INTRODUCTION

Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation is an organisation in the Mashonaland East District of Zimbabwe dedicated to the conservation and welfare of wild animals, with a specific focus on the protection and breeding of the critically endangered Black and White Rhinoceros.

Imire is committed to protecting wildlife and strongly believe that rural communities and conservation programs can live side by side, working together to ensure the protection of our natural heritage. Imire has been closely involved with the Wedza community since the conservancy was founded. Imire believe that sustainable conservation cannot exist without community support. As a result, Imire has been a long-time employer of local community members, a strong supporter of local primary and secondary education, and an active participant in grassroots development projects.

Rhino and wildlife conservation efforts can be strengthened by empowering the local community through livelihood opportunities in low impact and sustainable development focusing on wildlife and the environment.

This report details important community projects that Imire has initiated, supported and contributed to in 2016, as well as projects we have historically been involved with on an on-going basis.

Each project provides either education, medical or livelihood opportunities to the community that have been funded, sourced and supported by Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation. Imire is proud to have a positive and mutually beneficial relationship with our community. Imire remains 100% committed to ensuring that the community that surrounds us is as prosperous, successful and supported as possible.
2016 saw the construction of the Imire Community Education Centre located at the Imire Anti-Poaching Headquarters. The Centre is an educational space fitted with 10 state of the art computers each linked to a local server and network, wi-fi internet access, a library and a complete solar powered lighting and electricity system.

The Imire Community Education Centre was opened in memory of an Imire employee who passed away in the line of duty, Tafadzwa Gosho, and was officially opened in November 2016. The Centre offers the employees, spouses and children of Imire, as well as the greater community surrounding Imire easy access to up to date computer and communication technology, including internet and email access as well as the opportunity to learn vital computer skills - imperative in the information age in which we live.

Members of the library will in the long term have access to a wide range of up to date books, magazines and newspapers which are donated on an ongoing basis by Imire volunteers, visitors and well-wishers. As well as this, visitors and beneficiaries of the centre will have access to workshops and courses run out of the Centre, which will include International Computers Driver’s License (ICDL) courses and other important skill developing opportunities, especially for women.

We intend to arrange workshops where volunteers will be able to assist the women of our community with learning new abilities such as embroidery, crochet and other income generating opportunities. The children of the community will benefit from the Centre as it serves as space for them to do homework and study at night, as the centre is fitted with a complete solar system, and thus can offer adequate lighting and electricity 24 hours a day.

Imire also intends to partner willing overseas volunteers with the centre in order to assist older members of the community with getting up to date with computer internet and email skills as well as assist with supplementary reading practice, using the Imire Sponsored and Ministry approved “Happy Readers” literacy programme, for the younger children of the community.
In 2015 Anne Rakel Almaas, a Norwegian Masters student from the School of Architecture, visited Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation as an international volunteer. Anne was taken on a community tour and visit to Chizungu Primary School where she saw the Early Childhood Development children at Chizungu having lessons in an abandoned, cramped garage. Anne took it upon herself to not only design and build a fantastic new ECD classroom but also to source the funding of building materials to the value of US$30 000.

The classroom block is a state of the art, architect designed building, designed to fit in ideally with the African weather and environment and provide maximum light and a cool temperature for learners.

The classroom consists of 2 large indoor classrooms, one large outdoor classroom, 2 lockable and secure inside teachers rooms and storerooms and a wraparound veranda area and is built with full Ministry and Council Engineer approval.
EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT: SCHOOL OR INSTITUTION

Imire firmly recognizes and believes in the importance of Rural Community Development and conservation education. With this ethos in mind, we support the following schools:

