

Kasiisi Project Final Report February 2015



Figure 1: Kasiisi Project Students on Ngamba Island

This project links chimpanzee conservation efforts in the wild with that of sanctuaries, in a conservation education initiative, which involved children from around Kibale National Park, Uganda in the care of rescued chimpanzees at Ngamba Island Sanctuary in Lake Victoria.

PROJECT GOALS

1) To increase knowledge of chimpanzees

This project was carried out in 7 government primary schools within 5 km of Kibale National Park boundary reaching 14 Wildlife Club (WLC) patrons and 480 students.

Kasiisi Project staff held meetings with Ngamba Island staff, school principals and WLC patrons from the 7 target schools, to introduce the project and discuss the curriculum.

1. Staff from Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary visited all 7 schools and talked to the children about the need for sanctuaries, and the challenges of keeping apes healthy in captivity. They were told about the role of enrichment articles in keeping captive animals healthy and shown how to make them. Students were evaluated before and after these workshops. Evaluations showed on average a significant increase in knowledge about sanctuary chimpanzees after the workshops (Figure: 2)

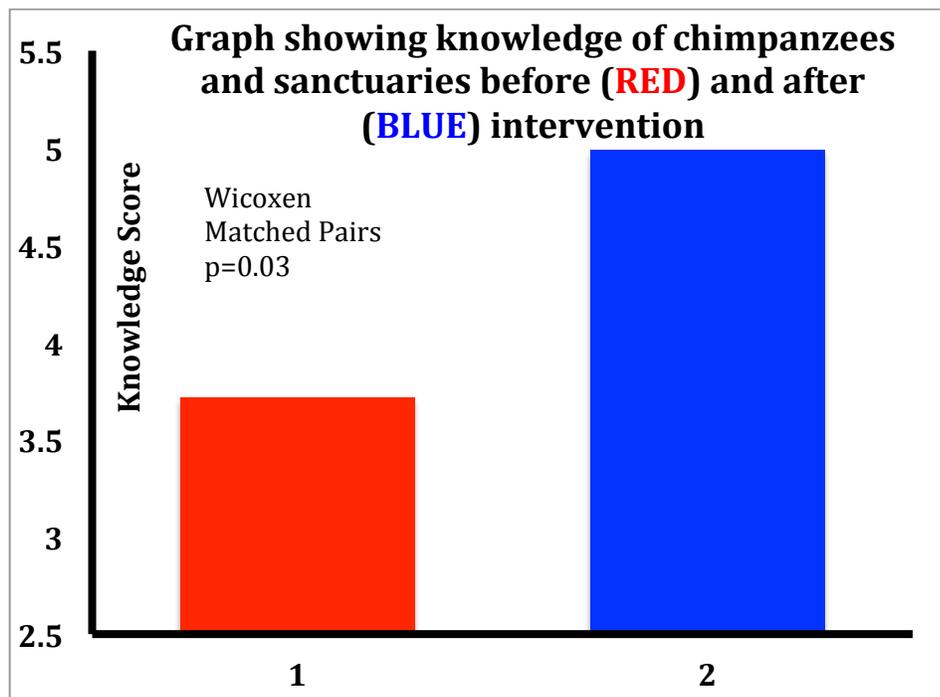


Figure 2: Graph showing significantly ($p=0.03$) increased knowledge of chimpanzees and sanctuaries after workshop given by Ngamba Island Staff

2) To build empathy towards chimpanzees through involving patrons and students in improving the lives of sanctuary chimpanzees by making enrichment articles to improve their quality of life.

Following the talks:

- Each school was assigned a particular individual chimpanzee from Ngamba.
- Students from all 7 schools then made enrichment articles for the chimpanzees. These included collecting tires for tire swings, rattles from jerry-cans and bottle tops, balls from fiber, food puzzles with bamboo tubes and honey and peanut butter etc.

14 students, representing 7 wildlife clubs, 2 WLC patrons, and 2 Kasiisi Project staff members travelled to Ngamba Island to deliver the enrichment articles on behalf of their fellow members.

Day 1: The party spent the first night at the Uganda Wildlife Education Center where they had a tour of the zoo and saw many different Ugandan animals.

Day 2: They travelled by boat to Ngamba – a bit rough and scary exciting. It was the first time anyone had visited the sanctuary and the first time any of the children had been in a boat.

