



PASA

African Primates in 2020: Taking Stock Across the Continent

2020 CENSUS REPORT

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PASA member sanctuaries provide care for thousands of great apes and monkeys.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There's no denying that 2020 has been a year like no other for Africa's fragile primate populations. Already under siege by traffickers, and driven off their wild lands through forestry, mining, agriculture and human population growth, it's now estimated that 53% of African primate species are threatened with extinction. For the 23 primate sanctuaries that make up the Pan African Sanctuary Alliance (PASA), these conditions – combined with the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic – have made 2020 among their most challenging years yet.

The sanctuaries – Africa's largest such network – provide lifelong care for over 3000 great apes and monkeys. Located across 13 countries, including rangeland for chimpanzees, gorillas, bonobos, and diverse species of monkeys, these organizations have insight into the state of Africa's primates based on their decades of experience with them. They monitor wild populations, work with law enforcement entities to bring traffickers to justice, and work with their local communities to provide environmental education, protect and conserve wild lands, and provide alternative livelihoods in some of Africa's most impoverished nations.

COVID-19 disrupted operations from February onward, making it impossible for volunteers and visitors to travel to sites, a hardship both financially and in terms of hands-on support. The pandemic upset supply lines, bringing higher costs across the board, for basics like food and water as well as crucial veterinary medicines. Sanctuary staff instituted careful biosecurity protocols to make sure that the primates in their care were not infected.

Yet, as of this writing, not a single sanctuary has ceased operations. And so far, two have been cleared to receive visitors again – with appropriate measures to protect all concerned. Many sanctuaries continue to rescue apes and monkeys in distress, and several have managed to reintroduce animals into the wild, despite the challenging conditions.



All 23 sanctuaries have been able to carry on through this dire time.

Members of the Alliance shared these data and highlights for the period between July 2019 and June 2020:

- 3440 animals received care from PASA members: 3082 primates and 358 non-primates
- 239 animals were rescued from the bushmeat trade, illegal wildlife poaching, and other dangerous conditions
- Ape Action Africa returned the first gorilla back into the wild of Cameroon.
- Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary, in Sierra Leone, worked to have the chimpanzee named the national animal.
- Limbe Wildlife Centre, in Cameroon, launched a national rescue, rehabilitation and release program for highly trafficked and endangered African grey parrots.
- Lilongwe Wildlife Centre, in Malawi, worked with law enforcement to disrupt the wildlife trade, resulting in government seizures of 395 kg of ivory, 103 rhino horns, and 24 live pangolins.
- Lola ya Bonobo, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, successfully rescued six orphan bonobos rescued from the bushmeat and wildlife trade, despite being under lockdown for the pandemic.

Perhaps the biggest accomplishment of all, however, was maintaining the high standard of care for the primates while operating with reduced staff and resources through the pandemic. Thanks to the generosity of you and other partners and supporters, all 23 member sanctuaries have been able to continue operations through this dire time.

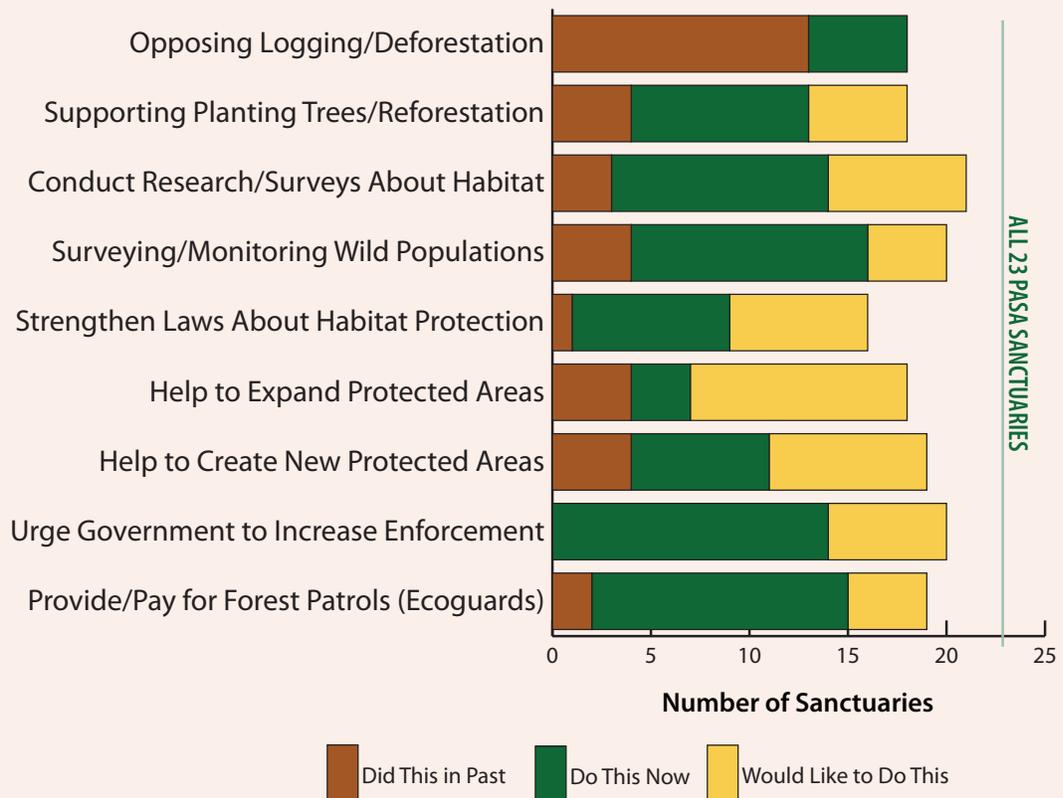
PASA secures a future for Africa's primates and their habitat through a unique collaboration of African sanctuaries, communities, governments, and global specialists. PASA International, based in the United States, provides direct support and capacity building for our members, while they rescue, rehabilitate, and reintroduce wildlife. Together, we galvanize the decades of in-country experience of our members into a global coalition to address major threats to African primates.

