

Gombe Stream Research Centre (GSRC) GOMBE MONTHLY BULLETIN

ISSUE 01 | MARCH 2026

Welcome to our Gombe Monthly Bulletin, home to the world's longest-running chimpanzee research started by Dr. Jane Goodall.

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Even though Dr. Jane Goodall is no longer with us, the research she began continues at the Gombe Stream Research Centre. Scientists and field researchers remain committed to long-term studies of chimpanzees and baboons. With support from the Jane Goodall Institute and the use of technologies such as cutting-edge digital tools and AI-assisted analysis, Gombe continues to be one of the world's most important sites for chimpanzee research and conservation.

GOMBE AFTER DR. JANE



**GSRC AND
PARTNERS TO
ADVANCE AI IN
RESEARCH**

MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Greetings from **Gombe Stream Research Centre (GSRC)**, Each month, our dedicated team of field researchers continues the important work of observing and collecting data of chimpanzees, building upon the remarkable **legacy begun by Dr. Jane Goodall**.

For more than six decades, Gombe has stood as one of the world's most significant sites for the long-term chimpanzees research, offering invaluable insights into chimpanzee behaviour and their life histories while shedding-light to human evolution.



DR. DEUS MJUNGU, GSRC DIRECTOR

Beyond research, we are also working closely with other stakeholders to ensure the long term survival of chimps outside Gombe.

At Gombe Stream Research Centre, we promise to continue carrying forward this research, deepening our understanding of chimpanzee behaviour, forest ecosystem, and the challenges chimpanzees are facing. We are committed to develop innovative solutions that not only safeguard chimpanzees and their forest but also serve as a model for conservation efforts elsewhere.

Together with our partners and supporters, we will ensure that **the legacy of Gombe's research continues to inspire, inform, and shape a sustainable future for generations to come.**

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Dm', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Director of Gombe Stream Research Centre

Lake Tanganyika
Beswe valley

Villagers' farms

Wildlife Returning to the Gombe-Burundi Corridor



The Northern Corridor is a network of village-managed forests reserve around Gombe, protected by local communities with support from JGI. **It connects Gombe to Burundi**, providing a pathway for wildlife, especially chimpanzees. However chimpanzees and their habitats continue to face ongoing challenges.

After many years of protection and regular monitoring in the **Corridor**, encouraging signs of ecological recovery are beginning to appear.

Continuous surveys and the recent construction of a **biomonitoring post** inside the corridor have allowed forest monitors to maintain a constant presence in the forest, resulted to strengthening conservation efforts.

Support from Conservation Partners

Support from partners and other stakeholders in district and community patrols has also contributed significantly. As a result, farming activities and human movement within the corridor have declined in recent months.

Wildlife and Chimpanzees Making a Comeback

These protection efforts are already showing promising results. Wildlife species such as bushbuck, bushpigs, and olive baboons—once absent from the area for many years—are now beginning to return.

Chimpanzees and other primates are also becoming more confident, with some now building nests close to the monitoring post and producing vocal calls that can be heard from the area—something that had become rare in the past.

This encouraging progress highlights how continuous protection, monitoring, and collaboration can help restore important wildlife corridors and support the recovery of biodiversity in the landscape.



Chimps captured by Camera traps



FM and TANAPA ranger on one of surveys



Youssef Warren Foundation, Beswe Biomonitoring post

Respiratory Disease Outbreak Reported in Gombe's Northern Chimpanzee Community

A Concerning Development

Respiratory disease outbreaks continue to pose a serious threat to the survival of wild chimpanzees in Gombe National Park. Recently, the Northern chimpanzee community in the park experienced a respiratory disease outbreak, raising concern among researchers and conservation teams working to protect these endangered primates.

Fortunately, the individuals within the group were relatively dispersed during this period, which helped limit the spread of the illness among the chimpanzees. While this reduced the potential impact of the outbreak, it still serves as an important reminder of how vulnerable wild chimpanzee populations are to infectious diseases.



Risks of Human-Wildlife Transmission

Close contact between humans and chimpanzees can spread diseases, as chimpanzees are highly vulnerable to human respiratory infections.



