The Jane Goodall Institute (JGI)
Gombe Stream Research Centre (GSRC)

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ONE YEAR ON: GOMBE AFTER DR. JANE

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Message from program director

Dear readers,



As the rainy season approaches, all staff and researchers at Gombe are encouraged to remain prepared and vigilant. **Weather forecasts from the Government and relevant authorities indicate the possibility of heavy El Niño-related rainfall.** Early preparations are therefore essential to minimise potential risks to research activities, infrastructure, staff safety, and the surrounding forest and lake environments. Particular attention should be given to fieldwork, forest patrols, lake activities, transportation, and the protection of research equipment to ensure continuity of operations and the safety of everyone at Gombe

Gombe is currently experiencing an influenza outbreak affecting chimpanzees, requiring increased vigilance and responsibility from all staff and researchers. Protecting the health and well-being of chimpanzees remains a priority while ensuring that essential research and data collection continue safely. **All researchers and field teams are reminded to follow established health and safety protocols, maintain appropriate distances, minimise unnecessary contact, and promptly report any unusual symptoms or changes in chimpanzee behaviour.**

Everyone is encouraged to remain alert, work closely with their respective teams, and prioritise preventive measures. Through collective responsibility, careful planning, and commitment to established protocols, we can protect chimpanzees, staff, and the wider Gombe ecosystem while continuing our important research and conservation work.

Dr. Deus Mjungu,

Director, GSRC



Respiratory Illness Reported Among Gombe Chimpanzees

A second outbreak this year

A new outbreak of respiratory illness was reported among chimpanzees in Gombe on 29 October, marking the second such outbreak recorded this year.

The first outbreak occurred in June, during the seasonal transition from the wet season to the dry season. This outbreak has came as the park transitions from the dry season into the rainy season, although not scientifically confirmed, influenza outbreaks at Gombe have often been observed during seasonal transitions, making extra vigilance essential.

Chimpanzees under observation

The illness has affected some chimpanzees, with **Tanga (TG), Nyota (NYO), Ipo (IPO), and Maybe (MAY)** among those reported to be in particularly poor condition.

Respiratory illnesses remain an important health concern for Gombe's chimpanzees, highlighting the need for continued observation and monitoring of their health.

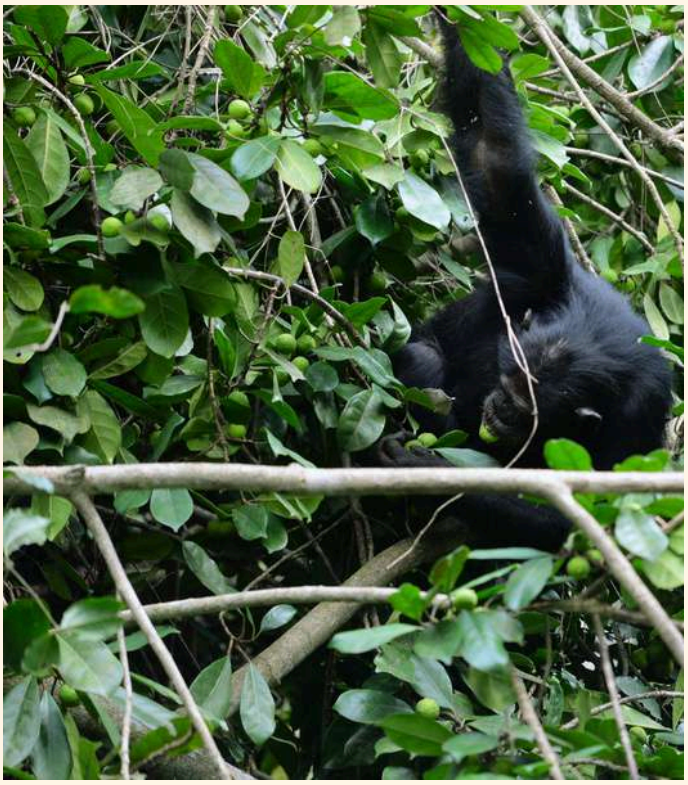
As the outbreak unfolds, the research team continues to follow the affected individuals and monitor developments within the community.