**Numwa Primary & Secondary School:**

- Imire and Kurima farm worker’s children, a total of 90 children, benefit from free primary and secondary education paid for by Imire.
- Numwa Primary is a constant beneficiary of various donations of stationery and other school equipment, from volunteers and guests to Sable Lodge, that take place on a weekly basis including tubs of poster paint, watercolour paints & Paint Brushes, Assorted glitter tubes, 10 supplementary text books, 4 tennis racquets and 40 tennis balls, $374.00 contributed to the Primary school feeding programme, 14 pairs of socks, 17 pairs of trousers, 500 Pencils, Soccer balls x 5, Pencil sharpeners 10 & erasers assorted x 10, Bicycle pump x 2, 3 calculators, Coloured pencils x 20 packs, Crayons x 18 packs, 300 ball point pens, Colouring book x 4, Assorted educational stickers, 40 alphabet posters, Ruled paper x 160, 80 page notebooks x 15, Assorted envelopes, Handballs x 4 packs, Glue x 2, Frisbees x 9, Sponge balls x 10, Drawing paper x 1 kg.
- An extra-large Cooking Pot was donated to assist the Numwa Primary School feeding programme.
- Imire facilitated the fund raising and donation of $1000.00 worth of new school uniforms for children who could not afford uniforms. The funds were donated to The Mother’s Support Group, who sewed the uniforms themselves and used their own small profit to help further fund their feeding programme at the school.
- Loan and supply equipment for Numwa school speech days such as tents, poles, water carts and free transportation.
- Donations of bread and food for Numwa school speech days.
- Donation of poles for construction at Numwa school.
- Numwa Primary have been donated the Ministry Approved “Happy Readers” literacy programme by Imire including 28 sets of Happy Reader Level 1 Books, each with a set of 9 books. (252 books total), 16 My ABC English Shona Ndebele Dictionaries (16 books total) and 1 Grade 1 Classroom set (2 x teacher’s handbooks/44 colour posters/word and sentence cards). Imire’s involvement in this literacy programme continues weekly with Imire volunteers attending reading practice lessons weekly, helping to monitor student’s literacy and reading progress using the literacy programme.
- Numwa Primary and Secondary are mowed monthly for free with assistance from Imire and Kurima Farms.
On the 12th October 2016 Imire donated school stationary to the ECD Centre Gandamasungo Primary School Hwedza.

Imire Black Rhino and Wildlife Conservation, together with Opportunities for Life, built toilet blocks for the Primary School, as their toilet block had completely collapsed and had left the school without adequate sanitation. Imire worked alongside the Gandamasungo community who assisted by helping to provide bricks, river and pit sand.

**Gandamasungo School:**

In August 2016, Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation assisted Zana Primary School in agricultural advice and assistance in fencing and vegetable seedlings. The school has since been selected as a Centre for Conservation Agriculture.

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The following Schools from the Wedza community have visited Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation on educational tours free of charge.

1. St Mary’s School (visit 1) - 80 children.
2. St Mary’s School (visit 2)- 75 children.
3. St Mary’s School (visit 3)- 110 children.
5. Wedza ECD - 60 children.
7. St. Leonas Maringa Mbire Primary -40 children.
9. St Margaret’s Primary School- 86 children.

Schools that stayed at Imire Bush camp free of charge with game drive and nature walks included:

1. Methodist Church of Zimbabwe
2. Chemhanza Secondary Prefects Camp
Nigel Kangai: Nigel is a young student attending Fels whose school fees have been generously donated by a Imire volunteer. Conservation is about so much more than just protecting and safe guarding our animals, it is about protecting our environment, our heritage and each other.

Simbarashe Mbofana: Simbarashe Mbofana, an extremely gifted scholar and sportsman, initially studying at Numwa Secondary School, has been the ongoing beneficiary of school fees donations, enabling him to complete his secondary school studies. Simbarashe comes from a very disadvantaged background and would not have afforded to finish his education. With Imires financial assistance Simba has just completed A Level and is awaiting his results in order to proceed onto University where he hopes to study actuarial science, which will also be funded by Imire donors.

Faith Shaibu: Faith Shaibu has been assisted with $800.00 worth of school fees which has enabled her to undertake training in hospitality at the UMAA.

Tanyaradzwa Chikomo: Imire assisted Tanyaradzwa Chikomo $384.00 in order for her to proceed with training and education in the Information Technology field at Speciss College Harare.

