



CHIPEMBELE

Wildlife Education Trust

2025 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT



Conservation begins with understanding — and grows through people

Our Vision

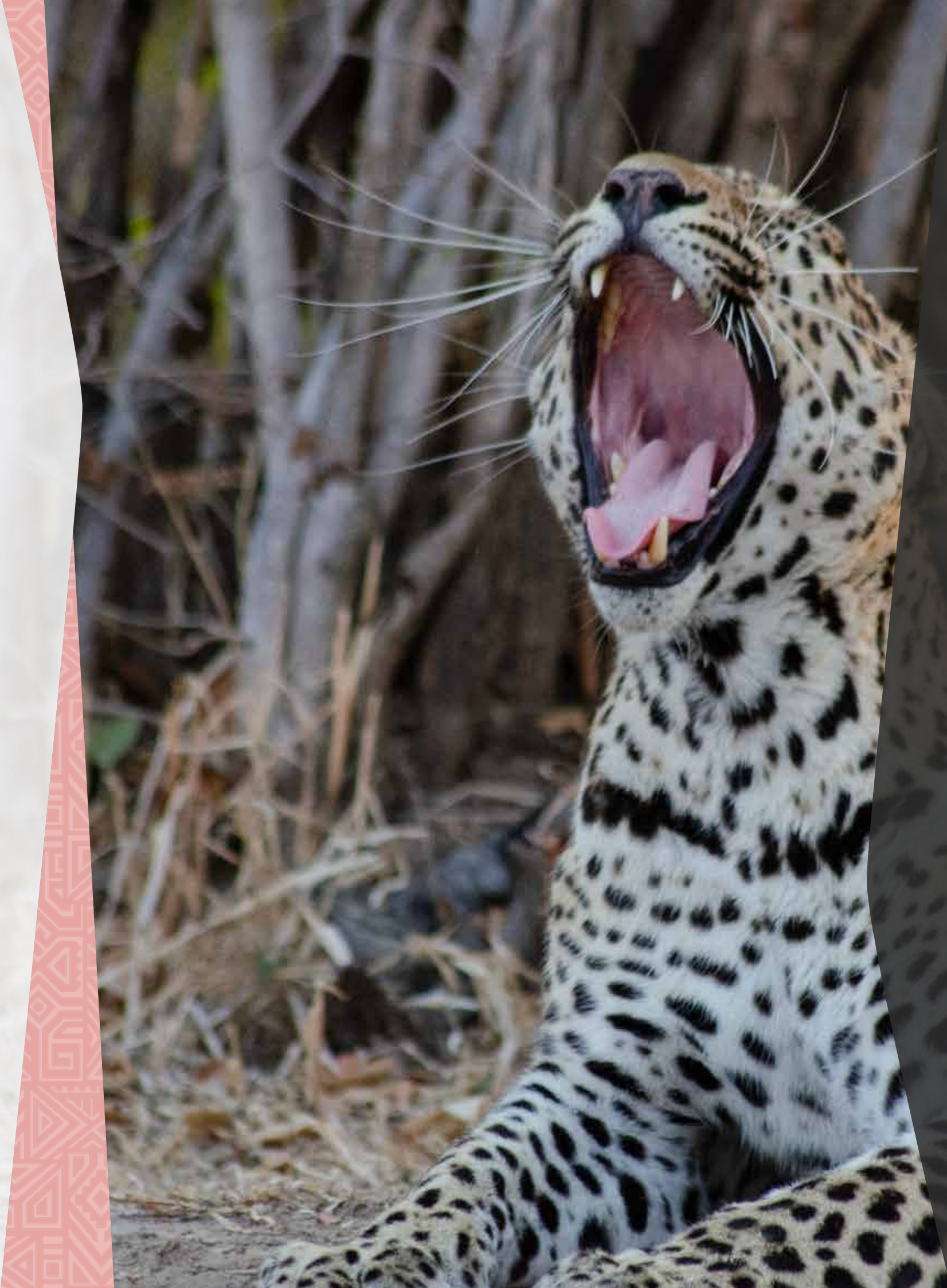
People and wildlife living in harmony throughout Zambia

Our Misson

To teach Zambian children and communities the value of wildlife and their environment so they may be conserved for present and future generations.

Our Values

- Integrity
- Passion
- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Creative thinking
- Environmental stewardship



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A word from our Founding Director - Anna Tolan

Dear Friends and Supporters

When I look back to the beginnings of Chipembele, I am reminded of the simple yet powerful vision that inspired its creation: to open the eyes of young people to the wonder of the natural world and to nurture within them a sense of responsibility for its protection. That vision has never dimmed. In fact, it feels more alive today than ever, carried forward by the energy, curiosity and determination of the young leaders who have grown through our programmes.

Over the years, Chipembele has evolved - new initiatives, new partnerships, new challenges - but at its heart, one thing has remained constant: the belief that conservation is not only about wildlife, but about people. It is about building dignity, opportunity and leadership through education. It is about ensuring that communities living alongside South Luangwa National Park feel empowered and entrusted to safeguard the ecosystems that sustain them. That purpose has guided us through every stage of growth and continues to anchor us today.

In 2025, I was especially moved by the stories of students who stepped forward with courage and conviction. Some spoke of how their time at Chipembele had changed the course of their lives, inspiring them to pursue careers in conservation. Others demonstrated leadership in their communities, sharing knowledge and motivating peers to take action. These moments remind me that the seeds planted years ago are bearing fruit and that the ripple effect of conservation education is far greater than we can measure.

Community led conservation has always been central to our work, and I see its meaning deepening with time. It is not about imposing solutions, but about listening, learning, and walking alongside communities as they discover their own strength. Education creates understanding, but it also creates pride. It allows young people to see themselves not as passive beneficiaries, but as active stewards of their environment. That shift - from awareness to ownership - is where true change begins.

Looking ahead into 2026 and beyond, I believe the most important thing to protect is the integrity of our vision: that conservation education must remain people-centred, inclusive, and inspiring. As Chipembele grows, we must continue to balance ambition with authenticity, ensuring that every new programme or project reflects the values that have carried us this far. Our proposed Nature Field Centre, now moving closer to reality, embodies this balance - it is both a bold step forward and a faithful continuation of our founding mission.

Conservation is not a distant ideal, but a lived experience. It is found in the excited laughter of children discovering wildlife for the first time, in the determination of young leaders who choose to protect their heritage and in the collective hope of communities who see their future bound to the health of the land. Chipembele exists to nurture that experience, and with your support, it will continue to flourish. My heartfelt thanks go to all our supporters in Zambia and around the world. Your belief, generosity, and encouragement helped to carry us onwards throughout 2025. This journey is shared with you, and together we are building a legacy of conservation and community empowerment in Zambia.


Anna Tolan
Founding Director



Executive Snapshot

2025: A Year of Conservation Education, Leadership, and Community Resilience

In 2025, Chipembele Wildlife Education Trust prioritised depth over scale, strengthening conservation education, youth leadership pathways, and community engagement across the Luangwa landscape.

Rather than expanding rapidly, the organisation focused on consistent delivery, trusted relationships, and clear pathways for young people and communities. Conservation education remained the foundation of Chipembele's work, while new livelihood-linked initiatives strengthened the connection between learning and daily life.