THREATS TO AFRICAN PRIMATES

Threats to African great apes and monkeys are many and ongoing.

While the threats to African great apes and monkeys are many, ongoing, and existential, this year has brought the impact of these threats together in a dramatic fashion. Primates are reeling from the impact of human activity. First, they are rapidly losing their wild forest home due to human population growth, agriculture, forestry and mining. Second, they have been relentlessly hunted and sold, either for food or for use as exotic pets or sold to emerging animal parks or “encounters.” Add to this a third challenge, a long line of disease threats, of which COVID-19 is just the latest.

HOW PASA MEMBERS PROTECT WILD PRIMATES





Population growth and food insecurity have accelerated the bushmeat crisis.

Apes and monkeys don't become endangered in a vacuum. That is why we contextualize the condition of Africa's nonhuman primates within the broader landscape of Africa's human growth and development. While the particular issues can and must be investigated independently, we must also consider them holistically so that together we can develop workable solutions.

THE BUSHMEAT CRISIS

Human population growth in Africa grew from 177 million people to 1.3 billion between 1950 and 2020. That's an average increase of 11 million people a year for the last 60 years. It is estimated that by 2060, Africa's population could reach 2.7 billion people. This trend puts tremendous pressure on the natural resources of the continent – its abundant forests, rich mines, and legendary animal species. A fifth of the population in Africa – 256 million people – remains hungry, an increase of 44 million over 2014. An additional 399 million people are considered “moderately food insecure.”

The expansion of commercial agriculture is an understandable effect of this condition. Yet commercial agricultural practices differ from traditional small-holder farming, and require larger tracts of land, which brings humans into more frequent contact – and conflict – with wildlife. This cycle is compounded by other industries. When combined with forestry and mining operations, the result is devastating habitat loss and fragmentation. This has dire consequences for the chimpanzees, gorillas, and many species of monkey that depend on forests for their lives.

Human population growth and food insecurity has accelerated the bushmeat crisis. As Adams Cassinga, founder of Conserv Congo, a nonprofit which investigates wildlife crime in the Democratic Republic of Congo, says, “In Kinshasa alone, which is almost the size of Rwanda, the entire republic of Rwanda, we do not have 2000 head of cattle. So you can imagine anything that moves becomes meat. People are trying to supplement their protein intake.”



No African primate has contracted COVID-19, but sanctuaries are vigilant.

Decades ago, subsistence hunting was sustainable. But sales of bushmeat have grown into a large and unsustainable industry of its own. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, approximately one million metric tons of bushmeat is consumed each year in Central Africa alone, and bushmeat hunting is one of the greatest threats to primates.

WILDLIFE CRIME & DISEASE

As mining and forestry concerns open up remote areas, poachers take advantage of the roads and other infrastructure to capture great apes and monkeys. The trade in primates is large scale and international in nature, involving thousands of animals per year, who end up in the lucrative – and illegal – wildlife trade. Sellers post photos and videos on popular social media channels like Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. When a buyer signals interest, the conversation quickly moves to an encrypted platform like WhatsApp, where the transaction can happen with protection. Ready buyers await in Dubai and China, where newfound wealth has created an appetite for zoos and exotic pets – and these buyers may bend the trade agreements to lend an air of legality to the transaction.

Disease is the third major threat to African primates. COVID-19 has demonstrated the power of a global pandemic, which as of this writing has claimed 1.3 million lives globally. While to date, no African primates have contracted COVID-19, the sanctuaries remain vigilant. PASA members endured Ebola outbreaks in 2014 and 2018, and have used what they learned to protect their staff and animals from COVID-19, knowing that for great apes, even a mild common cold can have devastating consequences. Disease outbreaks can be accelerated by the conditions we've outlined above: loss of wild habitat that brings humans and domesticated animals into closer contact with wildlife. This “interface” can be deadly.

