes that sustainable conservation can only be achieved through a community-based collaborative approach, it strives to improve the quality of life for the resident Maasai people. Big Life employs nearly 300 local Maasai, making it the largest single employer in the Amboseli-Tsavos ecosystem.
- 8. CAPE LEOPARD TRUST*** - SOUTH AFRICA
The Cape Leopard Trust (CLT) is a non-governmental, not-for-profit, public benefit organization based in the Western Cape, South Africa. The organization facilitates and promotes the conservation of biological diversity, with a focus on the leopard as a flagship species. CLT's purpose and vision is to ensure the continued survival of leopard populations, help secure their habitat and prey base, and promote their coexistence with humans.
- 9. CARE FOR WILD RHINO SANCTUARY** - SOUTH AFRICA
Care for Wild Rhino Sanctuary, in the Mpumalanga region of South Africa, is the largest rhino sanctuary in the world. The sanctuary's devoted staff cares for rhinos orphaned to poaching who would otherwise have struggled to survive in the wild.
- 10. CHEETAH CONSERVATION FUND** - SOUTH AFRICA / NAMIBIA
The Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) was founded in 1990 and is a global leader in research and the conservation of cheetahs. Their mission is to be the internationally recognized center of excellence in the conservation of cheetahs and their ecosystems. The Cheetah is currently on the Red List as vulnerable species on the Union of Conservation of Nature's list. Since the 1990's the dwindling number of cheetahs has been revitalized through the CCF from less than 3,000 to now over 3,500.

11. **CHILDREN IN WILDERNESS TRUST*** - SOUTH AFRICA
Children in the Wilderness (CITW) is an independent non-profit organization established and supported by Wilderness Safaris. CITW hosts rural children that live alongside Wilderness Safaris and other partner concessions, and through their Eco-Clubs, YES Programme and Eco-Mentor training, teaches them the importance of conservation. The children are exposed to their wildlife heritage, building and strengthening their capabilities to cope with life's challenge. They are educated with the life skills necessary to actualize their greatest potential, so that they are equipped to become the future custodians of these pristine wildernis areas.
12. **CONSERVATION THROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH** - UGANDA
Uganda-based Conservation Through Public Health (CTPH) promotes the conservation of biodiversity in the region by working towards a more harmonious coexistence between people, wildlife, and livestock, with a focus on improving their health and livelihoods.
13. **DAVID SHELDRIK WILDLIFE TRUST** - KENYA
The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (DSWT) is widely regarded as the most successful orphan elephant rescue and rehabilitation program in the world and, since its inception in 1977, has led the way in wildlife and habitat protection in East Africa. At the heart of its many conservation activities is the "Orphans' Project," a rescue and rehabilitation program for Kenya's threatened elephant and rhino populations.
14. **FAUNA & FLORA INTERNATIONAL** - CAPE VERDE
Empowers Africa is a proud supporter of Flora-Fauna's new "We Love Shark" project, which is protecting over 60 species of shark that have made Cape Verde's Brava Island their home.
15. **FRIENDS OF ALEXANDRA*** - SOUTH AFRICA
Friends of Alexandra was established as an NGO in 2007 with the aim to assist the people of Alexandra township, one of the most impoverished areas around Johannesburg. Alexandra has a population of 600,000 people. Unemployment is as high as 70% with 30% of residents living in homes without electricity, running water or sewerage. Lifespan because of HIV/AIDS is 42 years on average. The focus of Friends of Alexandra is on education and early childhood development.
16. **FRIENDS OF HWANGE TRUST*** - ZIMBABWE
Friends of Hwange Trust (FOH) was formed in 2005 with a mission of ensuring adequate water supplies for the wildlife of Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe. More recently, FOH has expanded its work to include anti-poaching and animal rescue operations, clearance of firebreaks, maintenance of access roads, and supplying adequate medical support for the Park's staff and their families.
17. **FRIENDS OF SAMARA TRUST*** - SOUTH AFRICA
The Friends of Samara Trust was set up to deliver the environmental and social development projects integral to Samara Private Game Reserve's vision, including wildlife conservation, the preservation of indigenous knowledge, landscape restoration and grass-roots community engagement. Samara's conservation vision is to restore one of South Africa's most spectacular landscapes, driving ecological corridors to create the country's third largest protected area.
18. **GOOD WORK FOUNDATION** - SOUTH AFRICA
Since 2006, the Good Work Foundation has been working to empower rural communities through digital-first education initiatives. Its digital learning campuses across South Africa endow both children and adults with the skills necessary to advance in a 21st-century economy.
19. **GLOBAL WITNESS** - ACROSS AFRICA
Global Witness is a non-profit organization that investigates and campaigns to prevent natural resource-related conflict, corruption and associated environmental and human rights abuses. They are responsible for exposing how 'blood diamonds' fuelled conflict in Angola, Liberia and across Africa and introduced the notion into the consciousness of consumers. Their research was later used for the 2006 blockbuster 'Blood Diamond.'
20. **GRUMETI FUND** - TANZANIA
The Grumeti Fund is a non-profit organization carrying out wildlife conservation and community development work in the western corridor of the Serengeti ecosystem in Tanzania. Their vision is a world in which people and wildlife live together sustainably, forever.
21. **HEALING HANDS OF JOY** - ETHIOPIA
Since inception, Healing Hands of Joy has been the only organization in Ethiopia fully committed to empowering survivors of obstetric fistula through rehabilitation and social reintegration. Healing Hands of Joy provides women recovering from obstetric fistula with resources and training to become economically independent.
22. **IAFRICA FOUNDATION*** - SOUTH AFRICA
iAfrica Foundation, a UK based charity focused on developing education, conservation and livelihoods in rural Africa, has initiated an ambitious new project 'iLearnabout' that provides a digital-based conservation curriculum for use in Sub-Saharan Africa. The foundation believes that providing their curriculum will go a long way to tackling large issues, such as, reducing poverty, increasing employment and livelihood opportunities while reducing population growth and tackling ever-important issues such as deforestation, animal welfare and wildlife destruction.