2025 at a Glance

1,342 students

reached through Conservation Education Clubs

16 youth leaders

completed the Aspiring Conservation Leaders (ACL) Programme

30,000+ community members

engaged through radio, campaigns, and outreach

6 women's groups

supported through agro-ecology training

22,100 kilometres

travelled by educators on bicycles to reach schools

4 volunteers and interns

supported programme delivery

What Defined the Year

- Consistent conservation education through regular school-based clubs
- Clear youth pathways from learning to leadership and further education
- Community-wide engagement beyond the classroom
- First steps into livelihood-linked conservation action

Why This Matters

The impact of 2025 is reflected in students' confidence, emerging youth leaders, stronger community dialogue, and women applying conservation knowledge in daily life.

Chipembele enters the next year with strong community trust, proven education and leadership models, and a growing focus on conservation action grounded in real needs.



Why Our Work Matters

Across the landscapes surrounding South Luangwa, conservation is not an abstract idea. Wildlife continuously moves through farming areas; forests provide fuel and food, and climate variability affects harvests, water access, and household stability. The people who live closest to biodiversity experience both its value and its vulnerability every day, yet access to structured, consistent conservation education remains limited, particularly in rural communities. Many young people grow up surrounded by wildlife without opportunities to understand ecosystems, human-wildlife coexistence, or the role they can play in protecting the natural world.

Chipembele exists to bridge this gap. We work in places where conservation is not optional, but unavoidable. We believe lasting conservation begins with understanding, grows through participation, and succeeds when it is aligned with people's real lives and future opportunities.

The Reality Facing Young People

Schools are often under resourced, environmental education can be inconsistent, and conservation careers feel distant or inaccessible. Without structured learning, wildlife may be viewed as a threat rather than an asset, and leadership potential is lost early.

Education Beyond Primary School

Secondary and tertiary education remain out of reach for many capable young people. Financial barriers force students to leave school, and conservation careers remain inaccessible. Chipembele's Student Sponsorship Programme supports secondary and tertiary education aligned with conservation pathways.

The Community Context

Conservation decisions are shaped by daily pressures around land use, fuel, and food security. Communities living closest to wildlife often have the least access to conservation education.

Why Livelihoods Matter

Conservation education cannot succeed if it competes with survival. In 2025, Chipembele introduced agro-ecology and eco-stove initiatives to align conservation with household wellbeing.

Why This Work Matters Now

Climate pressure is increasing. Human-wildlife conflict is intensifying. The need for informed, empowered communities has never been greater.

A Foundation for What Comes Next

The sections that follow show how Chipembele translates belief into action through education, leadership, community engagement, and conservation action.



Our Approach

Chipembele's work is grounded in a simple belief: when people understand the natural world and see themselves as part of it, conservation becomes personal and lasting. Our approach recognises that conservation education is not a single intervention, but a process that unfolds over time. Young people need consistent learning, opportunities to deepen their understanding, and pathways that allow them to grow into leadership and careers. Communities need access to information, dialogue, and solutions that align with daily realities.

Chipembele's model is built around three interconnected pillars: Conservation Education, Community Engagement, and Conservation Action. These pillars reinforce one another and ensure that learning leads to understanding, understanding leads to ownership, and ownership leads to action.

Conservation Education

Conservation Education is the foundation of Chipembele's work. Through school-based clubs, Conservation Centre visits, and youth leadership programmes, learners build knowledge of ecosystems, wildlife, and coexistence. Education is delivered consistently and locally, allowing trust and confidence to grow over time.

Youth Leadership Development

As learners mature, some show greater commitment and leadership potential. Chipembele nurtures this through the Aspiring Conservation Leaders programme, internships, and mentorship. These pathways allow young people to move from learning into leadership and responsibility.

Student Sponsorships

Chipembele recognises that leadership potential is often lost when students are forced to leave school due to financial barriers. Student sponsorships support secondary and tertiary education, particularly in conservation-aligned fields, ensuring that learning pathways continue.

Community Engagement

Conservation education must extend beyond schools. Chipembele engages communities through radio, campaigns, dialogue, and shared experiences, ensuring that conservation knowledge is discussed across generations.

Conservation Action and Livelihoods

In 2025, Chipembele strengthened its approach by linking conservation education to practical action, particularly through agro-ecology and eco-stove initiatives. This work recognises that conservation is most effective when it supports livelihoods and wellbeing.

Together, these elements form a holistic, community-rooted approach that prioritises long term impact over short-term outputs.



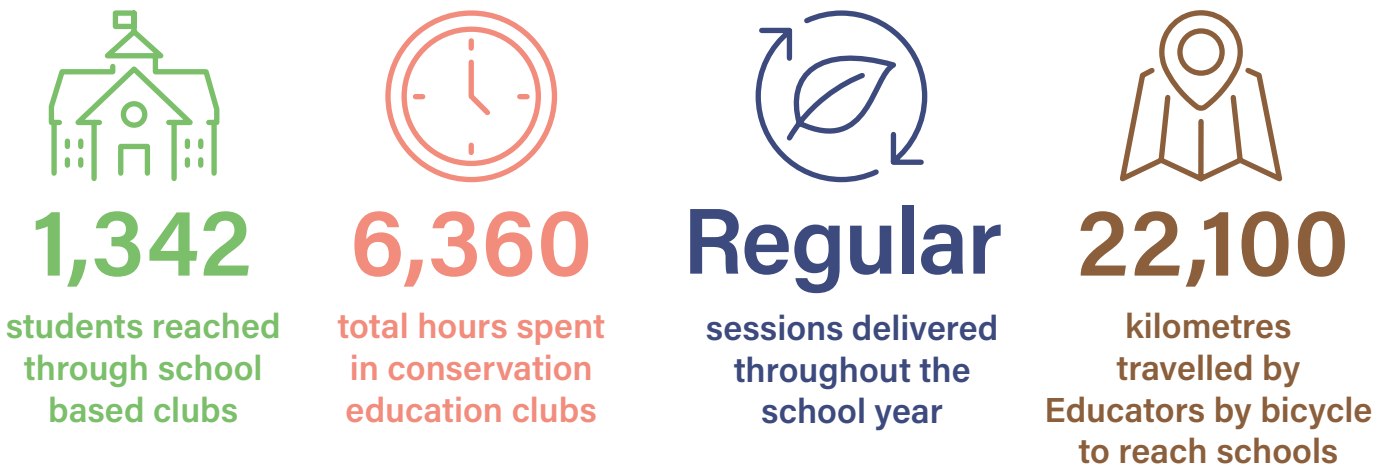
School Conservation Education Clubs

Consistent Learning Where Conservation Begins

Conservation Education Clubs are the foundation of Chipembele’s work and the primary way young people access consistent, structured conservation education.

In many rural schools, environmental learning is limited by time, resources, and access to specialist educators. Chipembele’s clubs address this gap by providing regular, curriculum-linked sessions that allow understanding to develop over time.

2025 Impact Snapshot



What We Did

In 2025, our Educators delivered interactive conservation lessons covering wildlife ecology, ecosystems, human-wildlife coexistence, climate-change mitigation and adaptation, and conservation responsibility. Sessions were adapted to local context and encouraged discussion, curiosity, and participation.

Rather than one-off visits, educators returned consistently to the same schools, building trust with teachers and learners.

