



2018 ANNUAL REPORT

Friends of Bonobos

On behalf of Amis des Bonobos du Congo/Lola ya Bonobo

www.lolayabonobo.org

www.friendsofbonobos.org



Photos by Frans Lanting

Dear friend of bonobos,

Thank you for your dedication to bonobos!

I get asked a lot about the relationship between Friends of Bonobos and Lola ya Bonobo, so let me start with a quick explanation. Friends of Bonobos was founded by Claudine Andre, founder of Amis des Bonobos du Congo (ABC). We are the US-based nonprofit that supports the work of ABC, which includes Lola ya Bonobo sanctuary and Ekolo ya Bonobo Community Reserve.

All of the on-the-ground work – that is, everything you will read about in this report – is managed and run in the DR Congo by ABC, originally led by Claudine Andre, and now led by her daughter, Fanny Minesi. They are the powerhouses behind some of the most effective bonobo conservation work in the world.

You are the powerhouses behind the accomplishments and triumphs in this report. Your gifts provide food, medicine, homes, rescues, and releases back into the wild for so many beautiful bonobos. Your gifts build awareness for bonobos so that more are being saved and protected.

I was fortunate enough to spend a little time at Lola ya Bonobo recently. It was a highlight of my life, as you can imagine. Spending time with bonobos up close is an experience everyone should have on their bucket list. The most striking part of the experience was the thoughtfulness, energy, and dedication of the entire staff, from the top management to the grounds-keepers, who always had a smile and an 'Mbote!' ('Hello' in Lingala) for me. But let me tell you, this is a serious bunch.

They are in the trenches folks, and they are ensuring your gifts are put to good use! Rescuing bonobos in rural Congo is no small feat. Keeping baby bonobos from the brink of death requires a love affair with your job. Moving bonobos on planes, trains, and automobiles so they can be free takes a level of dedication most of us will never experience. I know that your support of bonobos and the amazing people on the frontlines saving them from extinction is the best use of your time, energy and dedication.

Thank you for your commitment to bonobos. Thank you for standing alongside us in the fight to protect bonobos for the long haul.

If you have read this far, you must be a serious bonobo lover and advocate, so I know we have at least one thing in common! Please reach out to me anytime to talk bonobos. I would love to hear from you!

Now on to the good stuff!

All my best,



Ariel Rogers
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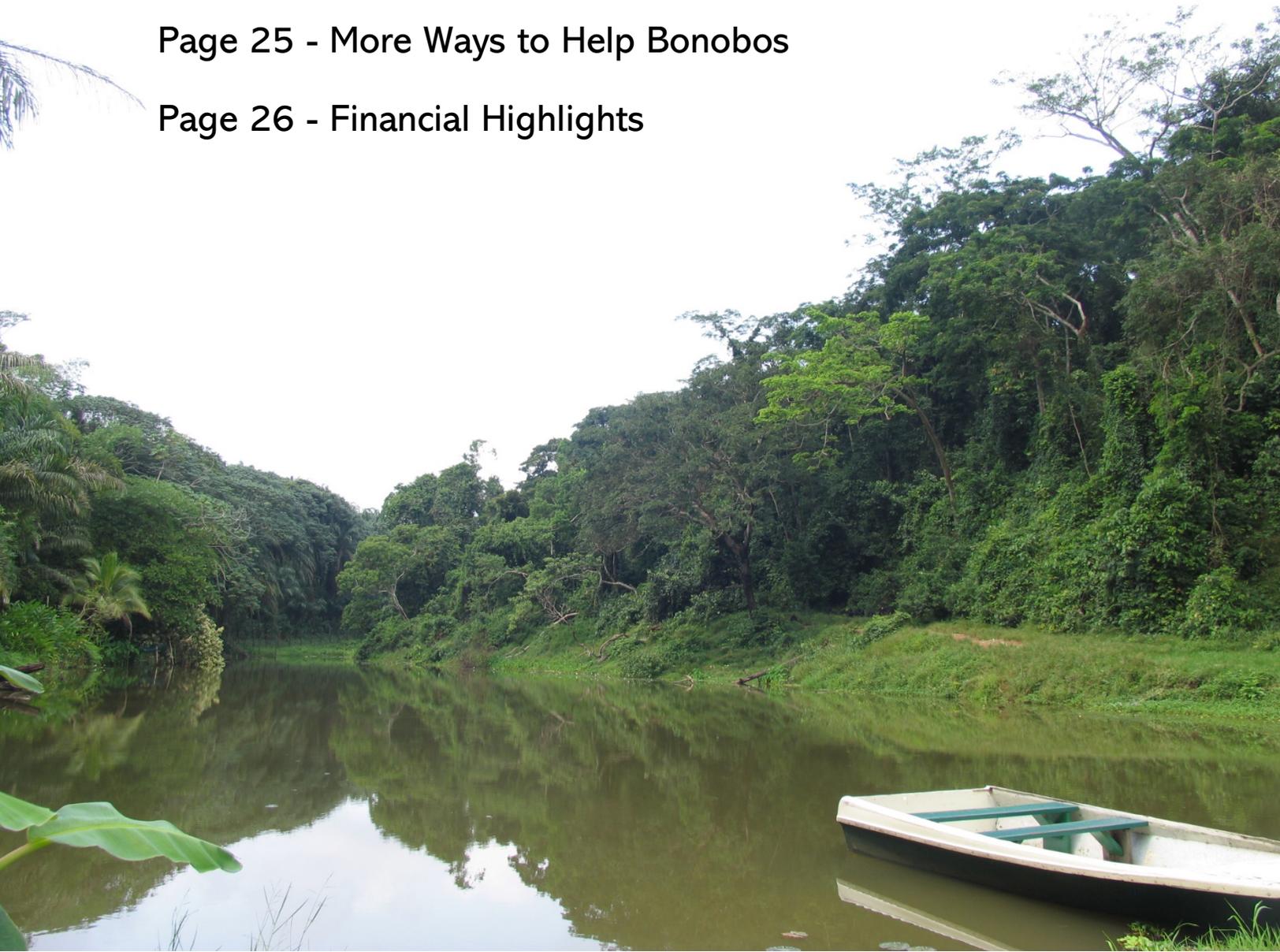
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Lola ya Bonobo Sanctuary