The students learned about:

- Chimpanzee behavior
- Vocalizations,
- Diet,
- Lifespan,
- Care of captive chimpanzees

In the evening after dinner the party watched the Disney documentary “The New Chimpanzee”.

Day 3: The students reconstructed the enrichment articles that they had made in their WLC, with help from the Ngamba staff. The staff took time explaining facts about chimpanzees and students learned about the individual chimpanzee their WLC had adopted.

They delivered their gifts to the chimpanzees and recorded that they particularly liked the car tire tunnels, the puzzle feeders filled with honey and groundnuts and the noisemakers. The students helped clean the sanctuary, and had time to play on the beach.



Figure 3: Constructing noise- makers



Figure 4: Making Puzzle Feeders



Figure 5: Students with enrichment articles



Figure 6: Chimpanzees explore puzzle feeder

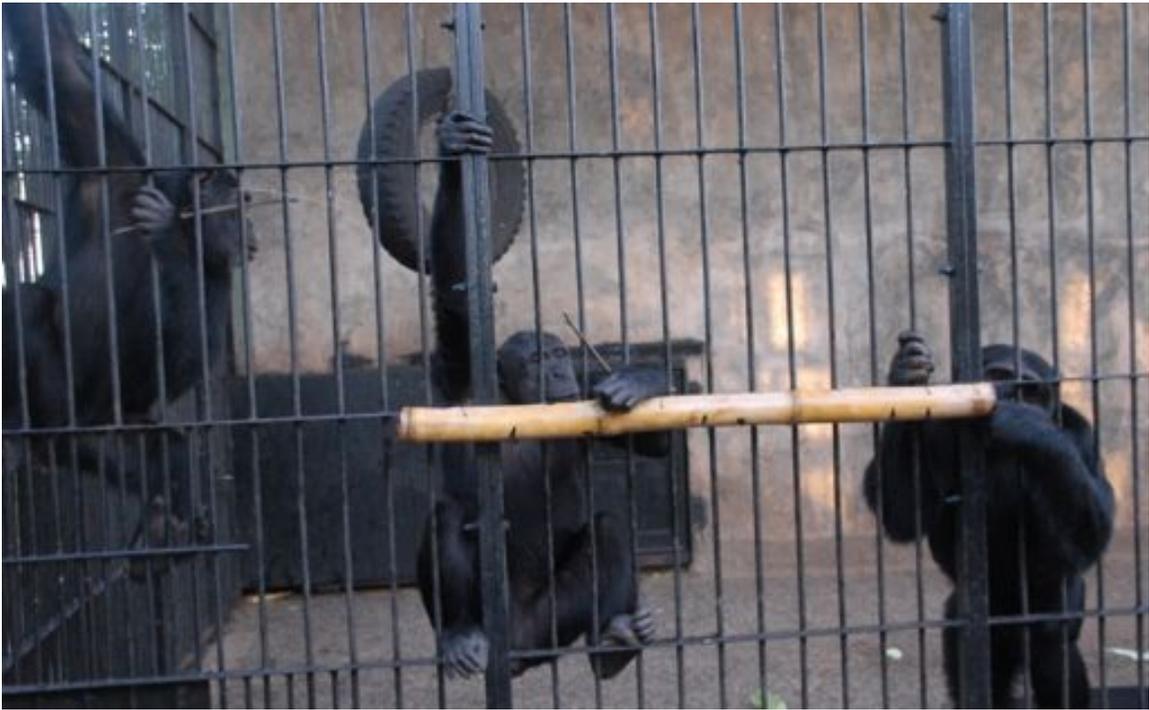


Figure 6: Chimpanzees explore puzzle feeder



Figure 8: Noise maker

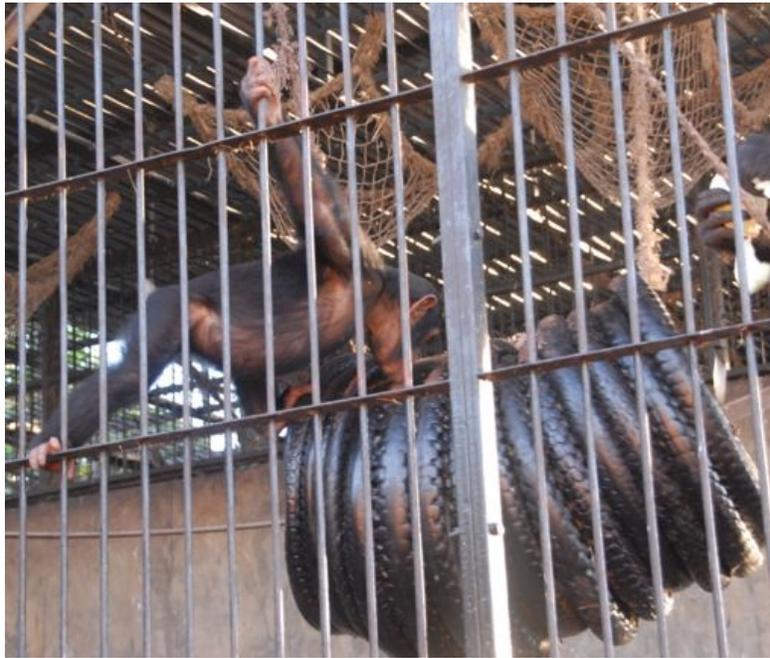


Figure 9: Tire swing

They also