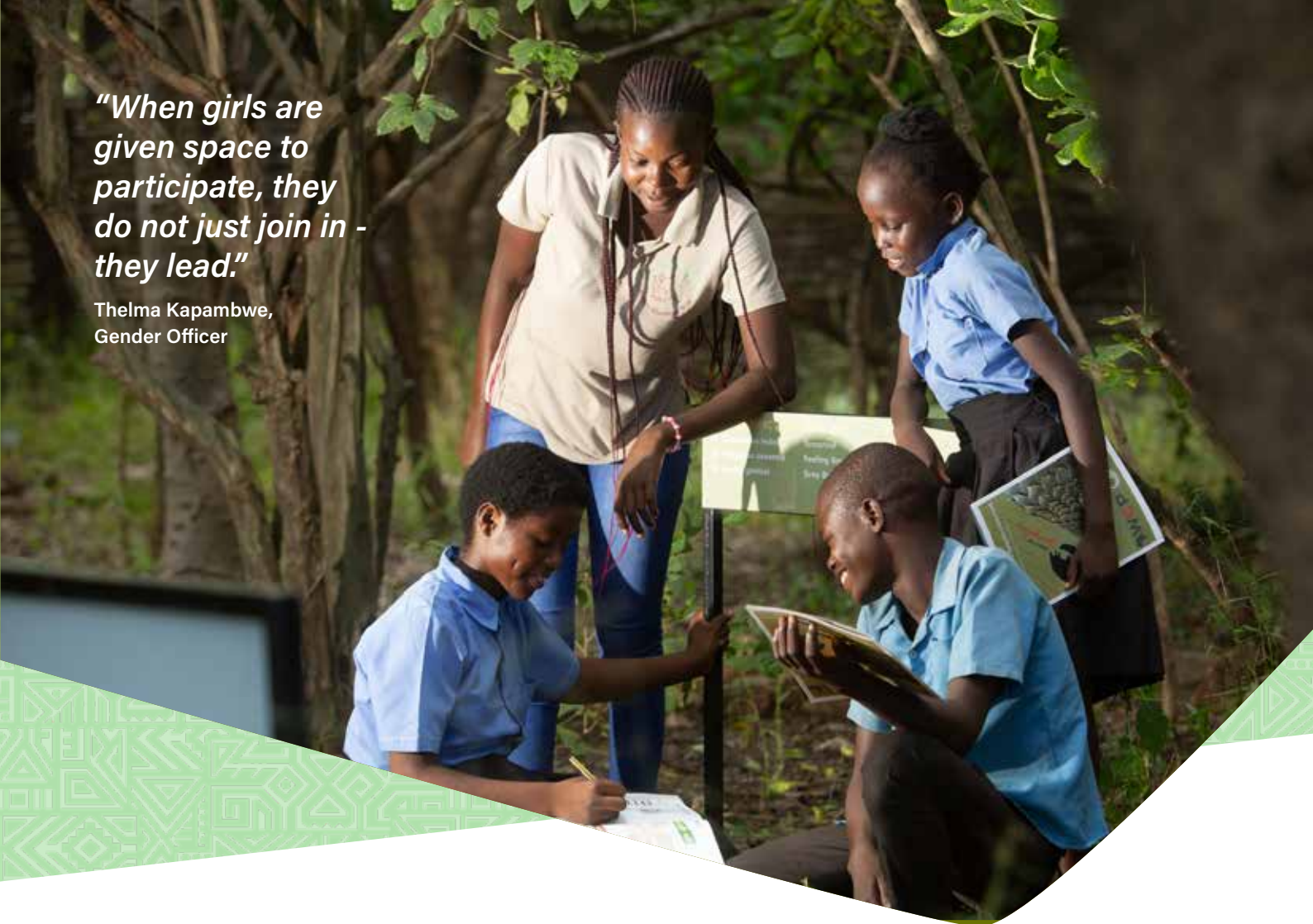


“They come again and again. That is why the children remember.”

Levison Sakala
School Teacher, Mfuwe Primary

“When girls are given space to participate, they do not just join in - they lead!”

Thelma Kapambwe,
Gender Officer



What Changed

Teachers reported improved engagement and curiosity among learners. Students demonstrated a stronger understanding of conservation concepts and increased confidence in discussions. Many began sharing conservation messages at home.

Intentional efforts to encourage girls’ participation led to greater confidence and leadership among female students.



Why It Matters

Conservation Education Clubs provide the entry point to Chipembele’s wider education and leadership pathways, including Conservation Centre Visits, the Aspiring Conservation Leaders Programme, and education sponsorships.

They lay the foundation for long-term conservation understanding and leadership.



Field-Based Learning

Turning Knowledge into Experience

Field-based learning is a core part of Chipembele’s conservation education approach. By taking learning beyond the classroom, students were able to see, experience, and connect with conservation in ways that deepen understanding and build confidence.

In 2025, field-based learning was delivered through Conservation Centre Visits and student focused game drives, reinforcing school-based education through direct, hands-on experience.

2025 Impact Snapshot



1. Conservation Centre Visits

Conservation Centre Visits provided structured, curriculum-linked learning experiences that complemented Conservation Education Clubs. In 2025, the Centre hosted students from 8 primary and secondary schools, delivering 43 day-long sessions across junior and senior conservation clubs.

Lessons covered topics such as:

- Birds and biodiversity
- Food cycles and ecosystems
- Trees of the Luangwa Valley
- Animal behaviour and adaptation

Feedback from accompanying teachers and club patrons highlighted strong learner engagement, with lessons consistently described as *very interesting* and *very useful*. Learner participation was rated as *moderate to very good*, and all sessions were confirmed to be professionally facilitated.

Secondary school students demonstrated stronger comprehension, while junior learners showed high enthusiasm and engagement.

One of the most rewarding parts of my work is facilitating the day-long student visits to the Chipembele Centre. By combining lessons with interactive activities and real-world conservation experiences, we create an environment where students are fully engaged, asking questions, thinking critically, and having fun at the same time. When learning is enjoyable and memorable, the messages stay with them long after they leave."

Anna Tolan – Founding Director

The Centre achieved a **50/50 gender balance**, reinforcing Chipembele’s commitment to inclusive learning environments.



2. Student Game Drives

In addition to Centre-based learning, Chipembele delivered 10 student game drives in 2025, each involving 15 learners. These game drives were designed specifically as education activities for students, not community outreach.

During the game drives, students:

- Observed wildlife behaviour in natural habitats
- Applied classroom learning to real-world environments
- Discussed ecosystems, food chains, and coexistence
- Built confidence and curiosity through direct experience

For many learners, this was their first opportunity to experience wildlife in this context.

"Seeing the animals helped me understand what we learn in our clubs, I am excited to be protecting wildlife."

Student participant

What Changed

Field-based learning contributed to:

- Deeper understanding of conservation concepts
- Stronger emotional connection to wildlife and ecosystems
- Increased confidence and curiosity among students
- Improved classroom participation following Centre Visits and game drives

Teachers reported that students returned to school more engaged and more willing to take part in conservation discussions.





3. Nature Nights

Nature Nights provided students with a unique opportunity to experience and learn about the natural world **after dark**, expanding their understanding of ecosystems beyond daytime learning.