FORGING SOLUTIONS TOGETHER

PASA is dedicated to understanding of the threats to African primates, and working strategically to develop solutions. Our Action for Chimpanzees program is one such



The 23 members of the Alliance are on the front lines in protecting wild primates.

program. In January 2020, PASA hosted a conference to discuss the challenges facing chimpanzees in West Africa. Joining PASA as co-hosts of the conference were the Chimpanzee Conservation Center (CCC), Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary, Akatia, Liberia Chimpanzee Rescue and Protection, the West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change program (WA BiCC, funded by USAID), and WARA. Participating in the conference were representatives from the governments of Cote d’Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, as well as the British Embassy in Guinea. Working together and leveraging the decades of experience that PASA member sanctuaries bring to the conversation, a task force was formed to work regionally on the issues.

PASA addresses the urgent threats while at the same time supporting sanctuaries as they rescue, rehabilitate and – where possible – reintroduce apes and monkeys into the wild. The 23 members in the Alliance are on the front lines of protecting wild primates.



ABOUT PASA

The Pan African Sanctuary Alliance (PASA) secures a future for Africa’s primates and their habitat through a unique collaboration of Africa sanctuaries, communities, governments, and global experts. Created in 2000, PASA is the largest association of wildlife centers and sanctuaries in Africa, consisting of 23 organizations in 13 countries.



PASA's network includes 16 sanctuaries that provide lifelong care for chimps.

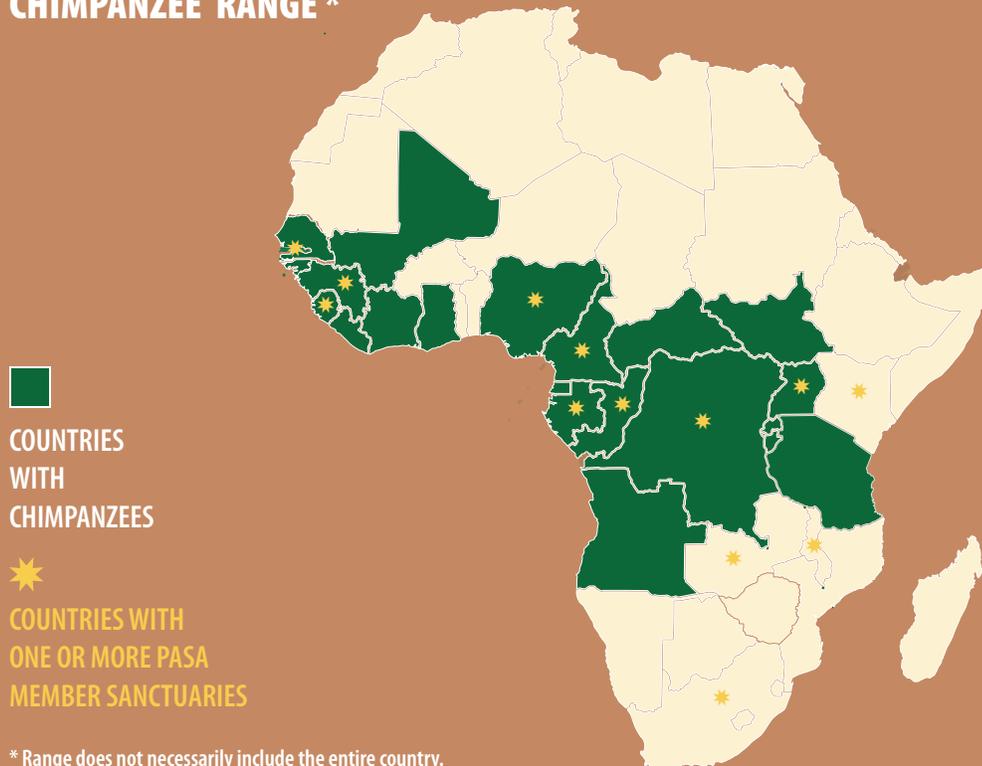
THE GREAT APES

CHIMPANZEES

According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species, chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*) are listed as endangered, meaning they face a “very high risk” of extinction within the next 100 years or less.

In practical terms, the IUCN estimates that only between 172,000 and 299,000 chimpanzees of all subspecies remain. This population is distributed across roughly 2.6 million kilometers of forestland.

CHIMPANZEE RANGE *



* Range does not necessarily include the entire country.



PASA members provide life-long care for a combined 1126 chimpanzees.

The PASA network includes 16 sanctuaries that provide lifelong care to chimpanzees. They partner with law enforcement entities to rescue chimps from the bushmeat and wildlife trade. These facilities are located in the key range countries for chimpanzees, including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon, Sierra Leone, Gabon, and Uganda. In addition, sanctuaries outside wild chimpanzee range provide a safe haven for chimps in Kenya, South Africa, and Zambia.