* This organization is a fiscal sponsor of Empowers Africa. See the Fiscal Sponsorship Program section for more information.

23. **INZALO COMMUNITY PROJECT** - SOUTH AFRICA
Inzalo Community Project is a South African nonprofit that runs community development projects in the communities outside of both the Thornybush and Sabi Sands Reserves in South Africa. Grants to Inzalo have gone to support the Utah Community Project, a productive community garden run by a group of volunteer mothers who sell produce to neighboring eco-tourism lodges in the Sabi Sands area. The garden also supplies the adjacent local school (Manyeleti School) with produce for its own feeding program and a weekly package for each volunteer mother.
24. **KENYA BIRD OF PREY TRUST*** - KENYA
The Kenya Bird of Prey Trust is a Kenyan non-profit dedicated to the conservation of birds of prey. The foundation acts on their mandate by: creating, advising, and implementing bird of prey conservation management plans with land managers, developers, and government bodies; engaging in monitoring and research programs that inform conservation and ecology of birds of prey; rescuing and rehabilitating injured birds of prey; and educating communities and other stakeholders on the ecological importance of raptors and the threats they face.
25. **KHULANI SPECIAL SCHOOL** - SOUTH AFRICA
The Khulani Special School (KSS), is located in KwaZulu-Natal region of South Africa, between the northwestern edge of False Bay in the Greater St. Lucia Wetland Park and Phinda Private Game Reserve. Since 1998, the school has been offering crucial support and education to special needs children in the area. Today, KSS provides 120 children with medical care, while also providing an education.
26. **LAIKIPIA WILDLIFE FORUM*** - KENYA
Laikipia Wildlife Forum (known as the Forum) is a dynamic membership based organization with over 20,000 members. The Forum is a vital vehicle in the realization of the goals and aspirations of small land holders, community groups, conservancies and large land owners focused on integrated natural resources management in a 15,000 km2 landscape in central Kenya. Program areas of the Forum are: wildlife conservation, land use, forest management, water management, rangeland management, sustainable tourism, and conservation education.
27. **LALELA PROJECT** - SOUTH AFRICA
Lalela Project provides arts education workshops to youth who battle extreme poverty, sparking creative thinking and awakening an entrepreneurial spirit. The foundation provides community-based arts education and leadership workshops to children grades 1 through 12 in a safe space during the vulnerable after-school hours and holiday periods.
28. **LEWA WILDLIFE CONSERVANCY** - KENYA
LEWA Wildlife Conservancy is an award-winning catalyst and model for community conservation known for its 61,000 acre refuge for rhino and elephant protection in Northern Kenya—one of the largest conservancies in all of Africa. LEWA pioneered the unique model of sharing limited resources and improving life for both people and wildlife.
29. **MÉDECINS SANS FRONTIÈRES /DOCTORS WITHOUT BORDERS** - ACROSS AFRICA
MSF was created on December 22, 1917, on the belief that all people have the right to medical care regardless of gender, race, religion, creed or political affiliation, and that the needs of these people outweigh respect for national boundaries. Since its founding, MSF has treated over a hundred million patients.
30. **NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION NETWORK*** - UGANDA
Natural Resource Conservation Network (NRCN) is a network of professionals who, in private-public partnership arrangement with the government of the Republic of Uganda, conduct investigation, prosecution and reporting of wildlife crimes in Uganda in order to reduce incidences of commercial wildlife trafficking and promote conservation of wildlife.
31. **NATURAL SELECTION CONSERVATION** - BOTSWANA / NAMIBIA / SOUTH AFRICA
Safari operator Natural Selection supports a number of projects working in the same regions where they operate, along with pledging 1.5 percent of their total revenue to conservation initiatives. Natural Selection also has a mammal migration initiative, which is expanding and protecting large mammal migration routes between northern Botswana, the Makgadikgadi Pans National Park, and the Kalahari Desert.
32. **NKOMO PRIMARY SCHOOL** - SOUTH AFRICA
Nkomo Primary School is situated in the rural community of Mduku on the North Coast of KwaZulu- Natal in South Africa. The school started in 1998 with 60 children and one teacher (Themba Zikhali). At that time, there were no classrooms, so teaching and learning took place under the trees. The school currently educates more than 900 children, has 24 teachers, 8 support staff, 17 classrooms and an Orphans and Vulnerable Children's (OVC) center.
33. **OL PEJETA** - KENYA
The OI Pejeta Conservancy is a 90,000-acre not-for-profit wildlife conservancy in Central Kenya's Laikipia County. It is the largest black rhino sanctuary in east Africa and home to over 110 critically endangered black rhino and the two remaining northern white rhino on earth. OI Pejeta employs highly trained rhino protection teams, partners with international veterinary experts, and continuously gathers data on each animal under their care.