The Nursery

Because of your generosity, three new orphaned bonobos were rescued in 2018, **Tshopo, Lutula, and Bolafa**. As is the custom at Lola ya Bonobo, they were all named after areas in the DR Congo near where they were rescued.

Tshopo (male, 2½ years old), arrived on February 26th. Tshopo spent several months at Kisangani Zoo and arrived in very poor condition. The veterinary team was not able to save him; he died shortly after arrival, on March 6th, 2018.



Lutula (female, about 3 years old), arrived on March 18th. Lutula was rescued from Lodja, in Kasai province. She recovered very well! After a month in quarantine, she joined the Nursery, where she continues to live today. She is now happy, safe and very healthy!
Pictured left.

Bolafa (male, 1½ to 2 years old), rescued in November. Bolafa was rescued by our team in a remote village in the forest. By the time he arrived at Lola ya Bonobo, he was suffering from severe malnutrition and dehydration. He received three weeks of 24/7 intensive veterinary care and fought hard to survive. Unfortunately he was unable to recover and died on December 28th, 2018. *Pictured below.*



In 2018, your gifts provided a home, food, medicine, care and love at Lola ya Bonobo to five bonobo orphans, all of whom are doing well and thriving in the Nursery!

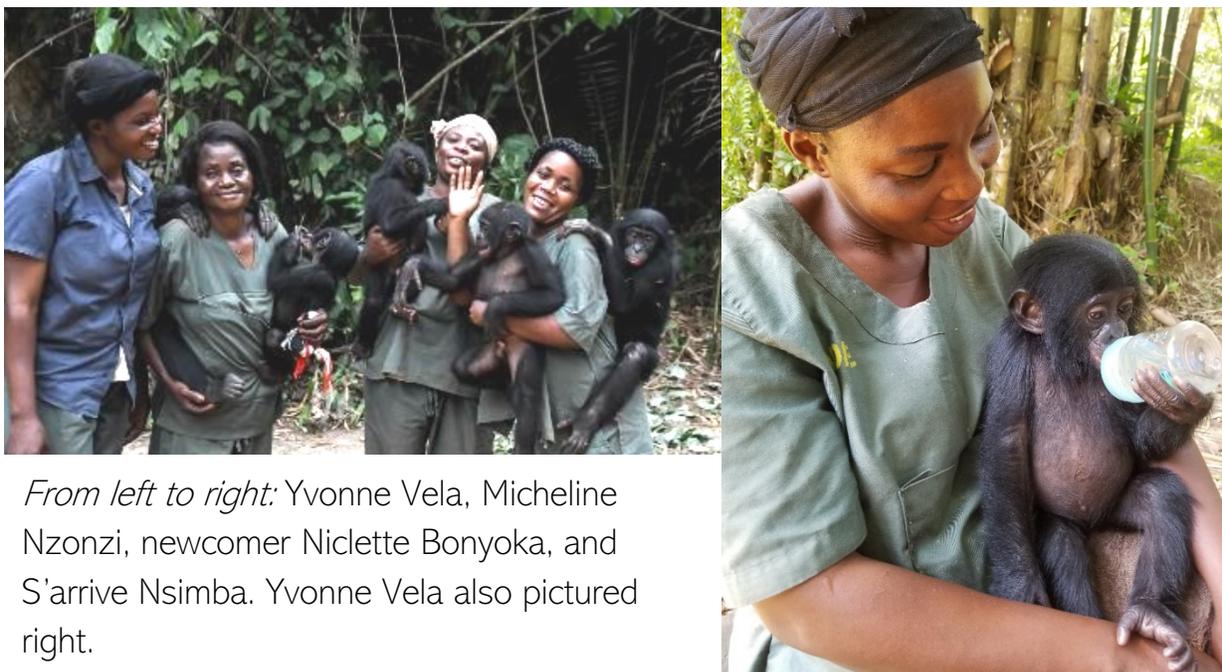
- Lalia (female, 5 years old)
- Bikoro (male, 6 years old)
- Kwango (male, 4 years old)
- Balangala (male, 4 years old)
- Lutula (female, 3 years old)