- Helped feed the chimpanzees,
- Observed their behavior
- Met around a campfire in the evening and participated in dancing, poetry recitals, discussions about which chimpanzee behaviors they liked and those they disliked and what they were going to do at home to promote chimpanzee conservation.
- Were awarded certificates of participation and for the respective schools.

Day 4: Students returned to Entebbe, visited the airport (a big hit) and travelled home.

3) To measure whether visiting Ngamba Island contributed to student's knowledge of chimpanzees,

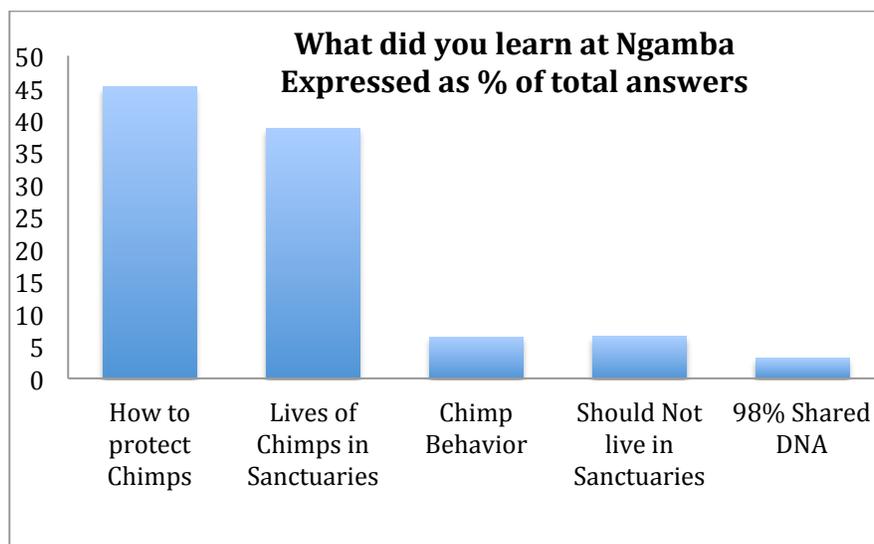


Figure 10: Graph showing what students learned during their trip to Uganda

4) To measure whether contributing to the welfare of captive chimpanzees and developing a closer relationship with individual animals increases empathy towards them.

When asked to select words that signified how they felt about chimpanzees, WLC students who had made enrichment articles for the Ngamba chimpanzees overwhelmingly chose empathetic words (Figure 10). This was true even if they had not visited the Island.