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34. **PAMS FOUNDATION** - TANZANIA
The PAMS Foundation is on the frontline of elephant conservation in Tanzania, organizing education programs and mitigating the negative effects of human-wildlife interaction.
35. **PANGOLIN.AFRICA*** - ACROSS AFRICA
Pangolin.Africa is a registered non-profit organisation dedicated to the conservation of the most highly trafficked wildlife species on the continent – the African Pangolin.
36. **PEACE PARKS FOUNDATION – SA COLLEGE FOR TOURISM** - SOUTHERN AFRICA
The SA College for Tourism (SACT) was established in 2001 and operates through Peace Parks Foundation. SACT is the first training center in southern Africa to focus its training program on the development skills for the lodge industry. Every year, 90 women and 16 men are selected – all unemployed and from impoverished rural backgrounds – and sponsored for training. More than 95% of the graduates have thus far been deployed in either full time employment, internships and/or further education.
37. **PUBAH*** - UGANDA
PUBAH (Purpose Uganda Babies At Home) is a non-profit organization funding a small orphanage and pre-school for babies and young children in the Entebbe region of Uganda's Wakiso district.
38. **SINGITA LOWVELD TRUST*** - SOUTH AFRICA
The Singita Community Development Trust is committed to a number of conservation and community initiatives. The foundation has made a lasting impact on various parts of Africa orchestrating an interdependent relationship between communities, wildlife and tourism.
39. **STOP IVORY** - ACROSS AFRICA
Stop Ivory is an independent non-government organization which aims to protect elephants and stop the ivory trade by implementing an initiative called the Elephant Protection Initiative (EPI). The EPI, with the support of its partners, provides an end-to-end global policy solution to end the ivory trade and the poaching of Africa's elephants for ivory.
40. **THE BLACK MAMBAS** - SOUTH AFRICA
The Black Mambas are the first majority-women anti-poaching unit in the world. Having started in 2013, the group has grown rapidly to 32 women and one man, today covering an area of over 100,000 acres in Greater Kruger National Park.
41. **THE MALILANGWE TRUST** - ZIMBABWE
The Malingwe Trust is a wholly Zimbabwean, non-profit organization focused on harmonizing biodiversity conservation, community development and commercial tourism.
42. **THE ROYAL PORTFOLIO FOUNDATION*** - KENYA
The Royal Portfolio Foundation is linked to The Royal Portfolio, a group of luxury boutique hotels who believe in sustainable tourism in Southern Africa. The objective of The Royal Portfolio Foundation is to pay or apply any income and/or the capital towards community upliftment and the conservation and protection of the environment.
43. **TIKKI HYWOOD TRUST** - ZIMBABWE
Operating in Zimbabwe since 1994, The Tikki Hywood Trust is raising awareness about the plight of lesser-known wildlife species and supporting the development of sound conservation practices. The on-the-ground rescue center rescues and rehabilitates orphaned, injured, and displaced wildlife with a focus on pangolin, currently considered the most trafficked mammal in the world. The Trust collaborates with wildlife stakeholders, law enforcement officers and legislators in Zimbabwe to address and prosecute wildlife crime.
44. **TIME + TIDE FOUNDATION** - ZAMBIA / MADAGASCAR
The Time + Tide Foundation initiates and manages projects in protected areas in Zambia and Madagascar. The foundation also conducts crowned lemur conservation efforts in Madagascar, as well as teacher funding and training in South Luangwa, Zambia.
45. **VIRUNGA FALLEN WIDOWS FUND** - DRC
This project in the Democratic Republic of Congo supports women who have lost their ranger husbands killed in the line of duty at Virunga National Park. The workshop teaches sewing skills to the women, with the goal of helping them be self-sufficient.
46. **WILDERNESS WILDLIFE TRUST*** - ACROSS AFRICA
Wilderness Wildlife Trust, an independent non-profit entity associated with the Wilderness Group, supports a wide variety of projects across Africa. The projects and research it supports address the needs of existing wildlife populations, seek solutions to save endangered species and provide education and training for local people and their communities.
47. **WILDLANDS*** - SOUTHERN AFRICA
Wildlands is one of South Africa's leading environmental non-profit organizations. Through strategic partnerships with communities and the South African Government, Wildlands is helping South Africa to strengthen its natural ecosystems, educating local communities and improving livelihoods in the process.