Through guided night-time activities, students were introduced to:

- Nocturnal wildlife and behaviour
- The role of night-active species in ecosystems
- Sensory awareness, listening, and observation skills
- Safety, respect, and responsibility in natural spaces

Nature Nights helped deepen curiosity, reduce fear of the natural environment at night, and foster a sense of wonder and respect for biodiversity.

"I didn't know so many animals are active at night."

Student participant



What Changed

Field-based learning contributed to:

- Deeper understanding of conservation concepts
- Stronger emotional connection to wildlife and ecosystems
- Increased confidence and curiosity among students
- Improved classroom participation following experiential activities

Teachers reported that students returned to school more engaged and more willing to participate in conservation discussions after Centre Visits, game drives, and Nature Nights.

Why It Matters

Field-based learning bridges the gap between theory and practice. By combining classroom education with immersive experiences, Chipembele helps students move from learning *about* conservation to understanding their place *within* it.

These experiences also strengthen pathways into youth leadership programmes such as the Aspiring Conservation Leaders (ACL) Programme and tertiary education.

Last year we achieved:



10
nights
camping



288
hours spent
during the
programme



60
student
participants



"I've been proud to see how conservation education in the Luangwa Valley has grown in 2025. Watching children and community members learn and work together toward coexistence is incredibly motivating. I most enjoy engaging young people and local communities on why natural resources matter—and how we can protect them. Education helps people understand nature, value it, and take action to preserve it."

Clara Nanja, Conservation Education Manager



Aspiring Conservation Leaders (ACL) Programme

From Education to Leadership and Careers

The Aspiring Conservation Leaders (ACL) Programme is Chipembele’s flagship youth leadership pathway, supporting motivated young people to transition from conservation education into leadership, further study, and employment.

2025 Impact Snapshot



What We Did

In 2025, ACL combined conservation education with leadership development, mentorship, and career exposure. Participants engaged in:

- Leadership and personal development workshops
- Two structured work placement cycles across conservation, tourism, education, media, and community development organisations
- Climate education and digital literacy training
- A student led Chipembele-Community Nature Conservancy restoration project
- Career exposure, including an annual Lusaka careers and university visit

Throughout the year, students were supported to build confidence, professional skills, and a clear sense of direction.

“ACL helped me see that conservation could be my future, not just something I learned about.”

Lameck Banda, Student



“Working with young people in conservation continues to inspire me because they carry fresh ideas, energy, and the courage to imagine a better future for our natural world. I have seen how exposure, mentorship, and opportunity can completely transform a young person’s confidence and direction in life. Conservation is not only about protecting wildlife and ecosystems, but also about investing in the next generation of people who will speak for them. Young people remind me that change is still possible, especially when they are empowered with knowledge and purpose. Being part of that journey is both a responsibility and a privilege.”

Suuba Muyamwa – Youth Leadership Coordinator

What Changed

Educators and placement supervisors reported significant growth in students’ confidence, communication, and professionalism. Participants developed practical conservation skills alongside leadership and project management experience.

All 16 graduates successfully transitioned into confirmed post-programme pathways by early 2026, several through government bursary support.

Why It Matters

The ACL Programme ensures conservation leadership is grown locally, supporting young people who understand community realities and are committed to protecting their environment. It serves as a critical bridge between conservation education and professional conservation careers.



"The financial support from sponsorship has helped me gain access to formal education and has brought many positive values into my life. For instance, it has contributed greatly to my personal development by improving my confidence to learn, discipline, communication skills, and ability to interact with different people. Sponsorship has also given me an opportunity to pursue a career and work towards achieving my future goals and ambitions."

Douglas Nkhoma, 1st Year University Scholar

Education Sponsorships

Protecting Potential and Building Conservation Pathways

Access to education is one of the greatest determinants of long-term conservation leadership. While conservation education builds awareness and values, many young people face significant barriers to continuing their formal education beyond primary school.

2025 Impact Snapshot



40

students supported through secondary education sponsorships

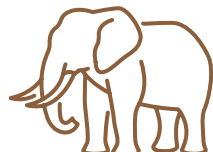


60%+
of sponsored students are girls and young women



19

students supported at tertiary level in conservation-aligned fields



Sponsorships aligned with education, wildlife, environmental science, and natural resource management pathways

Chipembele's Student Sponsorship Programme exists to ensure that financial barriers do not end conservation journeys prematurely, particularly for students demonstrating commitment, leadership potential, and interest in conservation-related careers.

What We Did

In 2025, Chipembele provided targeted education sponsorships to students who:

- Demonstrated strong engagement in School Conservation Clubs or the ACL Programme
- Faced financial barriers to continuing their education
- Showed interest in conservation, education, or environmental leadership pathways



Support focused on:

- Girls' education
- Secondary school retention, where dropout risk is highest
- Tertiary education, particularly in conservation-aligned disciplines
- Ongoing mentorship and guidance, alongside financial support

Sponsorships were not treated as stand-alone assistance. Sponsored students were encouraged to remain actively engaged in Chipembele programmes as mentors, role models, and youth leaders.

What Changed

Student sponsorships contributed to:

- Reduced dropout rates among engaged conservation learners
- Increased transition from secondary to tertiary education
- Stronger representation of young women in conservation-aligned studies
- Clearer pathways from education into leadership, internships, and employment

For many students, sponsorship support marked the difference between leaving school and continuing toward a future in conservation.

Why It Matters

Conservation leadership cannot be built without access to education. By investing in secondary and tertiary education, Chipembele ensures that



conservation knowledge, values, and leadership remain rooted within local communities.

Education sponsorships:

- Protect long-term conservation potential
- Strengthen leadership pipelines
- Reduce inequality in access to conservation careers
- Ensure that conservation is led by those who understand local realities

Looking Ahead

Chipembele will continue to strengthen the Student Sponsorship Programme by:

- Building a Scholarship Strategy to allow financial security and continuity of the programme
- Prioritising conservation-aligned fields of study
- Increasing support for young women and girls
- Deepening mentorship alongside financial assistance
- Strengthening links between sponsorships, ACL, and employment pathways

Animal Rehabilitation

Responding to Wildlife in Need

Alongside its education and community programmes, Chipembele operates an Animal Rehabilitation Programme, dedicated to the care, recovery, and management of injured, orphaned, or displaced wildlife.

This work responds directly to the realities of human-wildlife interaction in the Luangwa landscape, where animals may be affected by conflict, habitat pressure, or environmental challenges. Working together with the Department of National Parks Wildlife, CSL and ZCP we provided rehabilitation and relocation where possible of orphaned and injured wildlife.

What We Did

In 2025, Chipembele:

- Responded to cases of injured, orphaned, or displaced wildlife
- Provided ongoing care and monitoring to support recovery
- Assessed each case to determine the most appropriate outcome, including
 - Consultation with experienced wildlife veterinarians and specialist rehabilitators
 - Intensive rearing and close care by Steve and Anna Tolan
 - Rehabilitation back into the wild, where possible
- Ensured that all intervention was guided by animal welfare, conservation ethics, and long-term sustainability

Each intervention required careful evaluation, with decisions made based on what was in the best interest of both the animal and the surrounding ecosystem.

A Reflection from 2025

In 2025, the rehabilitation programme included the care of an orphaned baby elephant. Significant time, effort, and resources were invested in its recovery, with the aim of eventual reintegration into a safe environment.

