



# FROM THE FIELD

## LATEST IMPACT UPDATES FROM OUR GREAT PLAINS INITIATIVES

### Q1 IMPACT REPORT | JANUARY - MARCH 2022

This quarter saw a burst of energy into our community and conservation projects as restrictions were lifted across the continent. Our team on the ground in Botswana coordinated a Mobile Eye Clinic testing over 1,000 school childrens eyes, 2 bridges were built in the Masai Mara to support safe crossings for communities and we hired and started training the first all-female ranger unit in Botswana! Our Conservation Roots initiative planting indigenous trees has also scaled across Kenya with and involvement with communities and our work supporting rangers across Africa for wildlife conservation continues through Project Ranger.

Thank you for supporting our Great Plains Foundation initiatives and our long-term vision of wildlife conservation and community upliftment across Africa.

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Education • Empowerment • Welfare



## A VISION FOR CHANGE

*Bringing eye testing and eyeglasses to rural villages in Botswana to give school children with visual challenges a better chance.*



Millions of people living in the developing world don't have access to eyeglasses and face challenges with their eyesight, reducing success in school and skilled work requiring good eye sight. Over three weeks in March, the Mobile Eye Clinic (in partnership with 4x4OutFar), moved through 5 remote communities living on the edge of the Okavango Delta testing over 1,200 school children's eyes and distributing eyeglasses to those who needed, to support their progress in school and beyond. The project also trains communities on screening and supplies backup eyeglasses for the project to continue after the mobile unit has left.



[READ MORE](#)

**OVER 1200**  **school children's eyes tested in rural communities in Botswana**



# BUILDING BRIDGES

*Building reliable bridges for communities to cross rivers safely in the Masai Mara.*



In January and February our team in Kenya built 2 suspension bridges across dangerous fast-flowing rivers in the Masai Mara. Often communities need to travel between the two sides of the river for a variety of reasons - school children use the bridge as their only way to attend school, families would cross to go to the food markets and to health centres and clinics and rangers use the bridge to patrol the area. When the river flows fast communities fail to cross and get either to school, markets or medical clinics, with the implications this brings. The new bridges have created safe crossings for all.



**READ MORE**

## 2 GREAT PLAINS BRIDGES built across hazardous rivers in the Masai Mara



# FEMALE RANGERS

*Establishing the first all-female ranger team in Botswana for women empowerment and wildlife conservation.*



A central mission of the Great Plains Foundation is empowering women. In establishing our first all-female ranger team we aim to increase female employment and empowerment and create conservation leaders who will inspire younger generations. These female ranger units will also play an essential role in gathering data to inform and support conservation and natural resource monitoring in the Okavango Delta.



As well as detecting signs of poachers, our Female Rangers will undertake natural resource management activities like noting ecology fluctuations, data mapping animals and observing migration patterns - all valuable tools vital in conserving our unique ecological community. Our first 7 leading Female Rangers are currently undergoing a range of training from computer skills, to driving and vehicle maintenance, to first aid and guide training to support them in their range of responsibilities.

Our 7 rangers are inspiring every young girl in their communities, and Botswana at large – that any job a man can do, women can do too.

**7 FEMALE RANGERS**  
employed & undergoing  
6 months training

# SOLAR MAMAS

Bringing safe and sustainable power to off-grid families in rural Botswana through women empowerment.



The Solar Mamas have had a busy quarter. They have been busily selling and installing Household Solar Systems to their communities. Great Plains Foundation subsidises the purchase and transport of Solar Panels, which the Solar Mamas sell at a reduced cost. This quarter we checked in on the families that have had their solar panels installed to learn more about the impact they have had on them and their families.

[READ MORE](#)

# 200



## SOLAR HOUSEHOLD SYSTEMS HAVE BEEN INSTALLED



Beneficiary Mantaga from Seronga Village commented:

“I am a teacher for kids and the elderly and can see the benefits in school of the kids who have a solar system. I have 4 children and they can all study after work using my system, and I can help them all at once with the bright light. I have cut costs from spending money on candles and cheaper solar kits. The systems are reaching the right families with kids that are schooling.”



# WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

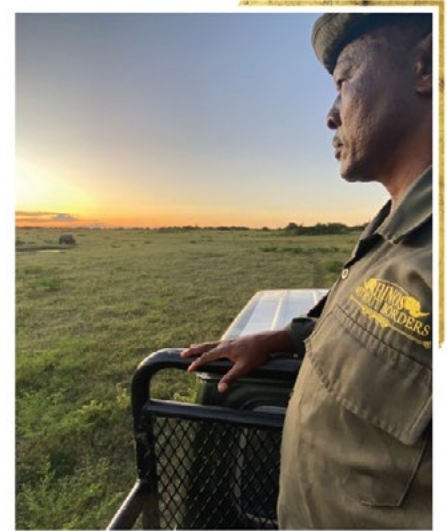
*Support to front line rangers protecting our endangered wildlife.*



## RHINOS WITHOUT BORDERS

*Protecting the last remaining populations of rhino.*

Monitoring of rhinos continues to be our priority, with our teams working around the clock patrolling and checking on their wards. We welcomed two new arrivals to the family in February and in March respectively. A little male calf was born the first week of February and a female calf was born at the end of March, always an exciting event bringing with it hope, hope for the future of this species. If you'd like to 'name a newborn' email us!



The team attended a SMART Training Workshop in March. The Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool platform consists of a set of software and analysis tools designed to help conservationists manage and protect wildlife and wild places. Our data collection model for rhino monitoring has already been developed and will be used extensively throughout the natural resource monitoring projects under Great Plains Foundation both in Botswana and Zimbabwe, to further understand changes and inform management decisions.

**2 NEW  
RHINOS  
born in the wild!**



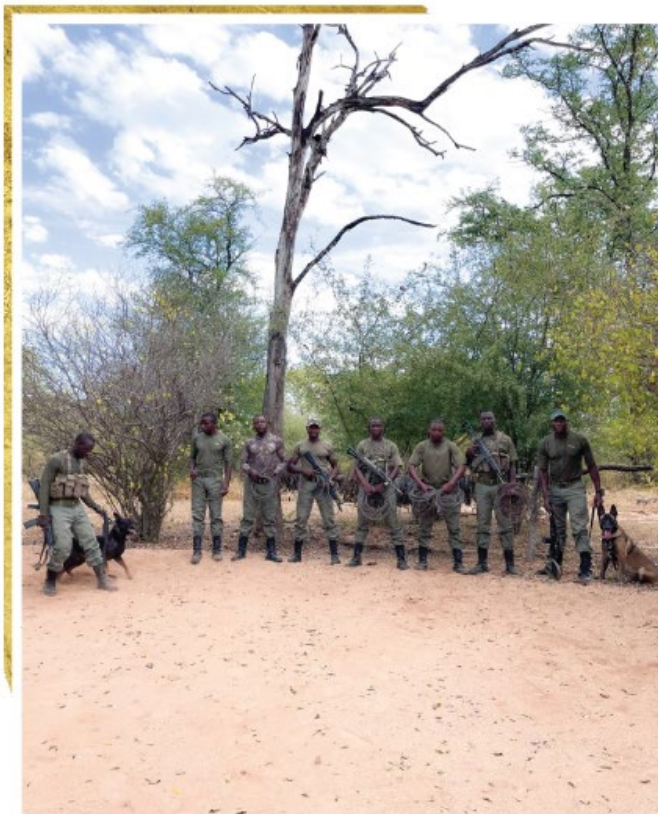
**983**  
  
**hours of patrol by the  
RHINOS WITHOUT  
BORDERS RANGERS**

# PROJECT RANGER

*Distributing emergency relief funding to salaries and operations of existing NGOs across Africa specialising in anti-poaching – who have experienced Covid-19s ripple effects on funding support and poaching.*

*Project Ranger Grantee*

## ANTI-POACHING TRACKING SPECIALISTS, ZIMBABWE



Great Plains Foundation has for 2 full months, funded the ATS K9 Unit, Anti-poaching Tracking Specialists in Zimbabwe, operating in the Savé Valley Conservancy, one of Zimbabwe's three, critical strongholds for rhino. This team comprises of 11, world class, Malinois dogs and their handlers. Their rhino monitoring is going according to schedule, the team has done well so far, in the most difficult time of the year. As the bush opens up the monitoring becomes less challenging.