Currently, PASA members provide life-long care for a combined 1126 chimpanzees – a five percent increase over last year. Of these animals, 53 were rescued this year. In the year that these data were collected, PASA members reintroduced three chimpanzees into the wild, joining the 282 wild chimpanzees that sanctuary staff regularly monitor.

“We’re proud that the Government of Sierra Leone has made the western chimpanzee the national animal of Sierra Leone and the new face of tourism, replacing the diamond,” said NAME. “The announcement sends a message of hope to other nations. After all, if Sierra Leone, one of the poorest countries in the world, can secure such an important policy decision, then other nations can also make the effort to save species from extinction a focus of national identity.”

GORILLAS



There are two gorilla species, western and eastern, each with two subspecies. Together, they represent a total population of approximately 368,000 animals, divided by species as follows:

Western gorillas:

362,000 western lowland gorillas (critically endangered)

250-300 Cross River gorillas (critically endangered)

Eastern gorillas::

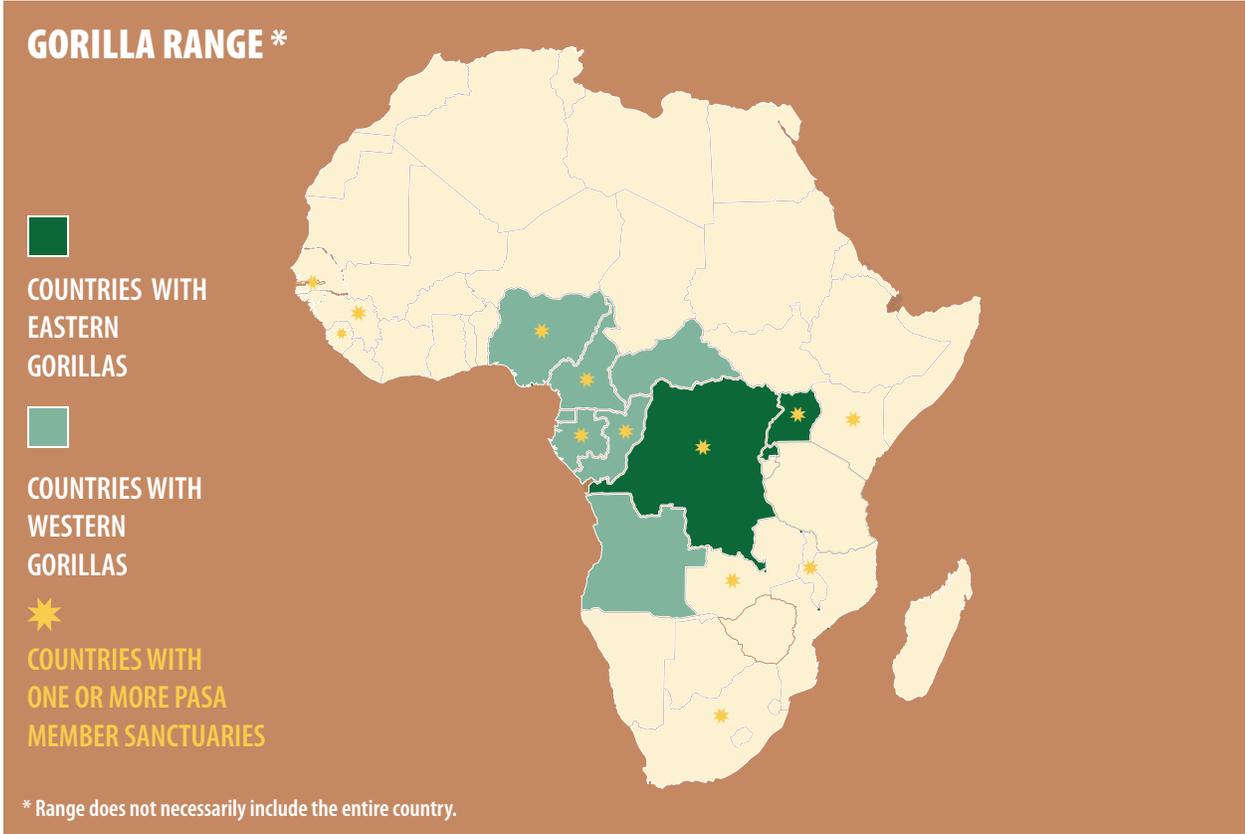
600-1000 mountain gorillas (endangered)

3,800 Grauer’s gorillas (critically endangered)



When possible, the sanctuaries reintroduce gorillas back to the wild.

Most Western Lowland Gorillas reside in the Republic of Congo, Gabon, and southwestern Cameroon. Cross River Gorillas have a very limited range along the border between Nigeria and Cameroon. Eastern Gorillas live in the mountainous forests of eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, northwest Rwanda and southwest Uganda. PASA includes six members that rescue and rehabilitate gorillas, located in Gabon, Republic of Congo, and Cameroon. Where possible, the sanctuaries reintroduce animals back into the wild, and they provide life-long care when that is not possible. Currently, PASA members care for a combined 67 animals, all of them Western Lowland Gorillas. They monitor another 63 individuals in the wild, most of whom they reintroduced. In 2019-2020, one gorilla has been reintroduced into the wild – the first reintroduction ever in Cameroon.