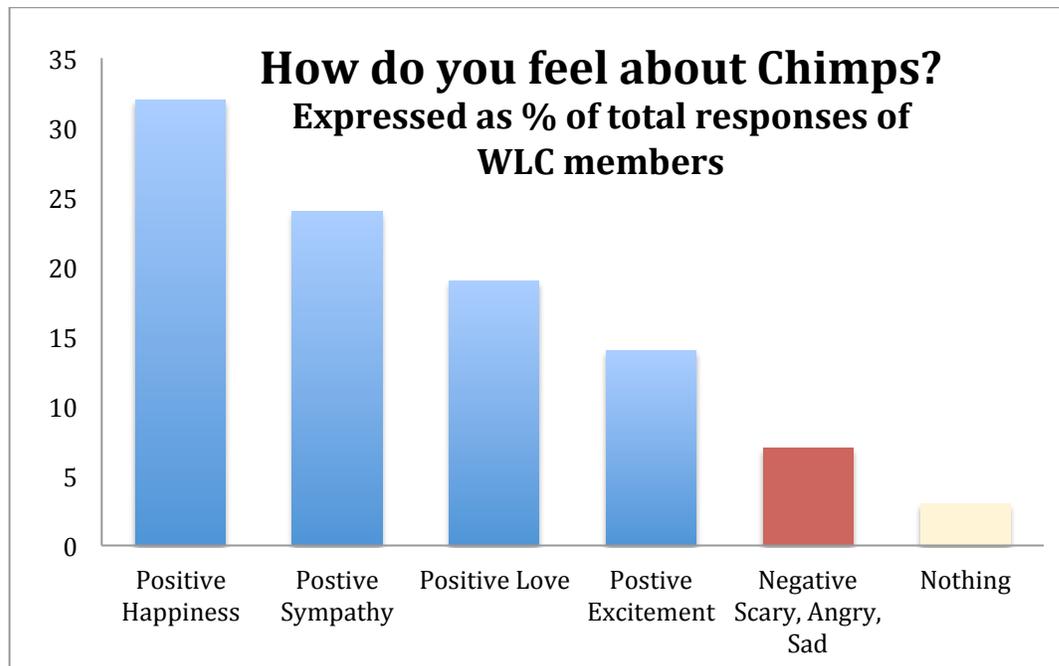


Figure 10: Graph showing response to chimpanzees in students who had made enrichment articles for sanctuary chimpanzees.

4) To share information from the project

Students who had visited Ngamba gave talks to their WLC peers about their experience. at all 7 schools that participated in the Columbus Zoo enrichment program,. The general structure involved a student talk followed by an open question time and discussions about the relative merits for chimpanzees of the wild versus living in sanctuaries.

Students covered the following topics in their talks

- Highlights from the trip.
- Lessons learned.
- The definition of enrichment.
- Threats to chimpanzees in forests.
- The reasons for sanctuaries.
- Similarities between humans and chimpanzees.

Open Questions

What happens if all firewood is exhausted?

What's enrichment?

Can a chimpanzee smoke?

Which problem can the chimpanzees encounter in a forest, not a sanctuary?

What problems exist in a holding facility?

What happens to young chimpanzees?

Do chimps go in menstruation?
 Do they have enough exercise?
 What did you see at UWEC?
 Do the chimps fall in the water?
 Why are there sanctuaries?
 Can you tell us about where you stayed?
 What is the meaning of the word sanctuary?
 Do animals in game parks enjoy their life 100%?
 How can you help the chimpanzees?
 What are the names of the chimpanzees?
 How did you see them treating injuries?
 What are the uses of chimpanzees?
 What was the most interesting chimpanzee?
 Were the chimpanzees in good condition or suffering more in the sanctuary?
 What did you eat?
 Did you find the sanctuaries in the bush or somewhere else?

Then we asked the children who had stayed at home what they had learned (Figure 11)