# 120 SNARES RECOVERED



# BUMI HILLS ANTI POACHING UNIT, ZIMBABWE



Thanks to the funding from Project Ranger, Bumi Hills APU were able to continue their operations in the Lake Kariba area of Zimbabwe with over 4,936kms patrolled. The team were able to recover 38 snares, 23 fishing nets making up 6km, and impound 7 dinghies. The team managed to treat a baby elephant who had an infection in her leg causing her an inability to walk. The team treated her leg and she is now running around happily with her herd.

**4936**  **3** **ARRESTS MADE** 

**kilometers patrolled**



## CONSERVATION WILDLIFE FUND HWANGE, ZIMBABWE

Thanks to grants and donations from organisations such as Great Plains Conservation Foundation's Project Ranger CWF has been able to keep our scouts employed and patrolling. The money donated by Project Ranger has been used to pay for wages and rations for five CWF Scouts. The new CWF scouts, employed in November 2021, are now being deployed alongside the more experienced scouts and settling in well.



CWF and FC scouts on deployment in Ngamo Forest arrested two poachers with snares, spears, axes and the carcass of an eland cow. The team also discovered a cyanide poisoning in January that killed 7 elephants and managed to find and arrest the culprits.

## UGANDA CONSERVATION FUND

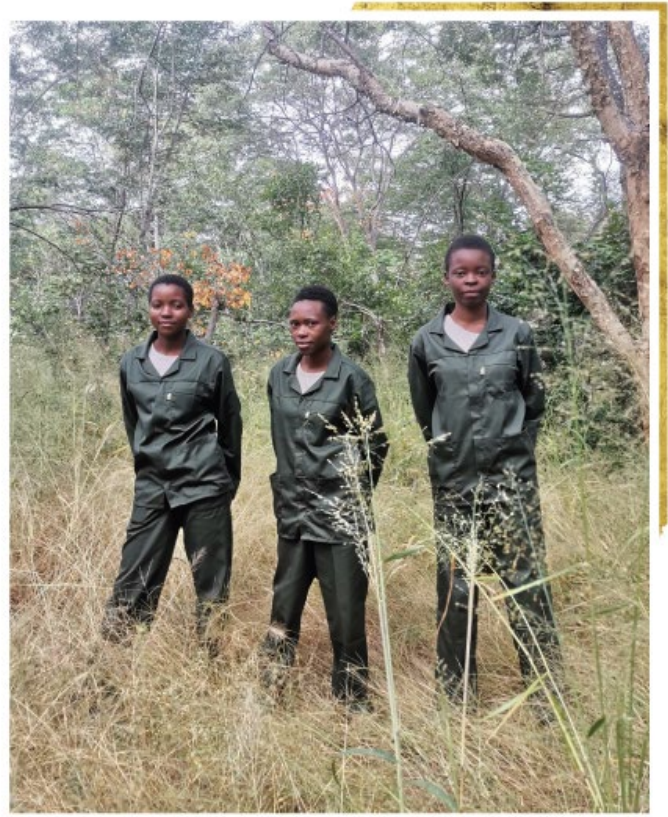
Project Ranger continues to support UCF and their anti-poaching rangers through food rations and operations. The overnight patrol team has had success in arresting two poachers, collecting 261 snares, 10 spears, 2 knives in Murchison Falls. The Vulture Satellite Tracking System identified where the vultures had been very active three weeks ago - where we found the carcasses of many buffalo, heartbeast and even a lion.

Without UCFs support over the COVID period, the parks would have been severely compromised. Simply put, without Project Ranger and the partners that have helped, we could not have done any of the work that was so desperately needed.





# MOTHER AFRICA TRUST, ZIMBABWE



Project Ranger granted Mother Africa Trust support in training, salaries, comms and supplies. The team grew this quarter with the new hiring of three female rangers who are fully qualified to start work, and accommodation was built for them so they are separate to the mens accommodation. Training is critical to keep the teams on the ground at their highest level of effectiveness, MA were able to fund training of their existing rangers. MA were able to build a specific storage cabin to keep their food supplies secure and away from baboons and other critters.