The PASA Alliance includes the only rehabilitation center for bonobos.

BONOBOS



Once thought to be a subspecies of chimpanzees, the bonobo is now recognized as a unique great ape species. It is listed as an endangered species and an accurate estimate of the current population is uncertain because, according to the IUCN, only 30% of the bonobos' range has been surveyed, using four bonobo strongholds. Based on that data, bonobo populations are estimated to be a minimum of 15,000 – 20,000 individuals. Bonobos are native to the Democratic Republic of Congo and inhabit forests as well as forest-savannah mosaics. This habitat in part makes it difficult to gather a precise estimate of their population.

The PASA alliance includes the world's only rehabilitation center for bonobos, called Lola ya Bonobo in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Currently, they provide care for 80 bonobos, and monitor an additional 14 which they reintroduced to the wild. This year, they reintroduced one bonobo into the wild.

MONKEYS



Africa's diverse monkey species are also at risk. For example, more than half of red colobus monkey species are endangered or critically endangered according to the IUCN Red List. Monkeys are subject to the same threats as African great apes. Habitat loss and fragmentation due to forestry, mining and human population growth have put their populations into more frequent contact with people, often with devastating impacts to the animals. They are hunted for bushmeat, illegally trafficked and sold as pets – decimating their populations.

PASA has eight member organizations that rescue, rehabilitate and provide life-long care for Africa's monkeys. In the past year, they cared for 1809 monkeys, including 689 vervet monkeys and 659 drills and 112 mandrills. In addition, they monitor an estimated 412 monkeys in the wild. This represents 117 different species of monkeys.

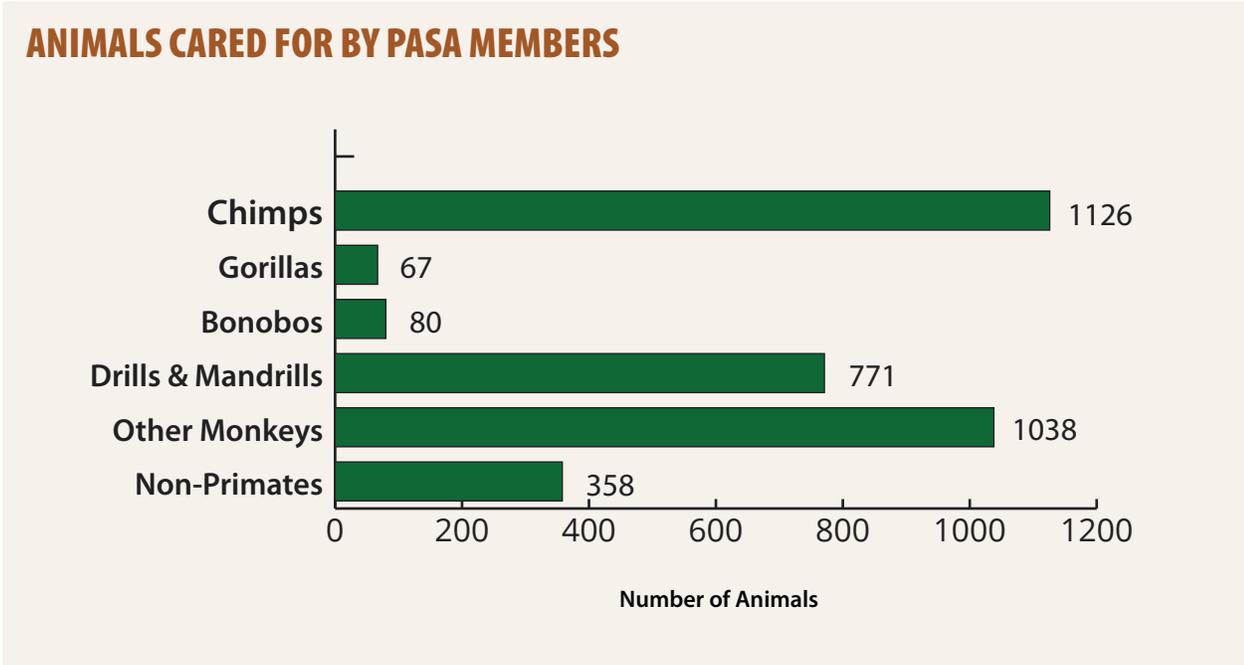


PASA member sanctuaries care for more than 3000 African primates.

SUMMARY OF ANIMALS IN SANCTUARY CARE

PASA member sanctuaries care for a total of 3082 primates and 358 non-primates. Non-primates include 304 gray parrots, an endangered species.