Kwango upon arrival

Kwango today

In 2018, your contributions provided four surrogate moms at Lola ya Bonobo to support, love and raise the young bonobos.



From left to right: Yvonne Vela, Micheline Nzonzi, newcomer Niclette Bonyoka, and S'arrive Nsimba. Yvonne Vela also pictured right.

Your gifts provided
74 bonobos living at
Lola ya Bonobo
sanctuary with a safe
home and all the support
they need to thrive.



The Bonobos of Lola ya Bonobo

In 2018, your gifts supported 74 bonobos who live at Lola ya Bonobo sanctuary.
14 of those bonobos were released in 2018! More on that later in the report.

You provided the support and care the bonobos need to live happy, healthy lives:

- Food and nourishment
- Medical care and treatment
- Rescue operations for orphaned bonobos
- Emergency needs
- Regular upkeep and repairs of enclosures and buildings, like the infirmary, sleeping quarters, nutrition center, and nursery
- Bonobo wellness providers
- And much more.

Your gifts also provided the necessary support to keep the sanctuary running efficiently and effectively to properly support all the bonobos as well as the bonobo education and awareness programs:

- Educational materials & education activities
- Educators and tour operators
- Utilities, communications, and equipment
- Hygiene, grounds and site maintenance
- Travel and vehicle expenditures
- Security
- And much more

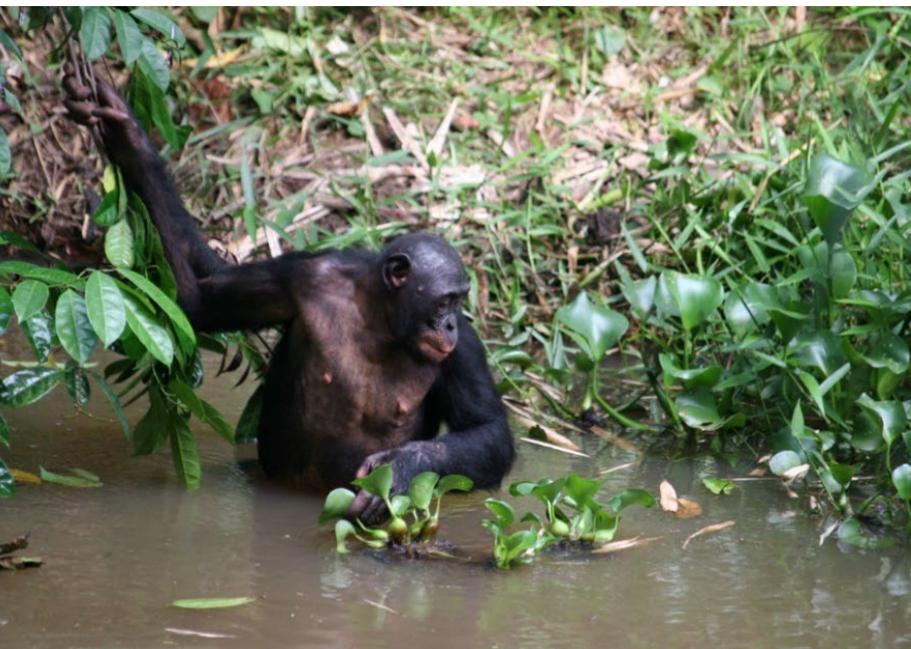


A Veterinary Miracle

Thanks to your support, Malaika ya Lola recovered from postpartum eclampsia.