Despite these efforts, the elephant unfortunately did not survive.

While the outcome was difficult, it reflects an important reality of rehabilitation work: not all interventions succeed, even with dedicated care and expertise.

“Rehabilitation is not only about saving animals. It is about doing what is right, even when the outcome is uncertain.”



Why It Matters

The Animal Rehabilitation Programme plays an important role in Chipembele’s broader conservation work by:

- Responding to immediate wildlife needs
- Reinforcing ethical approaches to conservation
- Highlighting the importance of wildlife crime prevention and habitat protection
- Grounding conservation work in real world challenges

This work complements conservation education by reinforcing a key message:

Conservation is not only about protecting wildlife at a distance, but also about responding with care when things go wrong.



Community Engagement

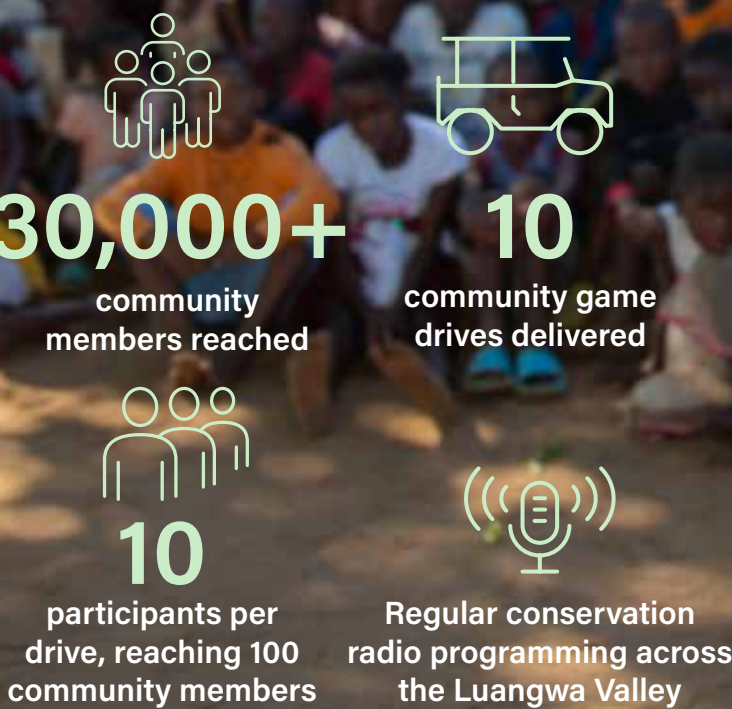
Shared Learning Beyond the Classroom

Chipembele’s community engagement work ensures that conservation education extends beyond schools and into households and shared community spaces. Communities living alongside wildlife face daily conservation challenges yet often have limited access to structured conservation information.

In 2025, Chipembele focused on accessible, dialogue-based engagement that encouraged shared understanding rather than one way messaging.



2025 Impact Snapshot



What We Did

Community engagement was delivered through a combination of radio programmes, environmental awareness activities, and community game drives, reinforcing conservation education beyond the classroom.

Conservation radio programming provided accessible education in local languages, addressing human-wildlife coexistence, environmental change, and responsible resource use. These programmes often reinforced conservation messages young people were learning at school and incited local pride and engagement as the community regularly called in and participated.

Community game drives were intentionally designed as conservation learning experiences rather than tourism activities. Participants were guided through discussions on wildlife behaviour, ecosystems, and coexistence, helping reconnect communities with local natural heritage.

The Mobile Education Unit

Reaching schools and communities across the Luangwa landscape requires flexibility, persistence, and adaptability. Many schools are located far from the Conservation Centre, making regular access to field-based learning difficult.

Chipembele’s **Mobile Education Unit** ensures that conservation education continues beyond fixed locations, bringing learning directly to schools and communities that might otherwise be difficult to reach.



The Environmental Campaign

By Stanley Mwanza
Senior Conservation Educator.

The annual environmental campaign was designed to respond directly to the environmental realities facing communities in and around the Luangwa Valley, through student leadership. In 2025, the campaign focused on climate change, strengthening local awareness and engagement through targeted outreach to community members and school environmental clubs. Through structured sensitization activities, the campaign promoted community-led climate action in South Luangwa. Implemented over a two-month period, the initiative was delivered through coordinated mini-campaigns across all five operational zones, culminating in a central event that consolidated learning, amplified key messages, and reinforced community participation and ownership.

The campaign reached over 20,000 community members and reinforced the community’s commitment to combatting and adapting to climate change. To all our supporters, the environmental campaign is a key part of our mission and the heart of the communities we work with. Thank you for being part of the journey with us.



What We Did

- In 2025, the Mobile Education Unit:
- Delivered 13 conservation education sessions directly in schools and community settings away from the immediate Mambwe Zone of Operation
 - Extended the reach of programmes to more remote and hard-to-access areas such as Sandwe Chiefdom
 - Provided interactive, curriculum aligned lessons adapted to local contexts
 - Reinforced learning from Conservation Education Clubs through additional engagement and follow up sessions
 - Supported flexible delivery, allowing programmes to continue despite distance and logistical constraints

Through this approach, Chipembele ensured that distance did not become a barrier to accessing conservation education.

What This Looked Like

The Mobile Education Unit allowed educators to adapt delivery to context, using locally relevant examples and participatory methods to engage learners.

- Sessions were designed to:**
- Encourage discussion and curiosity
 - Connect conservation concepts to students’ daily environment
 - Support teachers in reinforcing environmental learning

In areas where access to conservation resources is limited, the presence of the Mobile Education Unit helped maintain continuity and strengthen relationships with schools.

What Changed

- The Mobile Education Unit contributed to:
- Increased access to conservation education in remote areas
 - Greater consistency in programme delivery across schools
 - Improved engagement among students with limited exposure to conservation learning resources

Why It Matters

Access remains one of the biggest barriers to conservation education. The Mobile Education Unit ensures that learning is not limited to those who can travel, but is brought directly to the communities who need it most.

This approach strengthens equity, expands reach, and reinforces Chipembele’s commitment to conservation education that is inclusive, locally relevant, and sustained over time.

2025 saw the Mobile Education Unit expand our reach into newer areas.

What Changed

- Community engagement contributed to:
- Increased awareness of conservation issues, specifically on climate change
 - More positive attitudes toward wildlife
 - Stronger dialogue between young people, parents, and elders
 - Greater pride in local wildlife and landscapes

Learning became shared across generations, strengthening the impact of school-based conservation education.

Conservation Action & Livelihoods

Chipembele’s conservation action work seeks to translate conservation education into practical, real-world behaviour change. While education builds understanding, action ensures that learning influences daily decisions around land use, farming, and household resource management.

In 2025, Chipembele took a significant step forward by introducing livelihood-linked conservation initiatives for the first time. This work recognised that conservation education cannot succeed if it competes with basic needs such as food security and household wellbeing.

1. Agro ecology

Chipembele worked with six women’s groups to introduce agro-ecology practices that strengthen food production while reducing pressure on forests and wildlife habitats. Training focused on soil restoration, composting, water-efficient gardening, and climate smart farming methods.

Women reported improved soil health, better crop performance, and increased resilience to climate variability. Importantly, these practices reduced the

need to clear new land, aligning conservation with livelihoods.