An overview of the species cared for by members of the PASA alliance:



SPECIAL REPORT: FREEDOM GOES FREE



Freedom being transported to his new home.

Ape Action Africa successfully returned an adult lowland gorilla back to the wild, becoming the first sanctuary in Cameroon to do so. The gorilla was aptly named “Freedom” by the team and his story is full of unexpected challenges.

No one is quite sure where he came from, but staff at Ape Action Africa, a wildlife center in southwestern Cameroon, were alerted to his presence on the morning of August 24th, 2019. The center is home to gorillas, chimpanzees, and diverse monkey species. In fact, the team originally thought Freedom had escaped from the center. But caregivers soon realized that Freedom was not one of their resident gorillas.

An event like this had never occurred in the 23 years since the wildlife center opened, but due to deforestation and the growing human population now living in and around the center, the area was no longer safe for wild gorillas. The team had to act fast, as Freedom had to be captured, at least temporarily.

Freedom was completely unhabituated to humans, making his time at the center stressful for gorilla and caregivers alike. He

needed to be back in the wild quickly, but finding a good return site required many months, with multiple reconnaissance trips to investigate potential sites.

Finally, an appropriate return site was found. Now the team had to manage to transport the 135KG gorilla. A veterinary team from Twycross Zoo, in the United Kingdom came to Cameroon to help with health checks and logistics. The team had to hand-build a transport cage especially for Freedom and determine the dose of tranquilizer needed to sedate him and get him inside. Once in the cage, he was given lots of tasty leaves to eat when he woke up. And the 11 hour drive began.

But the journey didn't end on the road. To reach his new home, Freedom also had to be transported across a river. Once they crossed the river, the team then carried the still sleeping Freedom the rest of the way to the return site. When Freedom was fully awake, the team backed away and began unlocking the door of the cage from a distance, using safety ropes. As the final rope was pulled and the door opened, Freedom bolted for the trees to reclaim the independence he was named after.



PASA's network includes 16 sanctuaries that provide lifelong care for chimps.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Wildlife centers become community hubs, providing employment, creating local empowerment, and serving as an education resource for children and adults. This builds a community around conservation, one that benefits tangibly from the economic impact of protecting primates.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Virtually all 23 members of the PASA alliance conduct programs, most frequently for local children.

In a typical year, these programs reach a half million people or more. And despite the challenges of the year, Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary, in Sierra Leone, added 23 more communities to its education programs. Colobus Conservation, in Kenya, was able

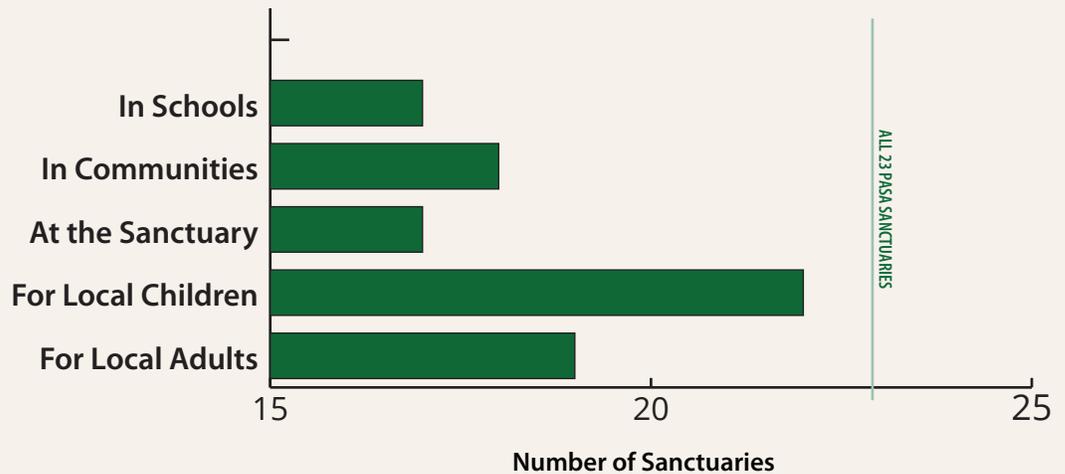




to build a new, modern education center to more effectively inspire local people about wildlife conservation.

Nearly all PASA member sanctuaries conduct education programs.

PASA MEMBER WILDLIFE EDUCATION PROGRAMS



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

PASA member sanctuaries across Africa contributed over \$6M to local economies in the last year. The sanctuaries work with their home communities to create alternative livelihoods, empower women, provide access to healthcare, and ensure that everyone in the communities receive economic benefits from conservation.