On July 16, 2018, just days before she was supposed to travel to the reintroduction site with her peers, Malaika ya Lola (11 years old) gave birth to a little male, Mpico ya Lola.

Malaika gave birth in the forest but the next morning came out very weak and displaying symptoms of postpartum eclampsia, including convulsions. The team at Lola quickly brought her into the infirmary for diagnosis and treatment. She and her just-born son were in terrible shape. Malaika was urgently given intravenous calcium & anticonvulsive medicines. She was kept under veterinary supervision for several days to monitor her condition and provide medical treatment. Meanwhile, the veterinarians did everything possible to keep her newborn son alive while she was too weak to nurse or care for him. Unfortunately, they were not able to save him and he died within a week.



In better news, however, Malaika recovered! It took over a month for her to regain enough strength to be reintroduced back into one of the bonobo groups at Lola ya Bonobo, but she is doing very well and does not seem to have suffered any lasting physical impacts from the eclampsia or convulsions. We feel confident that she will be able to return to the wild with a future release group.

Malaika Update!

We are excited to announce that Malaika has successfully given birth to a little boy, born July 7, 2019.



Bonobo Release

Second Bonobo Release in History

You helped make history! In 2018, your support made possible the second release/reintroduction of a bonobo group back into the wild – ever! This is only the second time in history that this has been achieved. (We conducted the first release in 2009.)

This release was initially planned for February 2017, but it had to be postponed twice. The first delay was due to last-minute issues with approvals from the DRC governmental authorities. By February 2018, we had obtained all the necessary paperwork and secured the additional funding needed for a chartered cargo plane. Rehearsals and final preparations took place in April, and a new date for the bonobo transfer was set for May 2018.

However, all plans were put on hold again a few days before D-Day, when several cases of Ebola were reported in the capital of Equateur province. An operation of this complexity could not be undertaken until we were sure the illness was not spreading further. Only once the epidemic was officially declared over in July did the DR Congo's Ministry of Health and Ministry of Environment give us permission to proceed.

**The bonobos were successfully released
to Totaka Island on Sunday, July 22nd, 2018!**



Bonobos on the Move

On July 22nd, 2018, the bonobos (and the team) traveled over 500 miles...



By truck from Lola ya Bonobo sanctuary to the airport...

By specially chartered plane from Kinshasa to Basankusu...



By tractor from the airport
to the Lopori River...



And finally, by specially constructed rafts from
Basankusu to Totaka Island, followed and
monitored closely by additional safety boats.