2. Eco-stoves

Eco-stove education and installation were integrated into conservation action work to address the high demand for firewood and its impact on forests. Households were supported to understand the benefits of energy efficient stoves, including reduced fuel use and improved indoor air quality. 2011 eco-stoves were installed in Mnkanya chiefdom of Mambwe district.

Women at the Heart

Women were intentionally centred in conservation action initiatives, recognising their role in farming, fuel collection, and household decision-making. By engaging women directly, conservation learning extended into homes and daily practice.

Conservation action in 2025 reinforced the link between education, community engagement, and sustainable livelihoods, marking an important evolution in Chipembele’s approach.



Human Effort Snapshot

The People Behind the Programmes

Every programme delivered in 2025 was made possible by consistent human effort. Chipembele’s work was carried out by a small, committed team of educators, coordinators, volunteers, interns, and youth leaders.

What This Looked Like

Behind every programme delivered in 2025 was significant human effort. Chipembele’s work was made possible by a small, dedicated team of educators, coordinators, volunteers, interns, and youth leaders who consistently showed up in challenging conditions.

Educators travelled long distances to reach schools, often by bicycle, navigating heat, rain, and limited infrastructure. These journeys were repeated week after week to ensure conservation education was not disrupted.

Staff invested hundreds of hours preparing lessons, mentoring students, supporting ACL participants,

coordinating placements, delivering community engagement, and responding to emerging challenges. Much of this work took place beyond formal working hours.

Volunteers and interns supported programme delivery, gaining experience while contributing to education, logistics, and community engagement. Human effort also extended into personal support for young people, including mentorship, encouragement, and guidance through education and career transitions.

Conservation education reached homes, kitchens, and fields through dialogue, radio programming, and livelihood-linked action.

This effort reflects belief in young people, communities, and the long-term value of education-led conservation.

Why It Matters

This effort reflects belief in people and in long-term impact. Conservation education succeeds not through one-off activity, but through presence, persistence, and trust.



2025 Effort at a Glance



6

Community Conservation educators serving 5 surrounding chiefdoms



Thousands of hours invested in education delivery, mentorship, and coordination



Daily travel by bicycle, boat and on foot in challenging conditions



4

volunteers and interns supporting programme delivery

Stories of Change

How Conservation Education Shapes Lives, Pathways, and Futures

Behind every number in this report is a person. A moment of learning. A shift in confidence. A new way of seeing the world.

Chipembele’s impact is not defined by a single outcome, but by the many ways conservation education unfolds over time. These stories reflect different pathways, different ages, and different starting points — yet all are connected by opportunity, support, and belief.

1. FROM CLASSROOM TO GLOBAL CONSERVATION VOICE

Samson Moyo - Former Chipembele Student, Wildlife Filmmaker



Samson’s journey began like many others: as a student participating in conservation education through Chipembele’s programmes and being sponsored by Chipembele through school and college. Growing up surrounded by wildlife, he was curious about nature but had no clear sense of how that curiosity might shape his future. Through conservation education, Samson learned to observe closely, to listen, and to understand ecosystems not just as places, but as stories worth telling. He developed a deeper awareness of the sounds, rhythms, and relationships that define the natural world around him.

Years later, that foundation found an extraordinary expression.

In 2025, Samson saw his work come to life with the release of the BBC *Kingdom* documentary, where he contributed as a BBC cameraman, capturing and sharing the soundscapes of Zambia’s wildlife with a global audience.

“What I learned when I was young shaped how I see nature. Now I share that with the world.”
Samson Moyo

Samson’s story illustrates the long-term ripple effect of conservation education. Early exposure does not simply build awareness. It builds confidence, identity, and the possibility of contributing to conservation in unexpected and powerful ways.

2. FROM STUDENT TO STEWARD

John Phiri - Former Student, now a Professional Guide



As a student, John loved wildlife but did not see a clear connection between conservation education and employment. Like many young people, he assumed conservation was something done by others, often outsiders.

Through regular participation in Chipembele’s Conservation Education Clubs, John began to understand animal behaviour, ecosystems, and the importance of coexistence. More importantly, he began to see conservation as something practical, local, and meaningful.

Over time, his curiosity grew into confidence. His confidence grew into aspiration.

Today, John works as a professional guide, earning a livelihood rooted in conservation. He shares his knowledge with visitors, supports conservation-friendly tourism, and plays an active role in protecting the landscapes he grew up in.

“Chipembele helped me see that conservation could be my future, not just something I learned about.”
John

John’s journey demonstrates that conservation education can create local career pathways, keeping skills, pride, and economic benefit within communities.

3. FROM YOUTH LEADER TO FUTURE EDUCATOR

Virginia - ACL Participant, Intern, University Scholar



Virginia joined Chipembele as a young schoolgirl with curiosity and determination, but limited access to opportunity. Through conservation education and later the Aspiring Conservation Leaders (ACL) Programme, she began to develop her voice and leadership skills. In ACL, Virginia deepened her conservation knowledge, learned facilitation skills, and supported education delivery. She later became an intern at Chipembele, mentoring younger learners and contributing to programme delivery.

With continued mentorship and support, Virginia accessed an education sponsorship and is now studying Environmental Education at university.

“Before, I didn’t think university was possible. Now I want to return and teach others about protecting our environment.”
Virginia

Virginia’s story shows how sustained support transforms potential into purpose.

4. CONSERVATION THAT STRENGTHENS FAMILIES

A Woman from our Agro-ecology Programme

For many women, conservation can feel distant from the immediate demands of feeding a family. When survival is uncertain, environmental protection can feel like an added burden.

In 2025, Chipembele worked with six women’s groups to change that reality.

Through agro ecology training, one participant learned new farming practices that restored soil health, conserved water, and improved yields. These practices reduced the need to clear additional land and strengthened household resilience.

“Before, we thought conservation was separate from farming. Now we see it helps our families.”
Agro ecology participant

Her household is now more food secure. Her land is healthier. And conservation has become part of daily life.

This story shows that conservation succeeds when it supports livelihoods, dignity, and women’s leadership.

THE THREAD THAT CONNECTS THESE STORIES

These stories are different, but they are deeply connected.

They show conservation education:

- Growing confidence in young people
- Creating pathways into careers and higher education
- Empowering women as environmental stewards
- Linking learning to daily life and global impact

They also show something more subtle, but equally important: time.

Chipembele’s impact unfolds over years, not months. It grows through consistency, trust, and long term commitment.

“The greatest impact is not what we deliver, but what people carry forward.”



Strengthening Facilities and Infrastructure

Significant improvements were made to learning and support spaces, including:

- A dedicated Student Support Office
- A new Student Library
- Expanded office space for staff collaboration
- Installation of a solar system to reduce disruption from power cuts

Chipembele also supported local education infrastructure through the rehabilitation of a classroom block at Mfuwe Primary School.

Investing in the Future: Nature Field Centre

Key groundwork was laid for the Nature Field Centre, including:

- Construction of a storage facility
- Installation of a borehole
- Completion of architectural designs and plans
- Securing planning permission and environmental endorsement

These steps move the organisation closer to establishing a dedicated hub for field-based learning.

Strengthening Capacity and Governance

The team grew in 2025 with the addition of new staff roles, strengthening programme delivery and coordination.