Preventive Measures and Guidelines

To reduce these risks, researchers follow health guidelines from the International Union for Conservation of Nature, including wearing masks, keeping safe distances, and limiting contact with chimpanzees.



Safeguarding the Future of Gombe's Chimpanzees

Onsite laboratories help detect and monitor infections early. These measures help protect the health of chimpanzees in Gombe while allowing research and conservation to continue responsibly.

FEAST OR FAMINE: HOW FOOD AVAILABILITY IS DRIVING CHIMPANZEE MOVEMENTS IN GOMBE

Recent reports from field researchers who monitor chimpanzee behaviour during have revealed striking differences in how two neighbouring chimpanzee communities of Mitumba and Kasekela are using the forest. At the heart of these shifting patterns lies one powerful force—food availability.



Kasekela Range Mainly in the Southern Where Food Is Current Available

The Kasekela chimpanzees are currently concentrating their activities in the southern parts of their range, 6 to 10 km south from their core habitat in areas such as Bwavi, Nyasanga, and Kalande valley, which are located about 6 to 10 km south of their core habitat.

These locations are rich in seasonal food resources, especially Mipapa, which appear to be abundant at this time.

With reliable access to nutritious food, the Kasekela community has shown more stable and predictable movement patterns, remaining in these productive zones where feeding opportunities are high.

Mitumba Navigates More Unpredictable Food Supplies

In contrast to Kasekela, **the Mitumba chimpanzees** in the northern part of Gombe have experienced more limited access to food in recent days.

With fewer readily available feeding opportunities, Mitumba chimpanzees ranged widely in search of food resources. As a result, their movement patterns have been less predictable and more difficult to track.

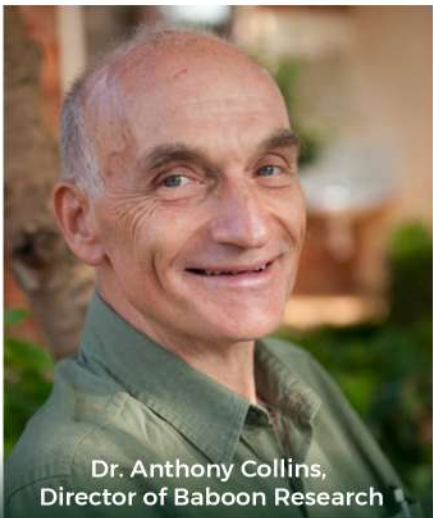
This has made the past month more demanding for **the Mitumba chimpanzees** as they adapt to fluctuating conditions in their environment.

Chimpanzee movements in Gombe are closely tied to food availability. In the abundant south or the more challenging north, they adjust their ranging to match changing resources, showing that survival depends on responding to shifting patterns of abundance.

Advancing Baboon Research at Gombe: From Paper Records to AI - How AI May Shape the Future

For more than five decades, the forests of Gombe National Park have served as a living laboratory for wildlife research.

While the park is widely known for the pioneering chimpanzee studies of Jane Goodall, it is also home to a rich diversity of wildlife including baboons, five kinds of monkeys, and galagos.



Dr. Anthony Collins,
Director of Baboon Research

At the Gombe Stream Research Centre (GSRC), Dr. Anthony Collins, Director of Baboon Research, has dedicated his career to studying the social lives of baboons. His work explores how these intelligent primates form family groups, interact within their communities, and adapt to environmental changes.



Gombe data-files in the fireproof cabinet
at Arizona State University - USA

A 50-Year Scientific Legacy

The baboon research program at Gombe is one of the longest-running primate studies in the world, spanning more than 50 years of continuous observation.

Over the decades, researchers and field assistants have carefully documented baboon behaviour births, deaths, and social relationships. These observations provide valuable insights into primate behaviour, ecosystem dynamics, and the impacts of habitat loss and climate change.



Bringing Data into the Digital Age

Much of this important information still exists in handwritten field notes and paper records. To unlock the full potential of these long-term datasets, GSRC is collaborating with partners including WildMon and Amazon Web Services(AWS) to develop an AI-enabled research platform. This initiative will support the digitization, analysis, and sharing of decades of scientific data.

