



2024 PASA Community Engagement Workshop

September 2024, South Africa

Executive Summary

The Pan African Sanctuary Alliance (PASA) is the largest association of wildlife centers in Africa, with 23 member centers in 13 African countries. PASA members are securing a future for Africa's primates by fighting the illegal wildlife trade, rescuing and rehabilitating orphans of the trade, educating the public, empowering communities, and protecting critical habitat. PASA strengthens our member organizations and works to build a global movement to save Africa's great apes and monkeys.

As part of our work to build the capacity of our member centers to tackle key issues in primate conservation, PASA regularly holds workshops that focus on different aspects of conservation and welfare. In 2024, we hosted a Community Engagement Workshop in acknowledgement of the central role that community engagement plays in effective conservation and to ensure that vital expertise, knowledge, and guidance on this topic can be shared among the Alliance. By increasing PASA members' capacity to effectively work with local communities to protect wildlife, we are helping to build a world where both people and primates thrive.

The Community Engagement Workshop (CEW) took place from 16th-18th of September 2024 in Johannesburg, South Africa. Outreach managers and educators from 13 member sanctuaries attended to share expertise and build their capacity to conduct effective conservation. By participating in sessions on multiple aspects of community engagement in African primate conservation, outreach managers gained vital knowledge and understanding of current best practices, ethical considerations, and the latest tools to encourage and measure behavior change in conservation.

This workshop allowed sanctuary engagement personnel to share and discuss helpful materials and approaches, key barriers, case studies, and strengthen ties and collaborations between PASA sanctuaries, improving the effectiveness of their community-based ape conservation efforts.

At the completion of the workshop, a committee of PASA member community engagement personnel was formed. This committee will update PASA's Education and Outreach Manual and help create an online sharing platform, allowing current best practices and guidelines for community conservation to be easily accessible to 23 primate sanctuaries across Africa.

The workshop proved highly successful, with participants providing positive feedback and reporting the benefits of being able to share with and learn from their fellow engagement professionals. We are confident that this workshop was extremely valuable in sharing expertise and guidance across the Alliance and has helped to raise the capacity of African wildlife centers to implement impactful and effective community conservation.

PASA is extremely grateful to the organizations and individuals who helped to fund this important workshop, with our special thanks going to the Arcus Foundation, the Animal Welfare Institute, and the Wagmore Foundation.



Conservation Case Studies

Following introductions and ice-breaking activities, representatives from member sanctuaries shared the work they are doing with local communities. Sharing case studies is an effective and popular way to discuss the specific challenges and successes in outreach programs with concrete examples that can be applied at different centers. Some highlights from the shared case studies are detailed below.

Clement Manjaalara from Lilongwe Wildlife Center in Malawi discussed the center's educational programs with Malawi's schoolchildren, including their work to create a national environmental curriculum with the Malawi Institute of Education. This is a program with a huge potential impact for the country's future relationship with biodiversity, and one that several other PASA members are also working on in their respective countries. By discussing the development and testing of resources for this program, Clement provided important insights into how conservation can be integrated into school learning.

Alfred Bongadu discussed the sustainable agricultural programs that Sanaga-Yong Chimpanzee Rescue is implementing with communities in Cameroon. By using Inga Alley Cropping – a technique where Inga trees are planted alongside traditional crops, the center is helping local farmers to use a sustainable and smart farming solution that helps reduce labor and financial costs, while also providing benefits to the soil and reducing the need for slash and burn agriculture – a huge threat to chimpanzee and gorilla populations in the region. Alfred detailed the development and logistics of the program, including intermediary measures to create economic advantages such as the sanctuary purchasing the Inga Alley seeds for the chimpanzees to eat.

Douglas Walwambe from Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary then shared the different types of outreach programs being conducted by the center in Uganda, focusing particularly on the radio programs the center produces. Radio is an extremely effective way to reach people in rural Africa, as many households have a radio, and radios are present in places where TV and the internet may not be available. By delivering conservation messaging via engaging radio programs, the sanctuary is reaching a huge audience with this crucial content.

Samuella Matifa Mbayo from Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary, James Jeta from Ape Action Africa, and Faya Diawara from the Chimpanzee Conservation Center also shared fascinating insights into their various conservation outreach programs. The sharing of these case studies – including detailed breakdowns of development processes and logistical challenges and solutions – is highly beneficial in promoting the scaling of effective programs throughout the Alliance and ensures that the most successful methods of conservation can be replicated across Africa to protect primates.