48. **WILDLIFE ACT** - SOUTHERN AFRICA
Wildlife ACT actively advances conservation by initiating, implementing and managing projects at no cost to wildlife reserves that do not have the means to do so themselves.
49. **WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY** - ACROSS AFRICA
The Wildlife Conservation Society is committed to saving wildlife and wild places in what the organization has determined are the 16 priority areas, home to more than 50 percent of the world's biodiversity.
50. **WILDLIFEDIRECT** - ACROSS AFRICA
WildlifeDirect, founded by African conservationist Dr. Richard Leakey, provides support to conservationists on the ground in Africa via the use of blogs, enabling individuals a direct and interactive role in the survival of some of the world's most precious species. WildlifeDirect is responsible for the influential Hands Off Our Elephants, a flagship campaign comprising a winning combination of expertise that was bold, influential, and successful.



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MEET THE CHANGE MAKERS

At Empowers Africa, we firmly believe the best empowerment and conservation work is done on the ground by those who live through the challenges every day, rather than well-wishers coming in for one-off projects from afar. That's why we thoroughly research the projects we support to make sure they are community-led, measurable and sustainable. Here are some of the people who made a difference this year.

FRED SWANIKER, FOUNDER OF THE AFRICAN LEADERSHIP GROUP

About 15 years ago, Ghanaian entrepreneur Fred Swaniker saw some staggering numbers and treated it as a challenge. By the end of the century, Africa will be home to some 4 billion people. By 2035, the continent's young population will amount to the largest workforce in the world. But where others saw an impending crisis—crunch the numbers and, with current development gaps persisting, that could all amount to a billion unemployed people in Africa—Swaniker saw an opportunity. How to unleash the potential of a young, entrepreneurial population that's constantly facing institutional obstacles?

He started with the African Leadership Academy, a boarding school in South Africa that teaches children from across the continent entrepreneurial skills and prepares them for university. In 2016, in a further effort to develop a socially-conscious generation of leaders committed to the betterment of the continent, Swaniker opened the first African Leadership University campus in Mauritius, followed shortly by another in Rwanda. By 2060, Swaniker hopes to have opened 25 campuses across the continent, contributing to the growth of an estimated 3 million leaders.

Besides keeping Africa's brightest minds in Africa, the African Leadership Group has also developed a groundbreaking curriculum that places an emphasis on service, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Students are encouraged to learn from each other in a carefully designed peer-to-peer learning system that isn't dependent solely on trained teachers. That learning is largely project-based and incorporates the latest technology, giving real-world skills to its students.

This year, we at Empowers Africa were prouder than ever to support Swaniker's vision, as a fiscal sponsor to the African Leadership University, which continues to grow at a rapid clip. 2018 marked the graduation of the ALU's first MBA class, 38 young men and women from 14 countries. In September, the ALU also officially opened its first standalone campus in Mauritius (it previously used existing buildings for its classes). Other initiatives, including ALX, a business incubation and professional development platform, and the new Mandela Centennial Scholarship Program, which will fully fund the education of 100 students at ALU Rwanda, are also bringing Swaniker's vision for 3 million new African leaders closer to reality.

WOMEN IN CONSERVATION

As an organization run entirely by women, Empowers Africa is excited to see the increasing role women are playing in conservation, from safari guides to the frontlines of anti-poaching.

In Tanzania's Northern Serengeti and Botswana's Okavango regions, there has been a coordinated uptick in the amount of women leading guests on safari. In fact, at Asilia Africa's Dunia Camp in the Shinyanga section of Serengeti National Park, the staff are all women. It was an intentional effort led by general manager Angel Vendeline Namshali. Similarly, in northern Botswana, the all-female Chobe Angels is the continent's first all-women safari guide team. Originally working out of the Chobe Game Lodge, the 14-woman team now exclusively operates Chobe Expeditions' mobile safari unit through the Okavango Delta. With increasing support from the Botswana government, the Chobe Angels are leading a huge increase in the number of women guides all over the country.

But it isn't just tourism that is seeing a rise in women. Women are also being sent to the frontlines of the war on illegal animal trafficking. Most famously, there is the Black Mamba Anti-Poaching Unit, a majority-women group of 36 individuals recruited from local communities who patrol a staggering 100,000 acres of wilderness in South Africa's Balule Nature Reserve. Understanding that patrols and raids aren't enough to stop poaching, the Black Mambas also engage in community education and empowerment programs.