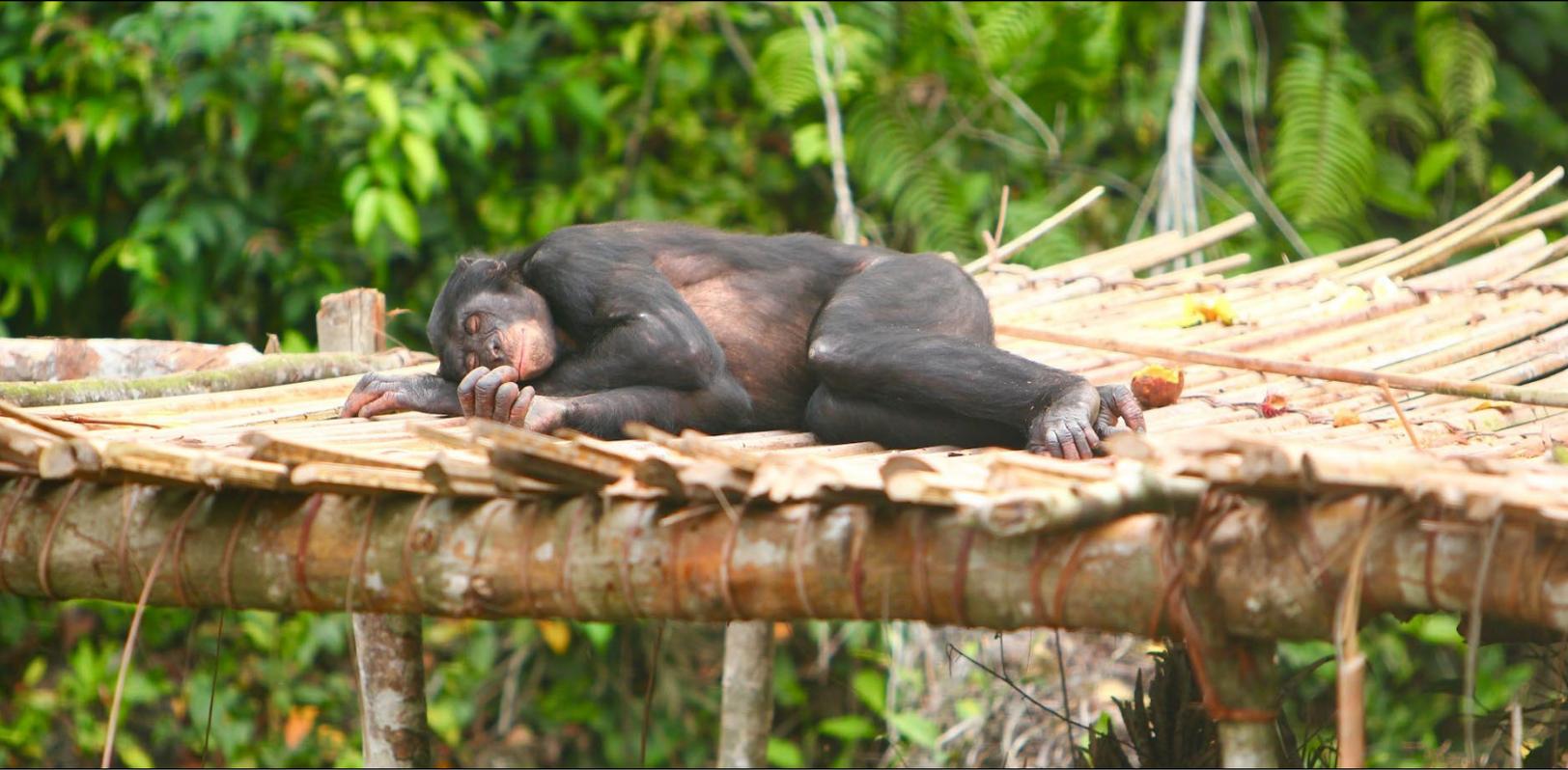
The Bonobos of Totaka Island

Meet the bonobos being released back into the wild! The group on Totaka Island is comprised of 8 orphans rehabilitated at Lola ya Bonobo and 6 sanctuary-born offspring.

- Maya (Female, 25 years old) + children: Bisengo (Male, 12 years old), Mayele (Male, 7 years old), Ndonga (Female, 2½ years old)
- Lisala (Female, 17 yrs old) + daughter, Elaka (Female, 1½ yrs old)
- Mwanda (Female, 15 years old) + daughter, Mvula ya Lola (Female, 5 years old)
- Masisi (Female, 11 years old) + daughter, Boyokani (Female, 5 months old)
- Api (Male, 18 years old)
- Mbandaka (Male, 16 years old)
- Yolo (Male, 15 years old)
- Kole (Male, 10 years old)



The initial group had 17 Bonobos in it. But Malaika ya Lola was kept at Lola ya Bonobo to recover from postpartum eclampsia, and two other bonobos (Nyotaya and Liyaka, 6½ and 8 year-old females) refused to enter their transport crates despite the team's all-night efforts. Sadly, they had to be left behind so as not to delay the operation. Things never happen quite as planned!



The bonobos will stay quarantined on Totaka Island, a 130-acre island on the Lopori River, located across from Ekolo ya Bonobo, close to our staff camp at Elonda. They will remain there pending their soft release into Ekolo ya Bonobo in late 2019, once the river waters have receded from the swampy forest.

A team of five ensures the bonobos' wellbeing, nutrition and security. Several floating feeding platforms were constructed for the quarantine period. From there, the bonobos receive food supplements twice a day, such as low-sugar fruit, and water three times a week.



A Baby Born on Totaka Island



Totaka ya Totaka (female) was born on August 15th, 2018. She is the daughter of Muanda (15 years old) and the sister of Mvulaya (5 years old).

She is the first bonobo born at Totaka Island!



Bonobo Protection

Protecting released and wild bonobos living in and around Ekolo ya Bonobo is of paramount importance, both to the species in general and to the success and stability of bonobo conservation initiatives throughout the region.

Your support makes all of this possible!

Your gifts provide eco-guards to monitor the forest. Members of our team conduct daily patrols to monitor the biodiversity of the forest and deter poachers. They also use camera traps throughout the forest to monitor the bonobos and learn more about the diversity of the Ekolo forest.