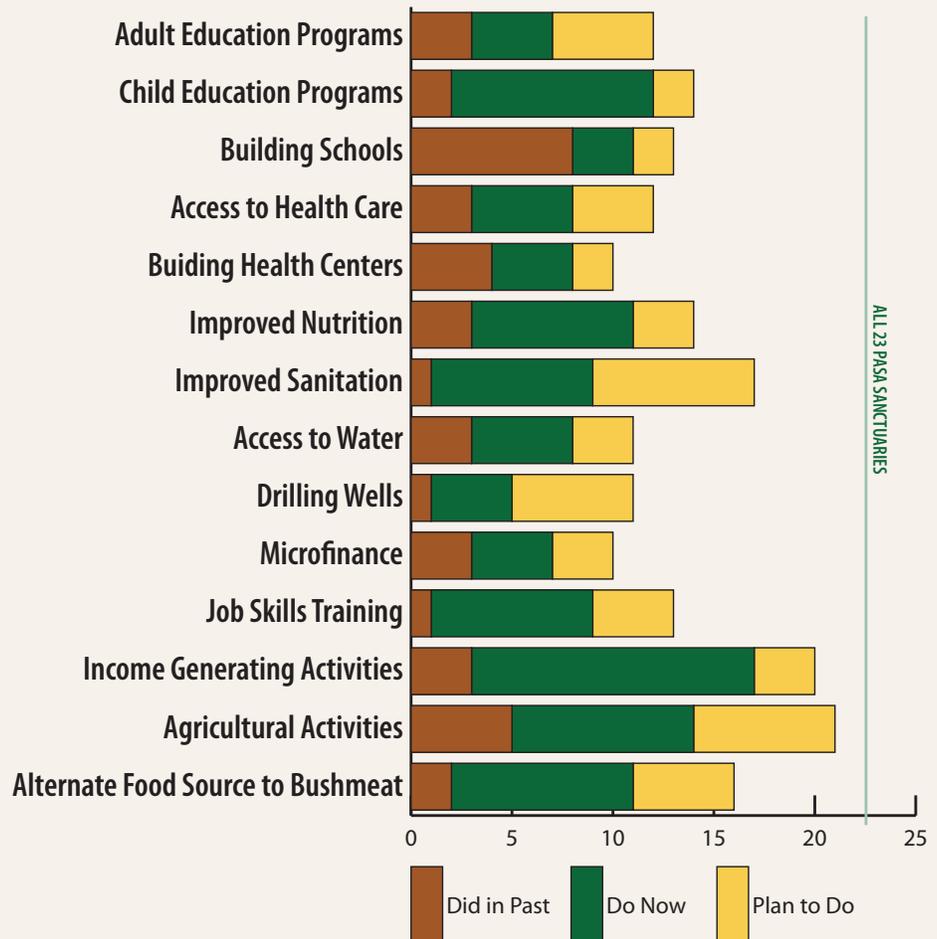
For Tacugama, this meant providing training on sustainable livelihoods to communities, distributing seeds and tools, and then following up with visits to the planting sites. In Cameroon, poverty in rural areas is still on the rise and food insecurity is a major concern. To address this crisis – and protect endangered chimpanzees and gorillas – PASA member Sanaga-Yong Chimpanzee Rescue is launching a new community development



**PASA members
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project in collaboration with farmers, agronomists, and conservationists. Leveraging decades-long relationships with the local communities, the team seeks to use an innovative agroforestry technique to improve crop production and provide Cameroonian communities with long-term sustainability. This wide-ranging project is helping to tackle major causes of poverty and lead to economic growth in remote areas of Cameroon where people have few alternatives, while protecting forests and animals.

PASA MEMBER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS



RESCUES DON'T STOP DURING LOCKDOWN



Pongo with Mama Yvonne.

BONOBO RESCUE

Investigators learned of sweet three-year-old Pongo when they were alerted about a man in illegal possession of a baby bonobo. They arrived prepared to make an arrest. According to the man, he found Pongo in the forest and tried to reunite her with her family, but they were nowhere to be found. We can only guess what horrible fate her loved ones might have suffered.

Pongo was swiftly brought to PASA member sanctuary Lola ya Bonobo for expert care and medical attention. After a visit with veterinarian Dr. Jonas, she was introduced to bonobo surrogate mother Mama Yvonne. It takes experienced sanctuary caretakers like Mama Yvonne to give orphans like Pongo the love, trust, and patience that they need to recover. Soon, Pongo will join the other rescued bonobos in one of the sanctuary's large forested enclosures. Someday, she might return to the wild where she belongs.

Pongo is just one of several orphaned bonobos recently brought to safety. Omandja came to Lola ya Bonobo in horrific condition, with swollen eyes and sores all over his body. Tiny Monkoto just

arrived last week, looking like nothing but skin and bones. Their caretakers are exhausted by the pandemic, and the sanctuary's resources are strained, but they won't give up on these animals.

GREY PARROT RESCUE

Limbe Wildlife Centre, a PASA member in Cameroon, provides sanctuary for gorillas, chimpanzees, and many monkey species that have been rescued from the illegal wildlife trade. The sanctuary also works closely with law enforcement authorities to confiscate and rehabilitate animals seized from poachers, leading to arrests and speedier convictions for wildlife crime. Fighting the illegal wildlife trade can require rescuing any species that needs help.