📍 Lilongwe Wildlife Centre



📍 Sanaga-Yong Chimpanzee Rescue



📍 Roberto Garcíá-Roa, Parc de la Lékédi

Challenges and Solutions

Challenges are inherent in conservation, and working with local communities can provide both challenges and opportunities to protect wildlife. Participants engaged in an open discussion on the challenges they have faced – particularly in addressing cultural differences, such as the consumption of wildmeat, and how to keep communities engaged in conservation. Importantly, the participants discussed the root cause of poverty as a driver of biodiversity loss and shared different income generating activities that have and haven't worked well for communities in their locations, sharing new ideas, identifying potential pitfalls, and highlighting the need to consult with communities during every step of the process.

Behavior Change for Conservation

The use of behavior change science for conserving biodiversity is a relatively new concept, yet one that has the potential for significant impacts when applied effectively. Miguel Garcia, the former Director of Programs at the Chimpanzee Conservation Center in Guinea, led the participants through a series of sessions on the use of behavior change for primate conservation in Africa.

Miguel initially discussed goals and strategies of behavior change for conservation, helping participants identify areas where it could be used in their home regions. In a highly interactive session, Miguel led the participants through the steps of creating a successful behavior change campaign, beginning with setting clear and realistic objectives and including the use of motivators and deterrents. Identifying audiences for campaigns was also discussed, as well as different aspects of messaging, including message content, format, and who should deliver the message.

Importantly, the session also covered ways to produce and crucially, to measure, behavior change campaigns and the importance of messaging design, encouraging the participants to evaluate and share lessons learned from the campaigns to benefit the work of the Alliance and beyond. The participants left the session tasked with designing their own behavior change campaign.



Chimpanzee Conservation Center

Ethics in Community Conservation

On the final day of the conference, the engagement managers were joined by the directors of the wildlife centers. This overlap session allowed for one-on-one meetings between engagement managers and directors where the engagement managers could share what they had learned during the workshop and discuss how the ideas, techniques and projects shared may be implemented at their sanctuaries. This was a highly valuable session and meant that the directors could learn about the community engagement lessons from the engagement managers and ask questions to the PASA community about specific projects.

Following this, all leaders participated in a session on Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) led by community conservation expert, Steven Collins from SADC Transfrontier. Steven reflected with the group upon the historical practices of conservation, with local communities subject to human rights violations and deprived of a voice in the protection of their natural resources. Steven shared key principles that centers could use to govern their interaction with local communities to ensure that these wrongs are not repeated and that future conservation efforts are inclusive instead of exclusive. These principles included the recognition of local community rights to be involved in conservation, the best practices in project co-development, and the considerations of how benefits should be shared among stakeholders.

As well as imparting these important lessons, Steven shared valuable guideline documents and other resources with the group that provide concrete pathways to ensuring the Alliance's conservation programs are following best practices in ethical community conservation.