**3** **NEW FEMALE RANGERS**  
**HIRED AT MOTHER AFRICA**

A graphic consisting of a large number '3' on the left, followed by a row of 13 female icons. The first icon is a boot, and the remaining 12 are simple female silhouettes.



# GREEN HEART OF GREAT PLAINS

*Minimise Negative Impact • Maximise Positive Impact*



## CONSERVATION ROOTS

*Planting indigenous trees in the Kenya to protect the ecosystems resilience for climate change.*

Our Conservation Roots team, led by Paul, have been hard at work this quarter planting indigenous trees in Kenya. The three indigenous tree nurseries in our camps Mara Nyika, Mara Expedition and Mara Plains are thriving with 7 different species of tree being nurtured for planting. Our project is expanding.



# 1078

**INDIGENOUS TREES  
PLANTED FROM  
JANUARY-MARCH IN KENYA**





# COMPOSTER

Using 100% of our food waste into compost for planting and for community farms.



This quarter we fitted all our safari camps in both Botswana and Kenya with Bokashi fermentation systems and have begun using the output on our tree nurseries to test the system before we share with community members. All the compost created in 2021 has been used to start vegetable gardens in a community in rural Botswana which we hope to buy from to 'close the circle' of our waste. Next quarter we are working on the composter machines becoming 100% solar powered.

**3900 KILOGRAMS** of waste has been  **composted into**  **90 BAGS OF COMPOST**





## ALIEN PLANT SPECIES

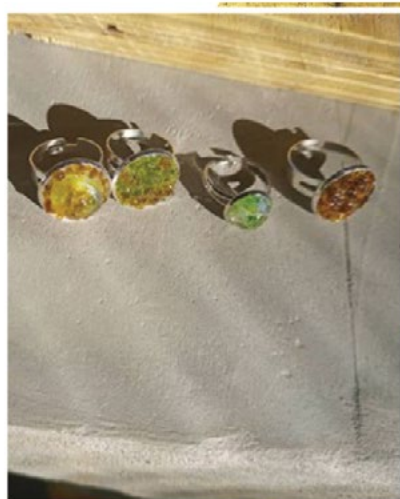
*Recording and removing invasive alien plant species affecting the ecosystem and biodiversity.*



During February and March this year members of Duba Explorers camp volunteered to engage in removing the two key alien species Paperthorn and BlackJack in between their daily duties. The team spent over 80 hours manually removing these species before they had a chance to seed, to reduce the spread as much as possible.

## NEW GLASS RECYCLING PROJECT

*Supporting a women-led business and avoiding landfill.*



We have been crushing the glass waste from our safari camps for over a year now, creating sand to build bricks for community developments. This quarter we looked at how we could diversify - we partnered with Travel for Impact who started a glass jewelry making project under their Economic Empowerment Program to expand the 'Trash to Treasure' initiative. The project focuses on two areas which is creating livelihoods and recycling. This project involves 12 ladies from Sedia ward in Maun who are unemployed with ages ranging between 22 years to 54 years.

*"It is innovators like Letso and Great Plains Conservation who are helping lead the way toward a more environmentally sustainable and financially feasible alternatives to a healthier planet and narrowing the gap between populations that have resources versus populations surviving on the fringe."*

# BOTTLING PLANT

*Recycling our water into safe drinking water on site to reduce transport of water to and from the wilderness areas.*

Our high tech bottling plant, located in the heart of our remote safari camps in Botswana, continues to meet the demand of guests and staff in the camps. The plant creates both sparkling and still water. When you drink our Great Plains water you are reducing your impact on the environment! Drinking from reusable glass bottles reduces plastic waste and drinking water produced on-site in our concessions reduces emissions from transportation. All water testing remains of the highest standard thanks to the ultrafiltration process on site.



**3,882** Litres of safe drinking water processed in Botswana

**12,940** PLASTIC BOTTLES AVOIDED



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