But it's not only apes and monkeys who are target of wildlife traffickers. This year, Limbe was called to rescue a flock of 275 endangered African grey parrots. These parrots are heavily trafficked in Cameroon, fueling a lucrative global pet market and contributing to their impending extinction in the wild. Without Limbe Wildlife, these intelligent birds could have ended up for sale in a pet shop near you.



Limbe Wildlife Centre in Cameroon rescued a flock of endangered grey parrots like this one.



Facing daily challenges, Sanctuaries have learned to be self-reliant.

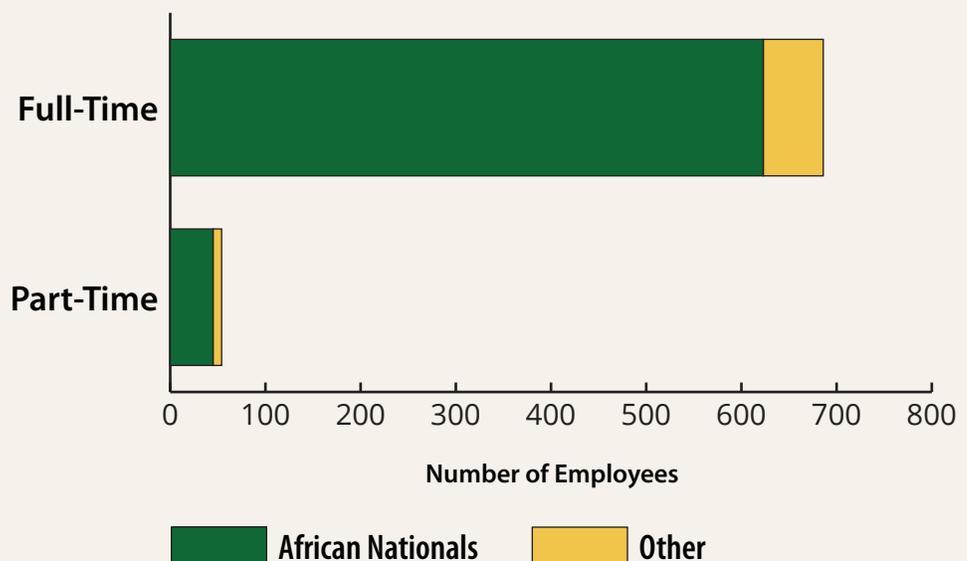
WORKING WONDERS

It is not easy to run a primate sanctuary in Africa under normal conditions, and this year was far from normal. They face regular challenges with basic infrastructure, telecommunications, and water.

For example, 18 members of the Alliance rely on their own water source, because a public option is not available. Similarly, 14 members provide their own electricity. While all have telephone and some kind of internet service, the quality of the telecommunications connections can vary greatly at different locations.

Yet these pioneers in primate protection are leaders in a continent-wide conservation movement, and with decades of experience, they have learned to be self-reliant and resourceful when resources are limited.

STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS





COVID-19 lockdowns forced many Sanctuaries to close their doors to visitors.

DESPITE CHALLENGES, WORK CONTINUES

COVID-19 continues to impact PASA's 23 members. When national lockdowns forced many to close their doors to visitors, some had staff who have stayed on site for months – apart from families, in many cases. Primate immune systems are very similar to our own, and a COVID-19 outbreak among animals in a sanctuary could be devastating, particularly for endangered species such as chimpanzees and gorillas. To address this, the sanctuaries implemented strict safety and cleaning protocols to ensure the health of staff and the animals in their care. They continue to maintain these procedures.

Thanks to generous donations from foundations and individuals, PASA was able to provide emergency financial support to every member that applied for it, ensuring that the live-saving work continued, no matter what. Two examples, among many, demonstrate the determination and resiliency of the teams on the ground. Truly, the work goes on.

- Support enabled Colobus Conservation to continue their animal rescue programs. In





A COVID-19 outbreak could be devastating to endangered species.

September, a total of 14 injured or abused monkeys were saved and brought to safety. Through a grant from the Humane Society International (HSI), the sanctuary was able to provide x-rays, ultrasounds, and blood and fecal tests as part of the animals' emergency medical care. HSI's grant has also been essential in keeping the sanctuary stocked with personal protective equipment, including gloves and masks, as well as animal medication.

- Under the order of their province, Jeunes Animaux Confisqués Au Katanga (J.A.C.K.), in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) began a lengthy lockdown starting in March. All of their staff quarantined at the sanctuary in order to continue providing expert care while keeping the risk of infection to the sanctuary's 34 chimpanzees as low as possible. Generous support from the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) enabled them to purchase beds, mosquito nets, toiletries, and other essential items for the staff at the center. The team is now preparing to receive 25 monkeys that have been rescued from traffickers in Zimbabwe – the largest rescue ever in PASA's 20 year history.

PASA

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