Community affected

It's only Kasekela community that affected at this time, it's good news that Mitumba community is safe so far.



Rains Return to Gombe, Bringing New Growth and Seasonal Food Resources







The arrival of the October rains has begun transforming the landscape of Gombe National Park, bringing fresh vegetation, replenishing water sources, and signalling the return of seasonal food resources for chimpanzees.

As the forest becomes greener, new food sources are becoming increasingly available. Chimpanzees are beginning to move towards areas such as Mkeke, Hilltop, and Busambo, where vegetation and seasonal foods are becoming more abundant.

This represents a shift from the dry-season months, when chimpanzees spent more time in the southern parts of their range like Gwavi, Kalande and Nyesanga, feeding on available wild fruits and other resources, including mbura (wild coconut).

Seasonal foods reappear

Seasonal fruits such as “mabungo” and “migege” are also beginning to appear, alongside “mgwiza”, providing additional food opportunities for chimps.

Water sources are replenished

The returning rains are also restoring water sources across the park. Rivers and streams that had dried up during the dry season are beginning to flow again, with water levels rising in places such as Kakombe and Kahama.

These seasonal changes are an important part of the forest's natural cycle, influencing chimpanzee ranging patterns, feeding behaviour, and access to essential resources.

New Birth and Pregnant Reported to the Mitumba Chimpanzee Community

Keaton (KEA) welcomes her second infant

October brought encouraging developments for the Mitumba chimpanzee community, with two females reported to be pregnant or caring for newborn infants, offering new hope for the community's future.

On 9 October, Keaton (KEA) was observed with a new infant, marking an important milestone for the female chimpanzee. This is her second known offspring. Unfortunately, her first infant was killed by Samwise, making the arrival of her second baby a particularly significant development.

Keaton is an immigrant to the Mitumba community and does not have close family members within the community. Her continued integration and the survival of her new infant will be important developments to follow.



Gossamer's second pregnancy

Another notable development involves Gossamer (GOS), who is pregnant again. Her previous pregnancy ended in miscarriage, making this second pregnancy an encouraging development. Gossamer previously moved from the Kasekela community to Mitumba, where she conceived.

The research team will continue monitoring both females as their stories unfold, following the progress of their pregnancies, maternal care, and the development of the infants.



Tanga's Birth and the Loss of Her Infant

A premature birth

October also brought a difficult development involving Tanga (TG), one of the females in the Kasekela chimpanzee community.

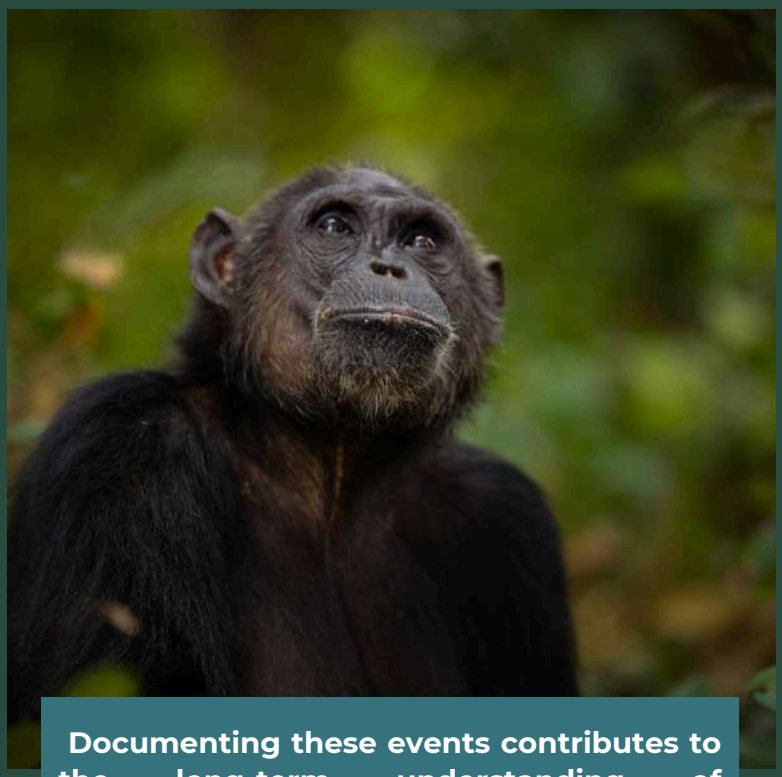
Tanga gave birth on 30 September, but her infant appeared to have been born prematurely. During observations, the newborn was noted to have very little hair, suggesting that it may not have reached full development before birth. Its estimated gestational age was approximately six months.