Building the Future of Conservation Science

In March 2026, GSRC staff and technical partners met in Arizona to discuss strategies for transforming historical paper records into a modern digital system. By combining long-term field research with advanced technology, this effort will help preserve Gombe's scientific legacy while strengthening conservation research for the future.



Tanzania and Burundi Convened a High-Level Meeting on Conservation of the Northern Corridor: Strengthening Cross-Border Collaboration and Good Neighbourliness

The meeting held **on 18th and 19th March 2026** marks a significant milestone in advancing conservation efforts within **the Northern Corridor forests—an important transboundary ecological landscape connecting Tanzania and Burundi.**

As part of ongoing initiatives to safeguard this critical ecosystem, **Jane Goodall Institute, in collaboration with government authorities** from both countries, convened a high-level meeting to deliberate on effective strategies for sustainable conservation, protection of biodiversity, and the promotion of cross-border cooperation and good neighbourliness.

The meeting, held in Kigoma, brought together key stakeholders, including an official representative of the Regional Commissioner for Burunga-Burundi and the Burundian Ambassador to Tanzania, who is based at the Kigoma liaison office. Also in attendance were the District Commissioners of Kigoma and Buhigwe, the Commanding Officer of Gombe National Park, the Director of the Gombe Stream Research Centre, and the District Executive Director of Kigoma District.

The meeting was further attended by senior leaders from districts bordering the corridor, members of district security committees, representatives from the Jane Goodall Institute, and other officers from Gombe National Park (GONAPA). Their contributions enriched discussions on strengthening protection and enforcement efforts within the corridor.

In addition to the constructive discussions, participants conducted a field visit to the Northern Corridor to assess firsthand the progress achieved, as well as the challenges posed by ongoing environmental degradation within the forest ecosystem.



The meeting concluded with the adoption of key resolutions aimed at strengthening collaborative conservation efforts, enhancing forest protection measures, promoting sustainable natural resource management, and reinforcing the spirit of good neighbourliness between the two nations in safeguarding this vital transboundary landscape.

STORIES BEYOND THE FIELD

INVESTING IN CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE OF GOMBE RESEARCH

Priscilla Shao has been serving as a **Veterinary Laboratory Assistant Officer at the Gombe Stream Research Centre (GSRC)** under the Jane Goodall Institute Tanzania for more than three years. Throughout this time, she has played an important role in supporting Gombe research.

The institute remains dedicated to ensuring that its staff continue to grow professionally and stay updated with current scientific knowledge. Supporting staff members in advancing their education and skills is an essential part of strengthening the quality and impact of research conducted at GSRC.



PRISCILLA SHAO
VETERINARY LABORATORY ASSISTANT OFFICER

SUPPORTING ACADEMIC ADVANCEMENT

In recognition of her dedication and potential, Priscilla has been granted institutional support to pursue a Master's degree at the **Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology (NM-AIST)**. The scholarship will support her academic journey for a period of two years and covers tuition fees, research expenses, dissertation production, and other academic administrative costs.

This opportunity represents a significant step in her professional development and reflects the institute's ongoing commitment to nurturing talent within its team.



Priscilla and team are collecting fecal samples in the field for DNA extraction as part of her internship

