

CLASSROOM AFRICA

AWF's Classroom Africa program provides primary schools in rural communities with a high-quality education, well-trained teachers, clean and sustainable schools, supplemental conservation education opportunities, and resources in exchange for a significant conservation commitment from the community. Community members become conservationists by helping to ensure wildlife has safe space to roam, participating in sustainable agriculture practices, and working with park rangers to inform them of poaching activities.

The majority of children in Classroom Africa schools have lived near wildlife their entire lives, but have never had the chance to experience the majesty of an elephant, zebra, or lion — often times these species are viewed as threats or pests because of the problems they pose for communities. In Classroom Africa schools, kids learn the valuable role wildlife could play in their future and will grow up with a newfound appreciation of the wildlife and wild lands around them. By providing children with a quality education we are empowering them with the opportunity to pursue successful livelihoods that are not reliant on the unsustainable use of the environment and preparing future generations to be stewards of Africa's wildlife.

In turn, children learn how each individual environment plays its unique part in the global ecosystem while instilling the belief that it is imperative to protect wildlife and the environment for coming generations.

Our goal is foster the link between education and conservation, ensuring a stronger tomorrow for Africa's children and wildlife.

Linking Education & Conservation

Classroom Africa empowers communities while promoting continued conservation of their lands.

- **Short-term conservation logic:** Communities make a specific commitment regarding the conservation of their resources and wildlife, in exchange for the capital to construct the school.
- **Medium-term conservation logic:** Diversification of livelihoods. Young people with a sound educational foundation will have many other opportunities to continue with school or seek employment in the modern economy rather than being forced to exploit the resources around them for livelihood.
- **Long-term conservation logic:** Educated people make better neighbors for Africa's wildlife. Education, and especially girls' education, is a powerful social investment that helps disrupt the vicious cycle of poverty—and the environmental degradation that typically results from this poverty.