Chipembele's work continued to be guided by the CWET Board and CT Board, whose oversight supports accountability and long-term sustainability.

Why This Matters

These developments reflect a clear shift: alongside delivering programmes, Chipembele is building the structures, spaces, and systems needed for sustained impact.

Stronger foundations enable deeper impact.

Organisational Development in 2025

Strengthening Foundations for the Future

Alongside programme delivery, 2025 marked a year of important organisational growth for Chipembele. Several key developments strengthened both the reach of conservation education and the systems supporting long-term impact.

Expanding Learning Opportunities

In 2025, Chipembele reintroduced the Conservation Inter-Schools Quiz, creating renewed excitement around conservation learning and giving students a platform to build confidence and deepen knowledge.

A focused climate change environmental campaign connected global challenges to local realities, encouraging dialogue around conservation, livelihoods, and responsibility.

The introduction of Student Conservation Awards further supported motivation and recognition, celebrating learners who showed commitment and leadership.



Financial Summary 2025

Total Income
(grants, donations, and local income):
= **USD 358,755**

Total Expenditure
= **USD 420,813**

Net Deficit for the Year:
= **USD (62,058)**

	USD	% Total
Conservation Education Programmes		
Conservation Education Programmes	100,813	23.9%
Community Projects *(Ag	35,564	8.4%
Student Sponsorship	56,373	13.4%
Animal Rehabilitation	597	0.1%
Salaries	139,597	31.3%
Vehicle & Transport Costs	47,241	11.2%
Non Project & Overheads	32,052	7.6%
Administration * (audit)	16,491	3.9%
TOTAL	420,813	100%

(All figures sourced from 2025 financial statements)

Partnerships

Collaboration That Strengthens Impact

Chipembele’s work is built on collaboration. Conservation education, youth leadership development, and community-led conservation action are only possible through strong partnerships based on trust, shared values, and long-term commitment.

In 2025, Chipembele worked alongside a diverse network of partners who contributed funding, technical expertise, mentorship, placements, and local leadership support. These partnerships strengthened programme quality, expanded opportunity for young people, and ensured conservation education remained locally relevant.

Why Partnerships Matter

Partnerships enable Chipembele to:

- Deliver high-quality programmes consistently
- Provide real-world exposure and career pathways for young people
- Align conservation education with national and local priorities
- Strengthen credibility, accountability, and sustainability

Rather than working in isolation, Chipembele operates as part of a wider conservation and education ecosystem.

Funding and Strategic Partners

Key funding and strategic partners in 2025 included:

- Schulprojekte Sambia
- Pestalozzi International Foundation
- Livingstone Foundation
- AJA Foundation
- Born Free Foundation
- Olsen Animal Trust
- Elephant Charge
- Future for Elephants
- Dazzle Africa
- Ernest Kleinwort Charitable Trust
- The Big Give
- Explorations Company
- People and Places
- Souter Trust
- Rhodesian Study Circle
- Kafunta Safaris
- Time + Tide
- Painted Dogs Conservation Inc
- Wildlife Crime Prevention
- Explorations Company
- Chichele Lodge

Major individual donors :

- Hermionie Holmes
- Julie and Mark Mills
- Sharron and Bernie Peters
- Julie and Adam Bates
- Anna and Steve Tolan
- And many others

Their support enabled conservation education delivery, the Aspiring Conservation Leaders (ACL) Programme, education sponsorships, community engagement, and livelihood-linked conservation initiatives.

Conservation, Education, and Private Sector Partners

Chipembele collaborated with a range of organisations that supported learning, mentorship, and placements, including:

- The Zambia Ministry of Education
- Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW)
- Community Resource Boards across all the seven chiefdoms
- Conservation South Luangwa

- Zambian Carnivore Programme
- Project Luangwa
- Game Rangers International
- Mushingashi Coonservancy
- Frankfurt Zoological Society
- Wildlife Crime Prevention
- Time + Tide Foundation
- Tribal Textiles
- Mulberry Mongoose
- Book Buddies
- Shah Trust
- Pako for Kids Magazine
- Scientific Exploration Society
- BBC Natural History Unit
- Vanishing Kings Foundation
- Maryland University
- Mosam Media

These partnerships provided practical learning opportunities, professional exposure, and pathways into conservation aligned careers.

Community and Traditional Leadership

Chipembele works closely with traditional leaders, schools, educators, parents, and community groups to ensure conservation education is culturally grounded, trusted, and community-owned.

- Hon. Senior Chief Nsefu
- Hon. Chief Kakumbi
- Hon. Chief Mnkhanya
- Hon. Chief Jumbe
- Hon. Chieftainess Msoro
- Hon. Chief Mwanya
- Hon. Chief Sandwe

Partnerships in Action

In 2025, partnerships directly enabled:

- 12 organisations hosting ACL work placements
- A 100% post-programme transition rate for ACL participants
- Expanded youth access to tertiary education, internships, and employment
- Community-based education, restoration, and outreach activities

From our Board of Trustees

Chipembele: Strengthening Our Legacy for the Future

As I look back on 2025 and look toward our 2025–2029 Strategic Plan, I am filled with a sense of pride that goes beyond mere numbers. After more than 25 years of history, Chipembele is a standard-bearer for conservation education in Zambia. In 2024, we navigated a significant leadership transition, and I am proud to say our core mission is as strong as ever. We have moved past the phase of “steadying the ship” and are now focused on the disciplined execution of our long-term vision.

Safeguarding our roots while professionalizing our future is the heart of the board’s stewardship goal. We must protect the original passion and integrity of our founders, Anna and Steve Tolan, while ensuring those values are supported by modern, robust systems. I have profound confidence in our direction because our leadership is more aligned than ever, there is a strong working relationship between our Founding Director and our Chief Development Executive. With a majority Zambian Board guiding our vision and a team that secured 68% of its annual funding target by the end of Q1 2026, we are operating from a position of clear stability. We balance our growth with depth by adhering to rigorous accountability. We are not simply expanding for the sake of it; we are implementing “true-cost” budgeting and have established a Standing Finance Subcommittee to ensure every dollar is tracked with full visibility. We are also prioritizing Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) because our partners deserve to see the measurable proof of our impact—the students who are becoming leaders and “active stewards” in their own communities.

We are now at a critical turning point because of the challenges facing the Luangwa Valley—from climate change to resource pressure—that require more than just hope; they require agency. I am most inspired by how Zambian youth are stepping up to the plate. We see this in students like Micara Njobvu, who was sponsored through our program and recently graduated at the top of her university class. We also see it in Jacob Mphasi, a former student and “youth voice” who has now joined our Board of Trustees to help guide our governance. What encourages me most is our successful position as Zambia’s leading conservation education organization. We are moving beyond our historical profile as a small player to embrace our role as a national leader in linking wildlife conservation to community education.

From the continued infrastructure progress at the Nature Field Centre to our innovative “Hub and Spoke” model reaching thousands of community members, our visibility is finally beginning to match the scale of our impact. To our partners and supporters: the future of this unique and invaluable ecosystem is a story we are writing together. As Sir David Attenborough has observed, “If working apart, we are a force powerful enough to destabilize our planet, surely working together, we are powerful enough to save it”. Our course is set, our team is strong, and our commitment is unwavering. Thank you for being a vital part of this journey.