There has been a surge in female rangers all over the continent in recent years. Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo, a place that has tragically seen 150 rangers killed in the line of duty since 1996, is no exception. Since 2014, the number of female rangers in Virunga has increased from just four to 14. These women put their lives on the line every day to protect Africa's most diverse national park and, most notably, the 300 mountain gorillas who call it home.





TOURISM AND CONSERVATION

A Q&A ON THE CONNECTION OF TOURISM AND CONSERVATION WITH WILDERNESS SAFARIS MANAGING DIRECTOR, DAVE BENNETT

Wilderness Safaris is one of Africa's leading safari companies and through its partner NGOs, the Wilderness Wildlife Trust and Children in the Wilderness, has a proven commitment to the areas in which they operate.

1) What obligation, if any, does the safari industry have to conservation?

The safari industry and conservation are mutually dependent. There needs to be more collaboration between the industry and various stakeholders to encourage countries to work together to preserve species through initiatives such as the trans-frontier conservation areas. Most importantly, the industry needs to ensure that local people also truly realize the benefits of ecotourism; if people understand the long-term benefits of conservation through tourism, then they are more likely to become the custodians of these areas in the future. The support of our non-profit partners, Children in the Wilderness and the Wilderness Wildlife Trust, and other key stakeholders and conservation programs are key to ensure authentic and sustainable ecotourism continues to make a positive difference to Africa, its wildlife and its people.

2) Where would you like Wilderness Safaris to have the most impact?

Whilst Wilderness Safaris is deeply committed to ensuring a holistic positive impact in all of the areas where we currently operate (Botswana, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Zambia and Zimbabwe). We also feel that we have an obligation to migrate our ecotourism model into less well known and even more threatened ecosystems, and to prove the merit of conserving these spaces and species. For over 35 years, we have been committed to building successful conservation economies in Africa and we are looking forward to expanding our reach and positive impact to new regions in the future.

3) Could Wilderness Safaris exist without the Wildlife Trust? How are the two connected?

Since 2001, we have been deeply connected to our two non-profit partners, Children in the Wilderness and the Wilderness Wildlife Trust. Our relationship with the latter is symbiotic – The Trust is involved financially in supporting various conservation research, habitat management and community upliftment projects across the continent, while Wilderness Safaris contributes logistically in terms of human resources and equipment. Over the last 10 years, we have funded over 100 different projects and impacted the lives of more than 10,000 children in eight African countries, helping to change the face of nature-based tourism in Africa.

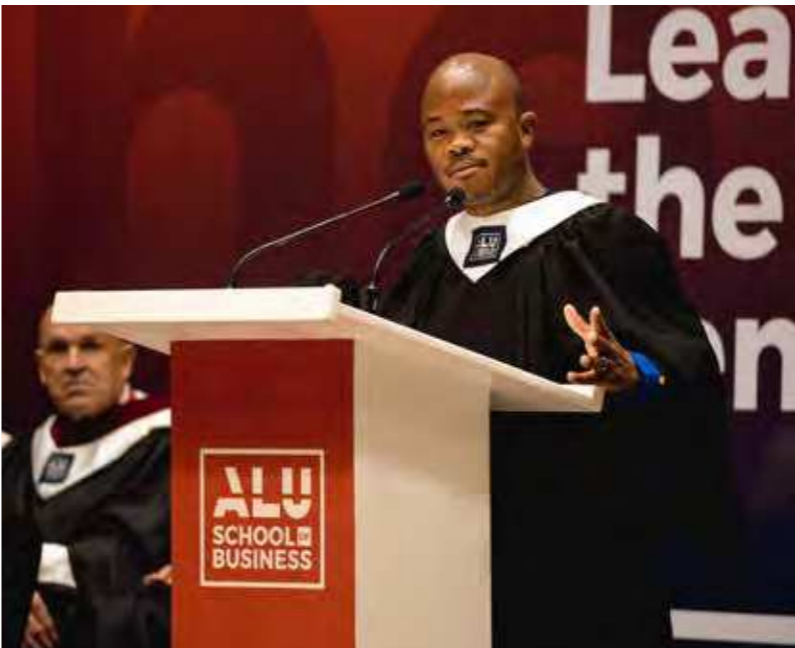
FISCAL SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Through our fiscal sponsorship program, we make it easier for some of the most effective organizations on the ground to process donations from U.S. donors. By collecting funds on behalf of these NGO's, we've freed them up to focus on their important work on the ground. These are the organizations and projects that we currently provide fiscal sponsorship to:



CAPE LEOPARD TRUST

The Cape Leopard Trust (CLT; Est. 2004) is a non-governmental, not-for-profit, public benefit organization based in the Western Cape, South Africa. The organization facilitates and promotes the conservation of biological diversity, with a focus on the leopard as a flagship species. The leopard is the last large predator and last member of the Big 5 to still roam free in the Western Cape. The species faces multiple threats, including limited and fragmented habitat, reduction in prey numbers and high levels of conflict with people. The Cape Leopard Trust's purpose and vision is to ensure the continued survival of leopard populations, help secure their habitat and prey base, and promote their coexistence with humans. To achieve this, the organization employs a three-pillar approach of research, conservation, and education. These three pillars operate in synergy within the Cape Leopard Trust and in collaboration with communities, private landowners and partner organizations.