A difficult outcome

Sadly, on 1 October, Tanga was observed consuming her own infant.

Such observations are part of the complex and sometimes difficult realities of wild chimpanzee life.





Documenting these events contributes to the long-term understanding of chimpanzee reproductive outcomes, maternal behaviour, and infant survival.

The research team continues to monitor Tanga and other members of the community.

CAR Project Completes One Year of Strengthening Communities and Forest Conservation in Western Tanzania

The Jane Goodall Institute Tanzania (JGI-TZ), with support from IRISH AID through the Embassy of Ireland Tanzania, implemented the Climate Adaptation and Resilience in Western Tanzania (CAR) project from December 2025 to October 2026. The project worked with communities mostly around Masito and Tongwe West Local Authority Forest Reserves to strengthen livelihoods, improve climate resilience, secure land rights, and promote community-led forest conservation.

These efforts improved food security and household incomes, reduced pressure on forests, strengthened climate resilience, and promoted gender equality and inclusive participation in conservation and community development.

Supporting women and sustainable livelihoods

Through 46 strengthened Community Conservation Banks (COCOBA) groups across 11 villages, more than 1,190 members, 82% of whom are women, increased their collective savings to over TZS 150 million. COCOBA members also accessed TZS 34 million in loans from CRDB and Uvinza District Council loan Scheme invest in small businesses and income-generating activities.



Strengthening Natural Resource Management

The newly appointed Uvinza District Commissioner, Mr. Mtela Allan Mwampamba, visited the Jane Goodall Institute (JGI) in Kigoma, where he chaired a meeting with the District Security Committee, District Executive Director and technical staff, alongside the JGI team.





The meeting focused on community led conservation, development initiatives, key challenges on natural resources management and Land Use implementation, and opportunities to strengthen collaboration between JGI and district authorities for sustainable resource management.

Improving farming and securing land rights



A total of 177 farmers, including 112 women, received training in climate-smart agriculture, while 34 demonstration plots reached over 990 community members.