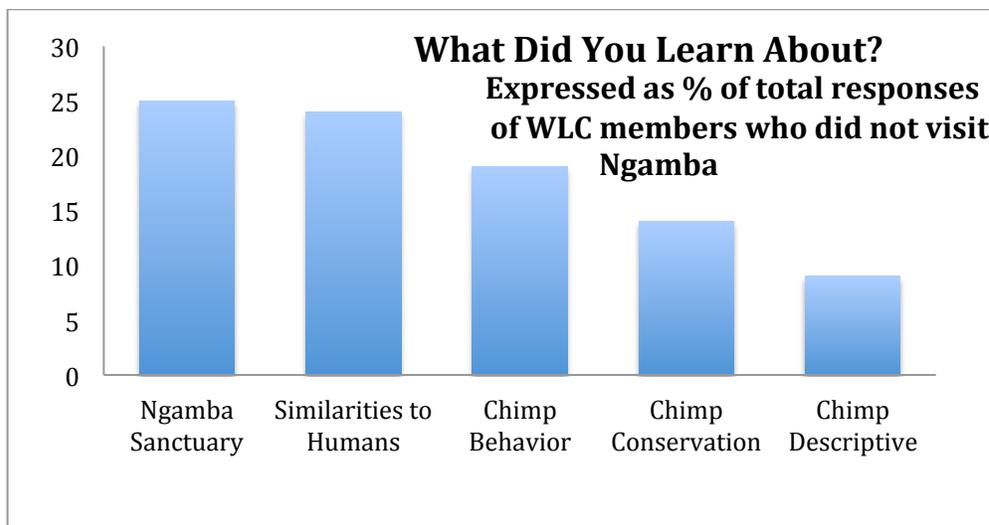


Figure 11: Graph showing what students learned from their peers visit to Ngamba

Student opinions of the advantages of sanctuaries vs. the wild

Reasons for Sanctuaries

Protection/Security
 No snares
 Getting help
 Longer life
 Balanced diet
 No poachers
 Right to play/games
 Enough Food
 Medical treatment
 Friendship
 Protection from weather
 No injuries/accidents
 Sleep

Reasons for Wild

Exercise
 Right Food
 Freedom and play
 Happiness
 Friends
 Chimps natural right
 Natural habitat
 Medicine
 With relatives
 No punishment
 Income generation
 Different trees
 No pollution

It is common for children to believe that the predictable food and security of sanctuaries means that they are actually preferable for chimpanzees rather than living in the wild. Kasiisi Project staff directed discussion towards having the children consider the competing benefits between freedom and security.

At the end of the talks students were polled on whether they thought chimpanzees were better off in sanctuaries or in the wild. 87% said the wild was preferable (Fig 12)

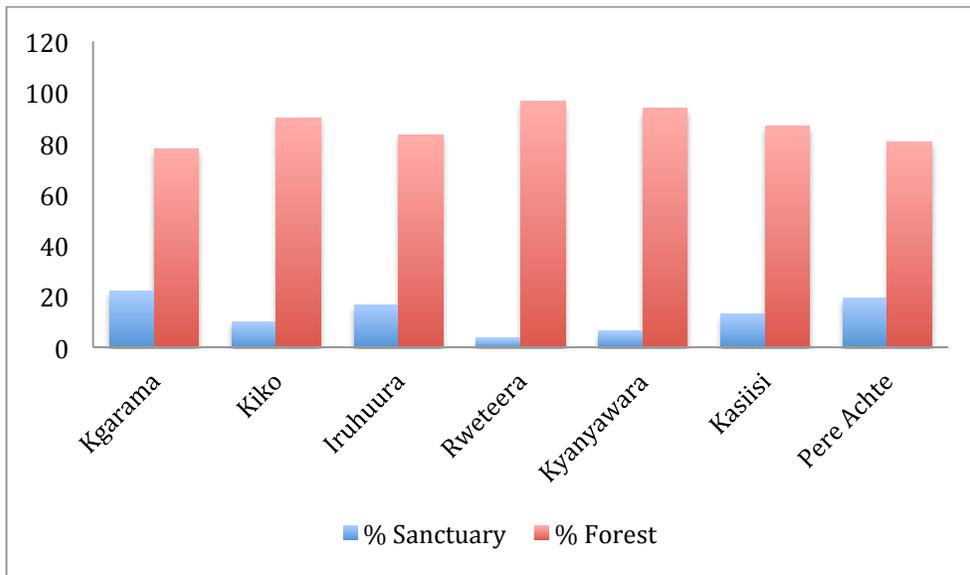


Figure 12: Graph showing the response of WLC members from 6 schools when asked whether chimpanzees are better off in sanctuaries or in the wild.

CONCLUSIONS

This project fulfilled its goals. Following a workshop from Sanctuary staff, making enrichment articles and delivering them to the chimpanzees of Ngamba Island Sanctuary students demonstrated

1. Increased knowledge of chimpanzees
2. Increased knowledge of the role of, and need for, sanctuaries
3. An increased understanding of the disadvantages for chimpanzees of living in captivity
4. An increased empathy towards chimpanzees

Financial Status: August 31st 2014

	Amount Budgeted	Amount Spent	Final Balance
Transport	\$1774	\$1649	\$125
Food and Accommodation	\$960	\$1043	-\$83
Supplies/Presentations	\$1000	\$1057	-\$57

Air/Internet	\$150	\$150	\$0
Copying/Printing	\$100	\$100	\$0
Salary	\$240	\$250	-\$10
Admin	\$400	\$400	\$0
Total	\$4624	\$4649	-\$23