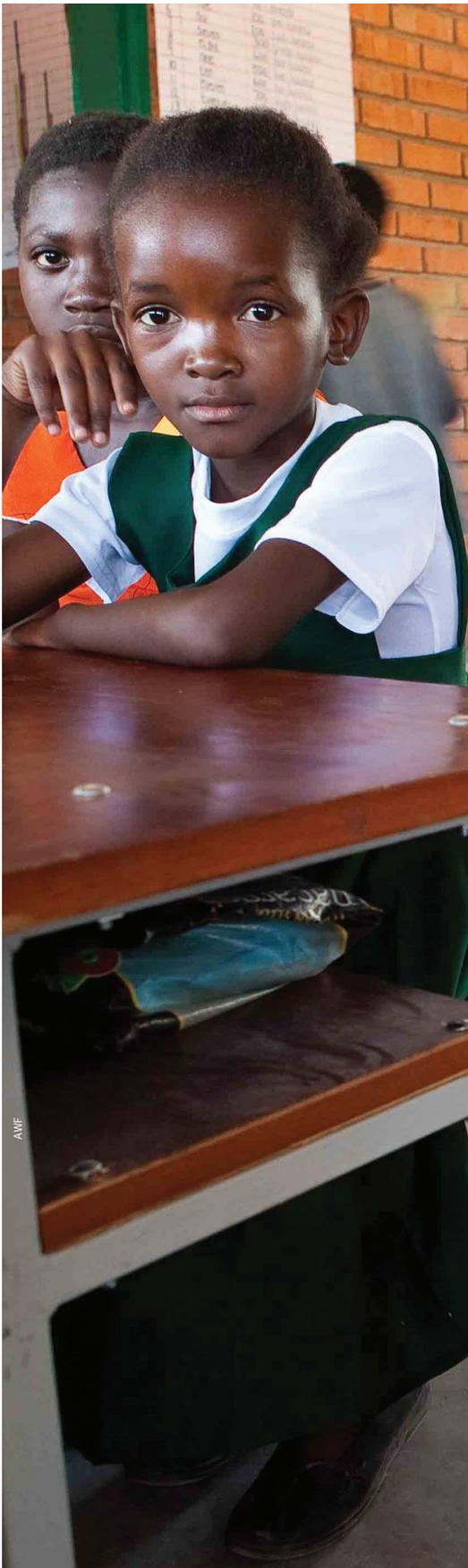
Implementation

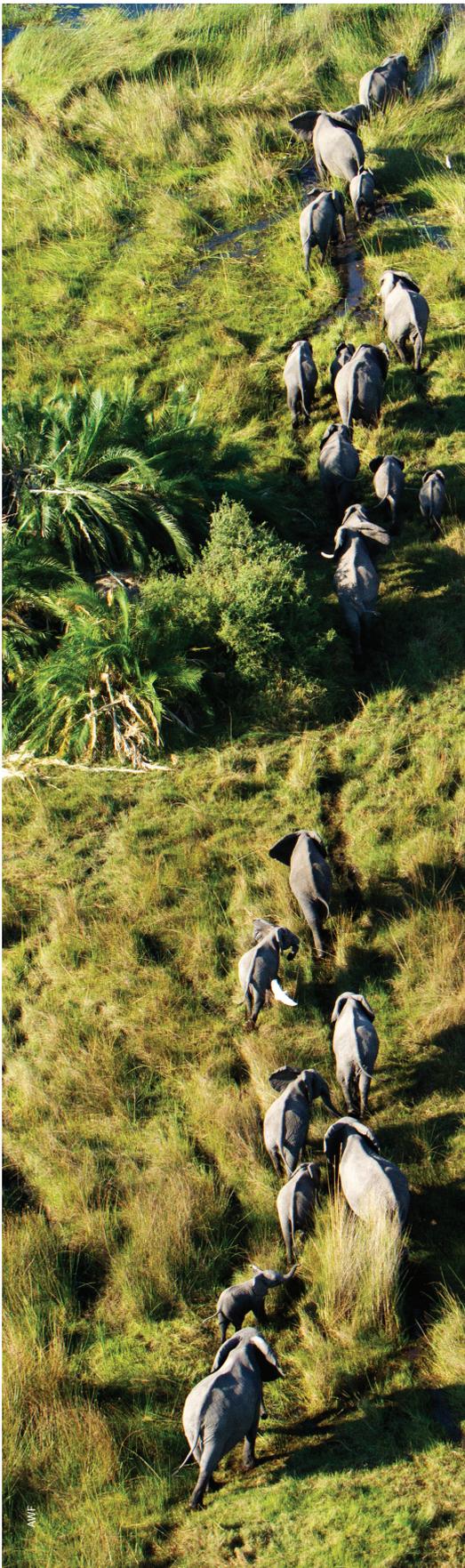
AWF partners with local architects in Africa to ensure that all school campuses are designed in harmony with the natural environment. For each of our schools, we have contracted with potential partners in educational training and conservation education to ensure that Classroom Africa will be synonymous not simply with effective conservation but also with topnotch education in Africa.

AWF Classroom Africa Schools

Lupani Community School, Zambia

- **Conservation issue:** Wildlife populations in Zambia's Sekute Chiefdom were declining, primarily from unplanned settlement and land conversion.
- **AWF agreement:** The Sekute community designated 20,000 hectares of their community land, creating two critical wildlife corridors that pass from community areas in Botswana, Namibia and into Zimbabwe, in exchange for the rebuilding of Lupani Community School.
- **Result:** After an initial phase of construction and a recent expansion, the Chiefdom boasts newly updated school facilities with six classrooms, new offices, a school library, teacher housing, and solar lighting kits. Classes are full with 115 students enrolled, and the Zambian government has provided 5 trained teachers to instruct classes. In addition to the upgraded school facilities, AWF has arranged ongoing teacher training and conservation education





opportunities. AWF's partnership with Bushtracks Africa takes the school on field trips to Victoria Falls and Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park to educate the kids on the importance of conserving wildlife and wild lands. There has been a noticeable reduction in unsustainable natural resource use (such as charcoal production) and land clearance, and zero incidents of illegal harvesting of natural resources in the conservancy.

Ilima Primary School, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

- **Conservation issue:** This part of the Congo Basin, in northern DRC, was being heavily deforested for agricultural purposes, while wildlife was being hunted for bush meat.
- **AWF agreement:** AWF built the Ilima Primary School in a clearing in the forest. In return, the Ilima community agreed to a land-use plan and a number of other conservation actions, including refraining from bush meat hunting and protecting habitat for the endangered bonobo.
- **Result:** The residents of Ilima now have a beautiful new school that offers a comfortable learning environment for their children. School enrollment has increased 40 percent, and teachers are using the school grounds to teach lessons on conservation. Over 95% of sixth grade students passed their primary school exit exams, the highest rate yet since AWF began supporting the school. Further, members of the community now understand the need to conserve the forest around them.

Manyara Ranch Primary School, Tanzania

- **Conservation issue:** The run-down and overcrowded Maasai school was located in the middle of an important wildlife corridor, which meant that students shared their schoolyard with elephants, lions and other wildlife, disrupting classes and endangering students.
- **AWF agreement:** AWF partnered with the Annenberg Foundation, the local school district, and the community to build an entirely new school on the perimeter of Manyara Ranch. The school was relocated to eliminate conflict and frequent disruptions from elephants, lions and other large species.
- **Result:** The new school comfortably holds 900 students, and the facility is equipped with dormitories, a cafeteria, an infirmary and a state-of-the-art IT lab with internet-accessible computers. Students can play and learn outside without the fear of coming face-to-face with a large predator. AWF has initiated a giraffe-themed conservation education program with Wild Nature Institute under a 'Toys R US' grant, and continues to provide school supplies.

Adisge Primary School, Ethiopia

- **Conservation issue:** Adisge Primary School is located in Simien Mountains National Park, an ecologically significant landscape home to the endangered Ethiopian wolf, endemic Gelada baboon and majestic Walia ibex. These beautiful highlands are under increasing threat from livestock grazing and human encroachment.
- **AWF agreement:** AWF currently co-manages Simien National Park, and the upgrade of nearby Adisge Primary School will provide significant and long-lasting benefits to the local community, while advancing conservation objectives in the national park. The community has agreed to cooperate with the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority to restrict livestock grazing in the park.
- **Result:** AWF is finishing construction of Adisge Primary School. The campus boasts simply constructed buildings that nevertheless feature warm, bright classrooms. Students are excited to learn and engage with the natural environment around them, thanks to AWF's efforts here. AWF recently received a contribution from Nature's Path EnviroKidz to support initial conservation efforts at the school.



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