Steve Blake
Chipembele Board Chair



Looking Ahead

Deepening What Works and Laying Foundations for the Future

As Chipembele looks ahead, the focus remains on deepening impact rather than rapid expansion. Learning from 2025 reinforced the value of consistent conservation education, strong youth pathways, and community led approaches that reflect daily realities.

Key Priorities

In the coming year, Chipembele will prioritise:

- Strengthening Conservation Education Clubs to ensure consistent, high-quality learning in participating schools
- Deepening youth leadership pathways through the Aspiring Conservation Leaders programme, internships, and education sponsorships
- Supporting secondary and tertiary education pathways, particularly for conservation-aligned careers
- Consolidating community engagement, including radio programming, environmental campaigns, and shared learning experiences
- Growing livelihood linked conservation responsibly, building on lessons from agro-ecology and eco-stove initiatives

- Laying the groundwork for the Chipembele Nature Field Centre, including planning, partnerships, and resource mobilisation to create a future hub for field-based learning, environmental education, and community engagement

Organisational Focus

To support these priorities, Chipembele will continue to strengthen:

- Financial sustainability and long term partnerships
- Staff capacity and wellbeing
- Monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems

These foundations are essential to maintaining programme quality, accountability, and long-term impact.

Our Commitment

Chipembele remains committed to conservation education that is locally rooted, people-centred, and designed for lasting impact, while thoughtfully investing in infrastructure and opportunities that will support future generations of conservation leaders.



Growing Conservation Leaders, Together

In 2025, Chipembele Wildlife Education Trust demonstrated that conservation education is most effective when it is consistent, locally rooted, and connected to opportunity.

Across schools, communities, and households, young people strengthened their understanding of the environment, youth leaders stepped into responsibility, and communities engaged in shared conservation dialogue. For the first time, conservation education was also directly linked to livelihoods, supporting households to protect nature while strengthening wellbeing.

This impact was not the result of one off interventions. It was built through trust, long-term commitment, and collaboration.

Chipembele remains focused on conservation that is understood, owned, and led by the people who live closest to nature.

Call to Action

As environmental challenges continue to grow, so does the need for informed, empowered communities and future conservation leaders.

We invite partners, supporters, and collaborators to:

- Continue investing in conservation education and youth pathways
- Support locally led solutions that align conservation with daily life
- Strengthen partnerships that build long-term impact rather than short-term reach

Together, we can ensure that conservation education continues to shape leaders, livelihoods, and resilient communities.

The future of conservation
lives in informed minds,
strong communities, and
shared commitment.





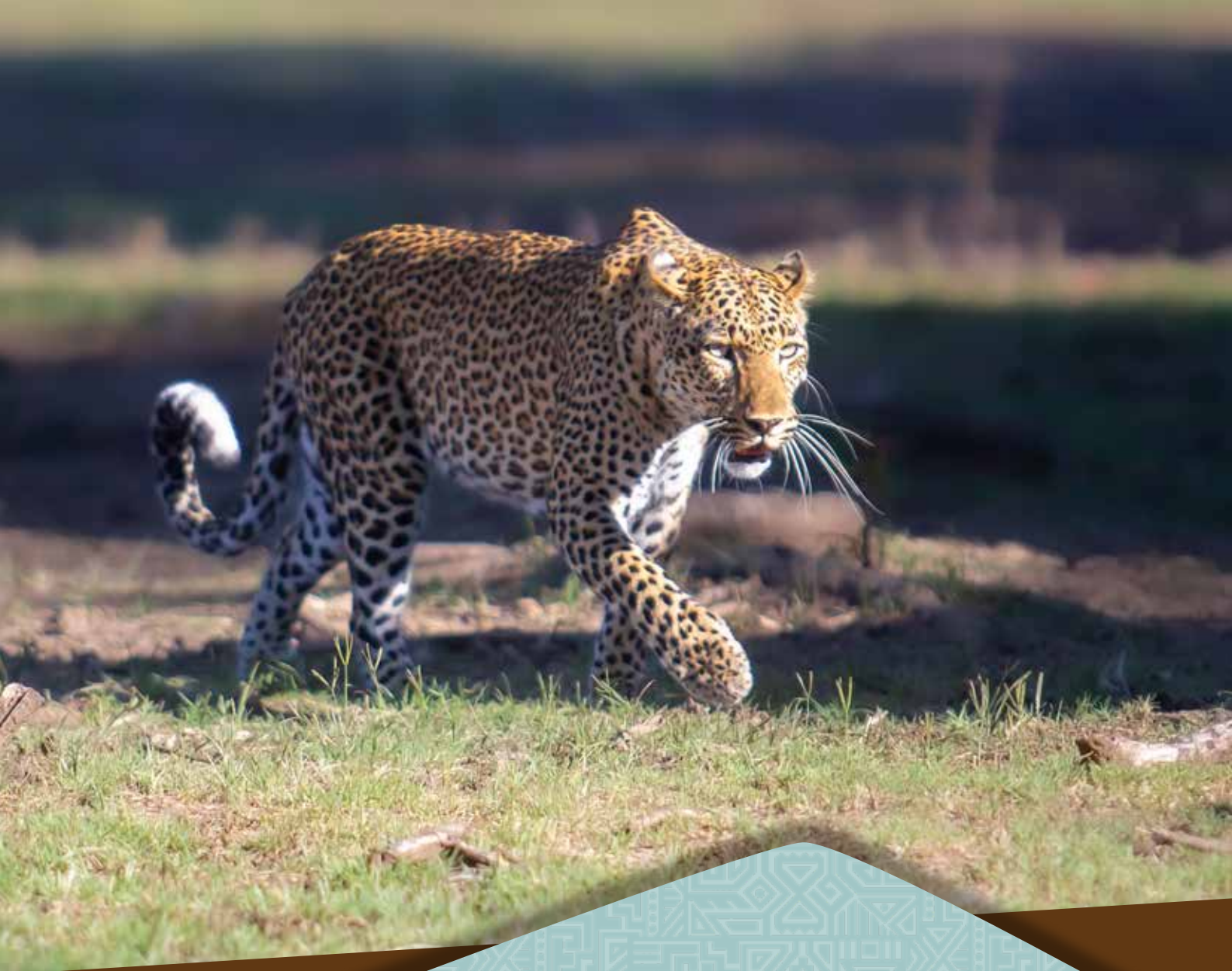
Acknowledgements

Chipembele Wildlife Education Trust extends its sincere gratitude to the partners, supporters, and communities who made the work of 2025 possible.

With Thanks To:

- Our funding and strategic partners, whose continued trust and investment support conservation education, youth leadership, and community-led action
- Our individual donors, who fuel our work, through giving, and continuous generosity, we are able to continue together with our communities, championing conservation and adaptation in the face of growing pressure.
- Our conservation, education, and private-sector partners, who provide expertise, placements, mentorship, and collaboration
- Traditional leaders, school administrators, teachers, parents, and community members, whose guidance and participation ensure programmes are locally relevant and trusted
- The Chipembele team, educators, volunteers, interns, and youth leaders whose dedication, persistence, and belief drive this work forward

Most importantly, we thank the young people and communities who engage with conservation education every day, shaping the future of conservation from within.



CHIPEMBELE
Wildlife Education Trust

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