AFRICAN LEADERSHIP UNIVERSITY

Founded as an evolution of Fred Swaniker's groundbreaking African Leadership Academy, the African Leadership University (ALU) is a network of tertiary institutions committed to educating the next generation of African leaders and entrepreneurs. It currently has two campuses, in Rwanda and Mauritius respectively, but hopes to expand to 25 campuses across the continent in the next 50 years. ALU's unique approach to learning includes a focus on developing real-world skills, a commitment to peer-to-peer education, and an emphasis on students declaring a personal mission along with a major to confront the issues faced by the continent head on.

CHILDREN IN THE WILDERNESS

The Children in the Wilderness Trust is an independent non-profit supported by the Wilderness Group that promotes sustainable conservation through educational programming for rural children in Africa. By learning to love their natural heritage, children are encouraged to grow into the next generation of stewards, protecting their land and the wildlife with which they coexist. Specific programs include the establishment of "Eco-Clubs" at schools situated on the periphery of wildlife reserves and three-night sleep-away camps located at Wilderness Safaris and partner properties, which include environmental education, leadership training and recreation. Children in the Wilderness' Youth Environmental Stewardship (YES) Program identifies kids that show particular promise or interest in environmental issues and conservation, and gives them specialized training and experience.



WILDTRUST

Wildtrust is one of South Africa's leading environmental non-profit organizations. Through strategic partnerships with communities and the South African government, Wildtrust is helping South Africa protect its natural environment, educating local communities and improving livelihoods in the process. As part of that mission, in 2015 Wildtrust co-produced the groundbreaking documentary, Blood Lions, which exposes the destructive practice of captive lion breeding and the "canned lion" hunting industry in South Africa. Wildtrust's participation in the Blood Lions campaign is aimed at regulating the captive lion industry and enabling wild lion conservation in South Africa.

SINGITA LOWVELD TRUST

The Singita Community Development Trust has made a lasting impact in various parts of South Africa by orchestrating an interdependent relationship between local communities, wildlife and the tourism industry. Among its diverse projects, the Singita Community Culinary School in Kruger National Park is a professional development program that imparts culinary skills to the area's youth. The Holistic Early Childhood Development Support program supports the physical, cognitive, psychological and social development of children living near the Sabi Sands and Kruger National Park. The Black Rhino Guardianship Program aims to safeguard this species in the southern Kruger through increased monitoring of the animals' movements and behavior. Additionally, the K9 Anti-Poaching Unit protects rhinos against poachers by tracking and disabling individuals and their weapons. Singita also supports camera-trap research of leopards in the Sabi Sands who continue to be threatened by illegal hunting, habitat loss and the bushmeat trade.



THE ROYAL PORTFOLIO FOUNDATION

The Royal Portfolio Foundation is linked to The Royal Portfolio, a group of luxury boutique hotels who believe in sustainable tourism in Southern Africa. The objective of The Royal Portfolio Foundation is to pay or apply any income and/or the capital towards community upliftment and the conservation and protection of the environment, including but not limited to:

- Poverty relief and anti-poverty initiatives;
- Community development for poor and needy persons;
- Job creation and skills development;
- Education;
- The provision of health care services to poor and needy persons;
- Youth leadership and/or development; and/or
- Nature conservation and the protection of the environment

Each of The Royal Portfolio's properties supports a number of community and conservation projects relevant to their unique location and particular situation.



NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION NETWORK

Natural Resource Conservation Network (NRCN) is a network of professionals who, in a public-private partnership with the government of Uganda, investigates, reports and prosecutes wildlife crimes in the country. As a prime example of how public-private partnerships can be powerful forces of conservation, NRCN has developed close working relationships with multiple agencies including the Uganda Wildlife Authority, the judiciary, the Directorate of Public Prosecutions and the police, along with other non-governmental organizations operating on the ground. NRCN has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Uganda Wildlife Authority to support UWA in all of its conservation and anti-poaching initiatives including arrest operations and anti-corruption initiatives. NRCN is also licensed by the Directorate of Public Prosecution Uganda to privately prosecute wildlife cases on behalf of the Government of Uganda.