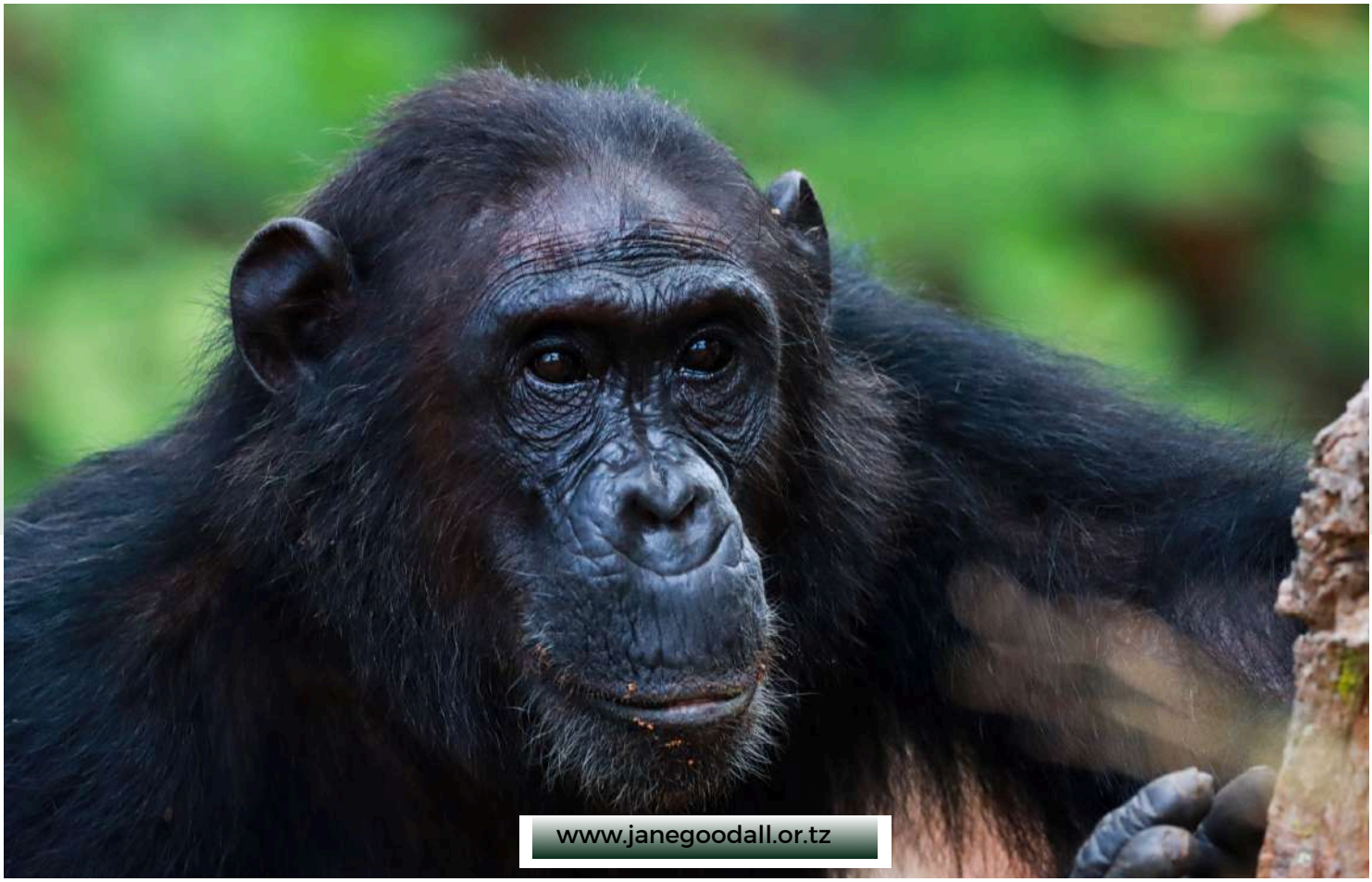
Additionally, 1,132 land parcels were adjudicated and 1,208 landowners, including 592 women, were registered through the issuance of Certificates of Customary Right of Occupancy (CCROs), strengthening land security and promoting sustainable land management.

The CAR Project trained 2 District Natural Resource Teams and 25 Village Natural Resource Committees (292 members), developed 25 climate adaptation plans, supported 6 forest patrols, and reached 1,473 people across 30 villages through gender equality and GBV prevention dialogues, with women representing 57% of participants.



Sustainability

The project leaves a strong foundation for continued impact through empowered communities, strengthened local institutions, village-led REDD+ initiatives, continued CCRO issuance through cost-recovery mechanisms, and lasting partnerships with agricultural input suppliers and financial institutions, enabling communities and local governments to sustain and scale up conservation, secure land rights, and livelihood initiatives beyond the project period.



Photos by Stephano Lihedule

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