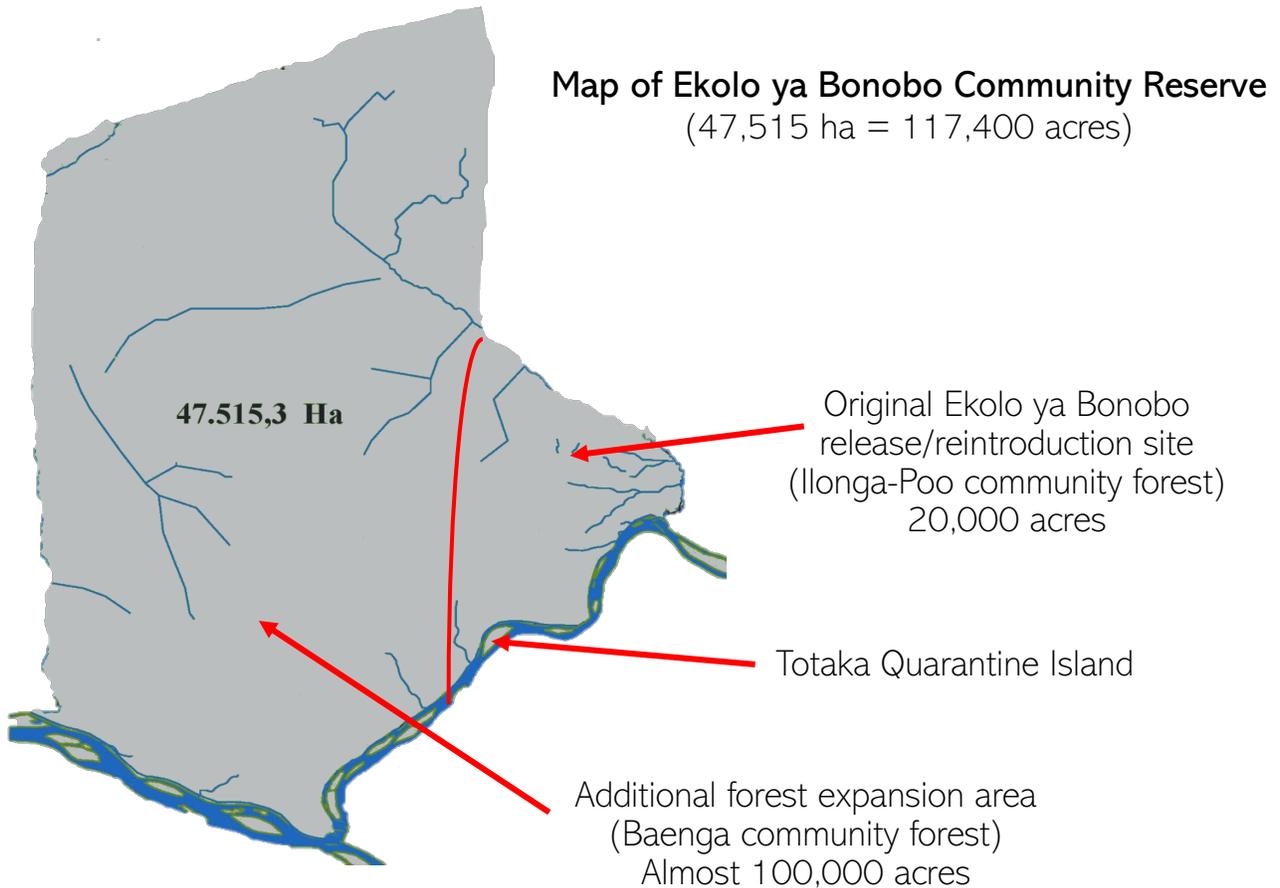
Eco-guards placing a camera trap.

One of the goals for long-term bonobo protection is the establishment of a Protected Area. **Your support made these necessary steps possible.** In 2018:

1. We held a series of participatory meetings with men, women and youth from the Ilonga-Poo and the Baenga people, two communities living around the original Ekolo ya Bonobo area and the proposed Protected Area expansion.
2. In July, the Baenga communities committed their forest to conservation.
3. In October and November, we held a series of stakeholder consultations with representatives of all communities and from district, provincial, and national-level authorities.
4. By the end of the year, we had secured the necessary community agreements to petition the provincial government for official Protected Area status under ABC management.

Ekolo ya Bonobo Community Reserve

Thanks to you, Ekolo ya Bonobo Community Reserve was officially decreed a **Protected Area** in April 2019 due to the work your gifts made possible in 2018 and previous years.