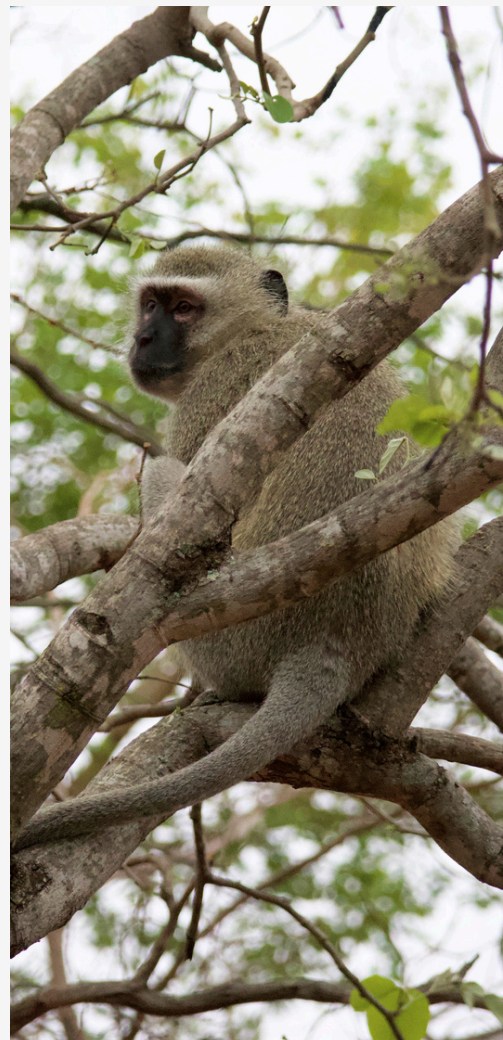
Roberto García-Roa, Parc de la Lékédi

Education and Outreach Committee

A further goal of this workshop was to create an Education and Outreach Committee. This committee, made up of outreach personnel from the PASA sanctuaries, will update the PASA Education and Outreach Manual. This manual is an important resource for PASA members but has not been updated since 2010. We were delighted that outreach managers from Colobus Conservation, Sanaga-Yong Chimpanzee Rescue, Ape Action Africa, Chimfunshi Wildlife Orphanage and Ngamba Island enthusiastically volunteered to join the Committee and held their first meeting. Committee members will continue to meet virtually over the next year to provide input and guidance into updating the manual and unifying community educators so that it can again serve as a valuable resource for PASA member sanctuaries to follow best practices and generate new ideas when developing their outreach programs.



 Lwiro Primates Rehabilitation Center



Meeting South African Changemakers

On the final afternoon of the workshop, the engagement managers visited Victoria Yards, an urban space in Johannesburg that houses multiple NGOs engaged in community development, environmental protection, and social justice. Workshop participants toured and met with personnel from a variety of these NGOs, and even joined the organization Timbuktu in the Valley, an afterschool center for holistic alternative learning, to lead a series of activities for the children in environmental learning. By meeting with these inspiring organizations and people, representatives from the Alliance were able to learn about inter-related initiatives and ideas and importantly share their enthusiasm for environmental and social justice with likeminded people working at the grassroots level.

Growing Together

To evaluate the effectiveness of our workshops, PASA asks participants to complete surveys before and after the workshop, allowing us to better understand what value was gained and what can be improved. Overall, the responses from the participants at the CEW were highly positive. On a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), when asked if the workshop has increased their understanding and knowledge of encouraging and measuring behavior change in communities, participants gave an average rating of 4.5. When asked if the workshop had increased their understanding of ethical considerations when working with communities, the average rating was 4.4, while increased understanding of best practices in community engagement for conservation work was rated an average of 4.5.

Important feedback from the participants allowed us to gain recommendations for future workshops, such as requests for more presentations on post-program evaluations and added small group sessions.

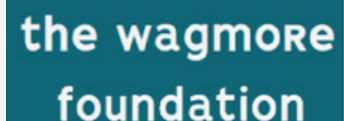
At the closing of the workshop, one of the attendees offered his thoughts on the value gained from the workshop, sharing that the workshop had encouraged communication among educators which was very beneficial and renewed his belief that community engagement should be prioritized as a crucial way to change attitudes and behaviors and to achieve a more positive future for both wildlife and communities.



📍 Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary

Special Thanks

PASA would like to thank the very generous organizations and donors that contributed to the 2024 Community Engagement Workshop. The workshop would not be possible without their support. We would like to thank the following organizations for sponsoring this highly valuable workshop that will undoubtedly have significant positive impacts for the community conservation work of PASA member sanctuaries.



Appendix 1 - Attendees

Alfred Bongadu, Sanaga-Yong Chimpanzee Rescue

Belem Peña Mancillas, Chimfunshi Wildlife Orphanage

Claire Willaume, PPG Gabon

Claudia Stork, Vervet Monkey Foundation

Clement Manjaalera, Lilongwe Wildlife Centre

Douglas Walwambe, Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary

Eric Willaume, Parc de la Lékédi

Etienne Charrière, Translator, PASA

Faya Diawara, Chimpanzee Conservation Center

Fredrick Onyancha, Colobus Conservation

Ian Muiruri, Sweetwaters Chimpanzee Sanctuary

Iris Ho, PASA staff

James Jeta, Ape Action Africa

Kaitlyn Bock, PASA staff

Kelly O'Meara, PASA staff

Lilija Rapa, PASA staff

Miguel Garcia, Speaker/ Translator, PASA

Nancy Mungania, Colobus Conservation

Samuella Mbayo, Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary

Wilson Ateh, Limbe Wildlife Centre