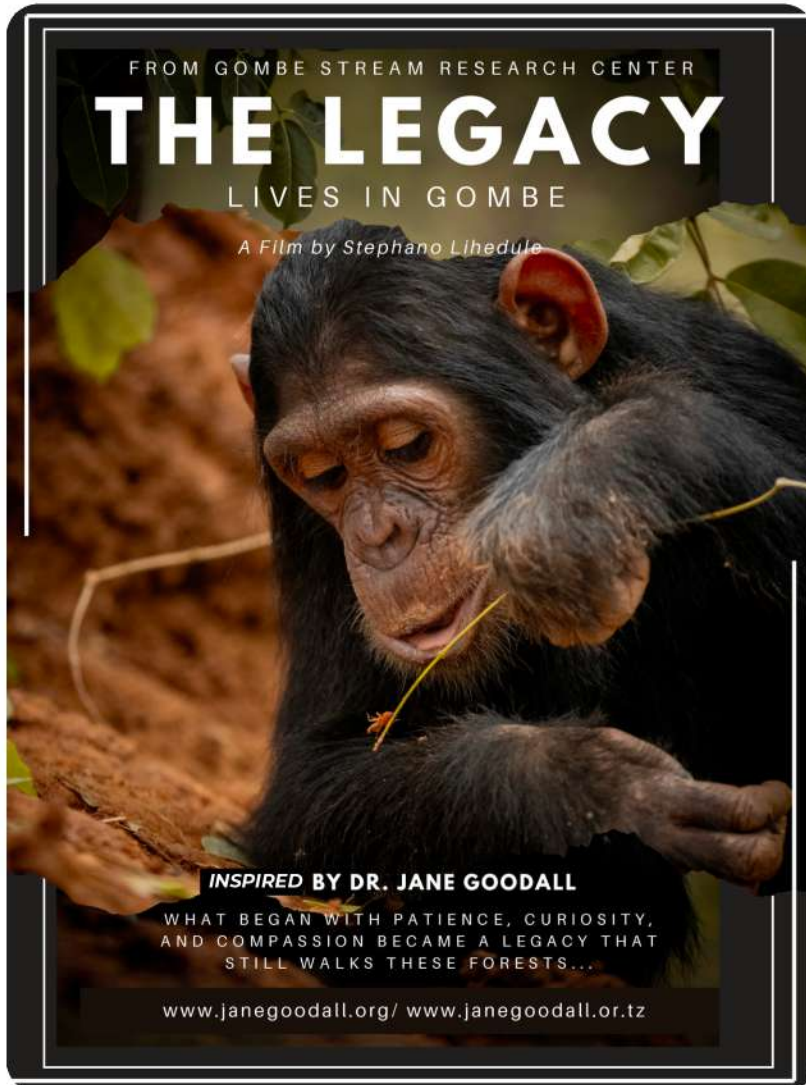
ENHANCING RESEARCH SUPPORT AT GOMBE

Through this opportunity, Priscilla Shao will enhance her expertise in veterinary and laboratory sciences, further supporting research at the GSRC. The knowledge she gains will contribute to wildlife health monitoring and strengthen the scientific work carried out at Gombe.

By investing in staff development, the Jane Goodall Institute Tanzania continues to build stronger capacity for research and conservation, ensuring the long-term impact of Gombe's scientific legacy.

Local Team's Film Makes History with First-Ever Screening at the Environmental Film Festival (DCEFF) in the Nation's Capital, Washington, DC

DCEFF is a major annual festival in Washington, D.C. that showcases films on conservation, climate action, and sustainability, bringing together filmmakers, experts, and the public to raise environmental awareness.



For the first time in history, a film produced by our local team has been screened at the Environmental Film Festival in the Nation's Capital in Washington, DC.

The Legacy Lives in Gombe, a short documentary by Stephano Lihedule, brings the story of conservation in Gombe NP to an international audience.

Set in the forests around Lake Tanganyika in Tanzania, the film shows how the work begun by Jane Goodall more than sixty-five years ago continues today, as researchers document the lives and behaviour of wild chimpanzees.

It also highlights the ongoing impact of the Jane Goodall Institute and its youth program Roots & Shoots in inspiring conservation.

Global Recognition and Impact for Local Conservation Filmmakers



Stephano Lihedule, GSRC Videographer and Film Director

The film was screened to international audiences, conservationists, scientists, and filmmakers at the DCEFF on 26 March 2026. This milestone highlights the growing role of local voices in conservation storytelling. For conservation efforts in Gombe NP, it brings global attention to the importance of protecting chimpanzees and their habitat.



For the local team and young filmmakers like Stephano Lihedule, it represents an inspiring achievement showing that stories from the field can reach international audiences and encouraging a new generation to use film as a powerful tool for conservation.



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