DR Congo on the World Map



Equateur Province in DR Congo



Conservation Education and Community Engagement

Another Strong Year

In 2018, your gifts provided education and awareness to over 15,000 visitors at Lola ya Bonobo, over half of which were children and youth.

Your gifts provided:

- Educational visits, talks, and programming to 122 school group visits, 5,882 children and 571 teachers.
- Support and programming to 39 active Kindness Clubs.
- Tours and educational programs to 8,515 spontaneous weekend visitors.





Many educational panels are displayed throughout the sanctuary for visitors and students.

Your gifts provided education and awareness to countless citizens throughout the DR Congo as well as systematic monitoring of bushmeat markets, including:

- Educational outreach activities to over 5,400 students & teachers in Kinshasa schools & universities.
- Educational outreach activities to over 40,000 people in villages near the release site at Ekolo ya Bonobo.
- 112 school visits with 12,135 students and 540 teachers participants.
- 50 film projections with pedal-powered cinema that showed bonobo conservation and awareness videos to about 18,500 people.
- Education for over 5,200 river travelers while observing the reintroduced bonobos.
- Sensitization for more than 3,000 adults and children during bonobo education sessions in their villages.
- 44 local radio shows serving countless listeners (in rural parts of DR Congo, radio is often the only form of entertainment available).
- Consistent monitoring of and within local bushmeat markets.



Community Development

Medical & Dental Care

In May 2018, we held our annual campaign for emergency dental care at Ekolo ya Bonobo led by Dr. Giuseppina (Pina) Ponziani, Dr. Adrian Dragone and Dr. Anais Rico, who were assisted by local nurses



Your gifts provided emergency dental care as well as 400 (100% biodegradable) bamboo toothbrushes to local children.

Improved Agriculture and Nutrition

Thanks to your support and with the help of Elise Gallay, we established demonstration fields to test out new species (giant beans, Mexican cucumbers, cabbage, and melon, to name a few) and showcase permaculture and composting techniques. Additionally, Jean-Pierre Isongu continues to deliver practical nutritional education sessions with women and men in villages surrounding Ekolo ya Bonobo.



Organizational Development

The ABC Team



General Director Fanny Minesi manages a team of almost 100% Congolese employees.

In 2018, Amis des Bonobos du Congo employed:

- 40 staff members at Lola ya Bonobo
- 21 staff at Ekolo ya Bonobo

You are a member of the bonobo team, and we would love to see you someday at **Lola ya Bonobo sanctuary!** For more information about visiting, please visit us at www.LolaYaBonobo.org.



Your support provided the bonobos with much-needed new team members. Jonas Mukamba is our new veterinary doctor. He replaced Paulin Mungongo, who left to complete a Masters program in Kenya. Niclette Bonyoka joined the other surrogate moms in the nursery.



Jonas Mukamba



Niclette Bonyoka

Huge thank you and shout out to all the volunteers and researchers who contributed their time and expertise to bonobo conservation through ABC's programs!

- Horticulturalist Elise Gallay provided on-site support and upkeep of plantations at Lola & at Ekolo ya Bonobo.
- Elisa Demuru conducted research on play in bonobos.
- Caroline Griffis assisted with Kipolo behavior and socialization.
- Diane Austry conducted research on conflict resolution.
- Raphaela Hanseen conducted research on collaboration in bonobos.

2018 Media Coverage Highlights

Bonobo Release

Please enjoy this superb video by Christopher Clark on the 2018 bonobo release:

[Back into the Wild: Ekolo ya bonobo.](#)

There is also an accompanying article in [Mongabay News.](#)



Research on Generosity

Research conducted on generosity at Lola ya Bonobo was published in 2018 and generated significant media attention. Here is one of the articles from [The New York Times.](#)

Ekolo ya Bonobo Community Reserve

The very informative and short [Ekolo Documentary](#) outlines the programs and people of Ekolo ya Bonobo, courtesy of Louise Bejot.



And a special **Thank You to Frans Lanting**, who visited Lola ya Bonobo Sanctuary in 2018 as part of a project for National Geographic, for many of the photos used throughout this report.

More Ways to Help?

Thank you for your generous donations to bonobos!

This report is intended to let you know how your support is saving and protecting bonobos for the long haul. But every year, we get *asked* – *are there other things I can do to help bonobos?* So with that in mind, we are letting you know of a few other ways you can help.

Invest in their future

- **Join the Fellowship**, a steadfast and passionate community of monthly givers on a mission to end the bonobo crisis in our lifetime. www.BonoboFellowship.org
- **Donate stock or IRA income. Consider putting a gift for bonobos in your will.** These are extremely tax efficient ways to support bonobos! For more, email ariel.rogers@lodayabonobo.org



Have fun like a bonobo for a bonobo!