PUBAH

PUBAH (Purpose Uganda Babies Home) is a non-profit organization funding an orphanage and pre-school for babies and young children in the Entebbe region of Uganda's Wakiso district. PUBAH has successfully carried out international adoptions, along with fostering and resettlement of many of their children. Their vision is to provide a stable home and environment for children who have been neglected, orphaned or removed from incapacitated families. PUBAH's mission is to make a difference in these children's lives by protecting, loving, educating and returning happiness into their lives while providing a caring home and providing them sponsors, in hopes of giving them a better future

KENYA WILDLIFE TRUST

Kenya Wildlife Trust (KWT) is Kenya's principal predator conservation trust and is dedicated to three of Kenya's most important ecosystems: Greater Mara, Samburu-Laikipia and Amboseli-Tsavu. KWT protects vulnerable predator populations, empowers local communities and educates communities and stakeholders about conservation and environmental stewardship. The focus on Kenya allows KWT a profile with national policy decision-makers, unique knowledge of the country's wildlife areas and local communities, as well as a clear understanding of the actors in the local and wider economy that have a stake in healthy ecosystems.

The Vision: A Kenya where predator populations are a cornerstone of thriving ecosystems.

The Mission: To implement programmes and provide funds to data-driven and community supported conservation efforts that enable the long-term viability of predator populations in Kenya.



WILDERNESS WILDLIFE TRUST

The Wilderness Wildlife Trust, an independent non-profit entity associated with the Wilderness Group, supports a wide variety of projects across Africa. All the projects and research it supports address the needs of existing wildlife populations, seek solutions to save endangered species and provides education and training for local people and their communities. The Wilderness Wildlife Trust has three main areas of focus. Firstly, the trust focuses on research and conservation initiatives including species studies and population monitoring. Secondly, the trust is devoted to community empowerment and education through its Children in the Wilderness program, an environmental and life skills educational curriculum for local youth. Finally, the trust is also committed to anti-poaching and management in the form of aerial surveys, anti-poaching units and support of researchers in the field.

PANGOLIN.AFRICA

Pangolin.Africa is a registered non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of the most highly trafficked wildlife species on the continent—the African pangolin. Conservationists estimate that one pangolin is poached from the wild every five minutes due to the huge demand from the African and Asian traditional medicine markets. The decimation of the Asian species has seen a dramatic spike in demand for the African pangolin.

In response to this crisis, Pangolin.Africa has adopted a three-pronged approach of publicity, participation and protection to achieve its mission of saving all four species of African pangolin. The organization works with partners in the tourism, conservation and corporate fields with the aim of increasing awareness of the threat faced by the African pangolin, encouraging public participation through citizen science research initiatives, and supporting law enforcement in combating the illegal trafficking of African pangolins.

The organization also supports conservation partners across Africa who are working on research, protection and rehabilitation of African pangolins. The situation facing the African pangolin is critical. It has reached a tipping point and if we don't act now, this animal could disappear in our lifetime.





ASILIA GIVING

Asilia Giving is the philanthropic arm of Asilia Africa, one of East Africa's leading travel companies whose mission is to empower crucial wilderness areas in East Africa, benefiting people and nature alike. By making bold and often pioneering investments into areas that are ecologically and economically vulnerable, they aim to turn these areas into viable conservation economies, benefitting both the local communities as well as the environment.

By collaborating with and funding in-country NGOs that work on everything from vocational school scholarships, women's income-generating projects, anti-poaching initiatives, wildlife conservation and land rehabilitation, Asilia Giving is able to ensure measurable change. By acknowledging that people and nature are inseparable partners, they work closely with communities, authorities, NGOs and industry partners to achieve the best possible long-term outcomes for all concerned. With the help of guest donations and conservation fees Asilia are able to make a significant positive impact towards their goal of empowering these areas and the communities and wildlife that call them home.



iAFRICA FOUNDATION

iAfrica Foundation, a UK based charity focused on developing education, conservation and livelihoods in rural Africa, has initiated an ambitious new project 'iLearnabout' having seen a vital need to create a digital-based conservation curriculum for use in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Striving to ensure all children in Africa can access quality education is critical to reducing poverty, increasing employment and livelihood opportunities while reducing population growth and tackling ever-important issues such as deforestation, animal welfare and wildlife destruction. Children are taught the basics – reading, writing, and arithmetic – but rarely have access to critical conservation subjects that directly or indirectly affect their and our lives. "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Nelson Mandela

The environmental and economic short and long-term effects of this gap in the education of African primary school children needs to be tackled now so future generations have a better understanding of what is at stake and what needs to change. The foundation recognizes this alone will not solve the major environmental challenges that countries in Africa and indeed throughout the world face right now, but early education is a critical component when it comes to equipping future generations with the knowledge needed.

Photograph : Johan Vermeulen

ECO-EXIST

Ecoexist Trust is a small not-for-profit NGO that was founded in 2013 by a multi-disciplinary team in Botswana. Their mission is to support the lives and livelihoods of people who share space with elephants. Elephants' needs are similar to humans; require space, food and water, and, in a place of heightened competition for these staples, EcoExist strives to find ways for people and elephants to share the same resources. They work on the ground and at policy level, addressing the needs for people to be safe and with secure food supplies, whilst also ensuring critical habitat security for elephants. Awareness and education are key for long-term success of these efforts, and all activities are monitored through research that provides evidence to inform policy and improve knowledge of the issue.