[Be a bonobo champ!](#) Do something fun to raise money for bonobos, like hike the Appalachian trail, throw a bonobo party, or fundraise with your birthday.

Spread the word



Most people don't know what a bonobo is, You can help to change this by spreading the word about these peaceful primates. Tell your friends, tell your workmates. Easiest of all, follow us on social media and SHARE!



Come see us this Fall

We will be exhibiting at the Wildlife Conservation Expo in San Francisco on October 12. [Come see us!](#)

2018 Financial Highlights

2018 Income and Expenditure Statement (ABC)

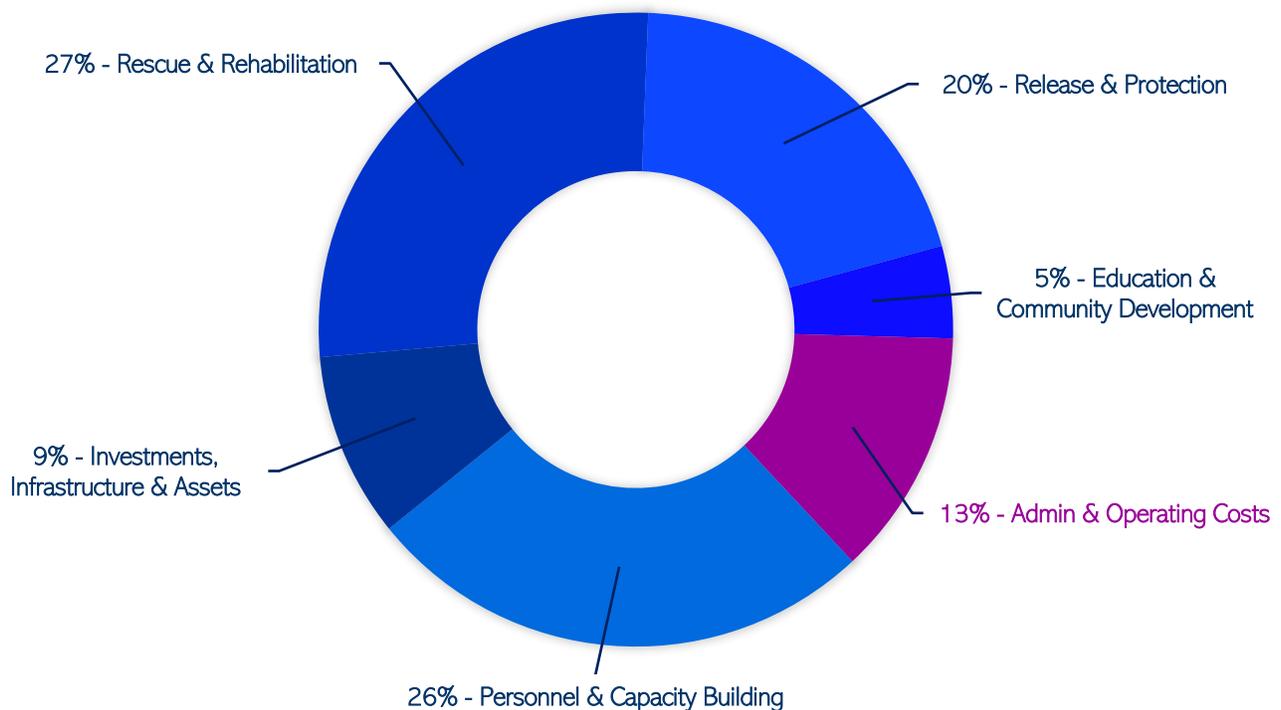
2018 Income

Income & Local Contributions	\$175,150
Grants & Contributions, incl Sister Associations	\$729,784
In-Kind Contributions	\$78,888
TOTAL	\$983,822

2018 Expenditures

Rescue, Care & Rehabilitation – Lola ya Bonobo	\$264,621
Release & Protection – Ekolo Ya Bonobo	\$197,137
Education & Community Development	\$46,120
Personnel Costs & Capacity Building	\$256,165
Administration & Operating Costs	\$123,436
Investments, Infrastructure & Assets	\$92,300
TOTAL	\$979,779

2018 Expenditures





YOU ARE SAVING BONOBOS!

In 2018, you rescued, provided safe haven, released and protected our peaceful cousins! Thank you for your commitment to bonobos.



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On behalf of Amis des Bonobos du Congo/Lola ya Bonobo

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