FRIENDS OF HWANGE TRUST

Friends of Hwange Trust (FOH) was formed on the back of the extreme drought of 2005 that severely affected Hwange National Park. FOH's mission is to develop and maintain water resources in Hwange National Park for the benefit of its wildlife, in collaboration with the Authorities responsible for the Park; to develop and maintain opportunities for the conservation and sustainable utilization of natural resources in the Park so that it will be enjoyed by the generations to come; and to assist in the attainment of national objectives for wildlife conservation, with particular reference to Hwange National Park. More recently, FOH has expanded its work to include anti-poaching and animal rescue operations, clearance of firebreaks, maintenance of access roads, adequate medical support for the Park's staff and their families, necessary research, and conservation of highly endangered avian species and the habitat that supports them.

FRIENDS OF ALEXANDRA

Friends of Alexandra was established as an NGO in 2007 with the aim of assisting the people of Alexandra township, one of the most impoverished areas in Johannesburg. Alexandra has a population of 600,000 people and unemployment is as high as 70%, with 30% of residents living in homes without electricity, running water or sewerage. Lifespan as a result of HIV/AIDS is 42 years on average. The focus of Friends of Alexandra is on education and early childhood development, but because there are so few organizations that provide assistance, they are frequently involved in other areas such as xenophobia relief, fire relief and flooding in shacks. Since opening the first pre-school crèche in 2010, more than 400 children have had the benefit of being fed daily and receiving a basic grounding in preparation for going to regular school.





KENYA BIRD OF PREY TRUST

The Kenya Bird of Prey Trust is a Kenyan non-profit dedicated to the conservation of birds of prey.

We act on our mandate by:

1. Creating, advising, and implementing bird of prey conservation management plans with land managers, developers, and government bodies.
2. Engaging in monitoring and research programs that inform conservation and ecology of birds of prey. This includes training students and conservation professionals on bird of prey research and management techniques.
3. Rescuing and rehabilitating injured birds of prey.
4. Educating communities and other stakeholders on the ecological importance of raptors and the threats they face. The foundation strives to foster human-raptor coexistence through this action.

The Kenya Bird of Prey Trust has a long history of conservation in the region. Simon Thomsett, a founding Trustee, is East Africa's foremost bird of prey expert with over 50 years of experience. Our comprehensive knowledge of raptors and the complex threats they face in East Africa is our greatest asset and places us in a unique position to carry out meaningful and practical conservation programs.



TSAVO TRUST

Tsavo Trust is a field-based Kenyan non-profit organization, headquartered in Tsavo in southern Kenya. The Trust recognizes the importance of a holistic approach to biodiversity conservation and are committed to the protection of Tsavo's wilderness through professional conservation activities, grass-roots community engagement and valued partnerships. The Trust also works closely in support of the Kenya Wildlife Service, engages with specific communities bordering the protected areas, and partners with several other conservation organizations focused towards four core programs of: wildlife conservation; community conservancy; animal welfare; and the development of conservation partnerships.

FRIENDS OF SAMARA TRUST

The Friends of Samara Trust was set up to deliver the environmental and social development projects integral to Samara Private Game Reserve's vision, including wildlife conservation, the preservation of indigenous knowledge, landscape restoration and grass-roots community engagement. Samara's conservation vision is to restore one of South Africa's most spectacular landscapes, driving ecological corridors to create the country's third largest protected area. In 1997, Samara's founders bought up 11 former livestock farms in the heart of the Karoo and embarked on an ambitious project to recreate what once was. Since then, 67,000 acres have been painstakingly rewilded and thousands of indigenous animals reintroduced, including the first cheetah, elephant and lion to return in over a century. Today Samara's conservation vision extends beyond its borders to the creation of South Africa's third largest protected area by linking three national parks in a Global Biodiversity Hotspot – in the very same landscape those springbok once roamed.



LAIKIPIA WILDLIFE FORUM

Laikipia Wildlife Forum (known as the Forum) is a dynamic membership based organization with over 20,000 members. The Forum is a vital vehicle in the realization of the goals and aspirations of small land holders, community groups, conservancies and large land owners focused on integrated natural resources management in a 15,000 km² landscape in central Kenya. The Forum began in this landscape in 1992. 26 years have given the organization trust, familiarity and accountability with communities, local government, national authorities, and conservancies. They have managed grants from international sources such as the USAID, World Bank, EU, Dutch Government, multiple international NGO partners, philanthropists, etc.; and managed these funds and their reporting to international standards.

The program areas of the Forum are: wildlife conservation, land use, forest management, water management, rangeland management, sustainable tourism, and conservation education.

Their projects are all aimed at helping the less advantaged conservationists in this landscape with grant applications, their management, and accountability – all aimed at giving capacity and empowering those groups in whose hands the future of our environment lies.





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