Polite Pamhenza: Imire has assisted Polite for 5 years running with $550.00 worth of tertiary education fees annually to attend the Belvedere Teachers College.

Ruth Mupini: O’Level exam fees sponsored by Imire

Romeo Mudhombo: O’Level exam fees and Numwa Secondary School Fees sponsored by Imire

Perpetua Zowa: O’Level exam fees sponsored by Imire

Shylet Mbambaya: O’Level exam fees sponsored by Imire

Amson Machinga: O’Level exam fees and Numwa Secondary School Fees sponsored by Imire

Peter Madziva: Numwa Secondary School Fees sponsored by Imire

Felix Sithole: Numwa Secondary School Fees sponsored by Imire

Adonia Manyame: Numwa Secondary School Fees sponsored by Imire

Tawanda Masikwa: Numwa Primary School Fees sponsored by Imire
Chizungu Primary:

On the 16th December 2016, an Australian organisation, Opportunities for Life, in conjunction with Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation, arranged and funded the installation of a community borehole at Chizungu Primary School. The water supply was cited by Tornado Drilling and drilled to 65 metres thus producing between 4000 and 6000 litres per hour. A brand new manual bush pump, water trough and wash stand have also been provided for the community. This donation was to the value of $5000.00. The Chizungu community have been battling without a safe and reliable water source for some years now so this donation comes as a true godsend.
Prior to January 2016, community members at Matsine primary were collecting water from a large open & extremely unhygienic well. Opportunities for Life, in partnership with Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation, arranged and funded the installation of a brand-new manual bush pump, along with a water trough for cattle and a wash stand for the community, now servicing well over 750 children and the wider community with fresh clean water.

**Gandamasungo Primary School:**
In October 2016 Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation sourced donor funding to deepen an existing well to 22 metres and attach a bush pump, providing Gandamasungo with much needed water supply and alleviating a severe water shortage at the school and within the surrounding community. Prior to this donation teachers from Gandamasungo were completing a four kilometre round trip for water collection. As well as this Imire also provided the school with fencing, fence dropers, vegetable seeds and 20 bags of compost to initiate a vegetable garden alongside the well. This project is now self-sustaining providing the school with water and food.

**Matsine Primary School**
Prior to January 2016, community members at Matsine primary were collecting water from a large open & extremely unhygienic well. Opportunities for Life, in partnership with Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation, arranged and funded the installation of a brand-new manual bush pump, along with a water trough for cattle and a wash stand for the community, now servicing well over 750 children and the wider community with fresh clean water.

**Chamatendere Primary School:**
Chamatendere, at the base of Hwedza Mountain has been without a water source since 2012, collecting water from a nearby stream. The school has well over 400 children plus teachers living on the school premises. In January 2016, Opportunities for Life, in conjunction with Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation, arranged and funded the installation of a new bush pump, along with a water trough for cattle and a wash stand for the community.

**Fels Primary School:**
Fels Primary has been donated an electric mono pump, together with 40 metres of electrical cable to the value of $1,650.00 to assist the school and community with fresh water supplies.
The Mother’s Support Group of Numwa Secondary School have been assisted by Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation and the Zimbabwe Gecko Society in their 2016 endeavours. The Mother’s Support Group is an independent group of local mothers have collaborated to raise funds to assist in supporting underprivileged local children. They support these children by way of a supplementary feeding programme and educational assistance where needed.

The Zimbabwe Gecko Society is a non-profit organization based in South Surrey, British Columbia, Canada. The Society was founded in 2008 by Susan and Frank Janetti and began its ongoing partnership with Judy Travers and Imire in 2015. The Zimbabwe Gecko Society donated clothing collected from church groups in Vancouver, Toronto, to Imire and the Mother’s Support Group. Volunteers at Imire then purchase clothing from the Numwa School Support Women’s Group and then donate the clothing they have purchased to villages alongside the Imire boundary including (but not limited to) Corby, Idube, Sheffield and Inora. This project is ongoing and supports not only the beneficiaries of the clothing but also the Mother’s Support Group, who use this vital income for a feeding programme which they run from Numwa School.

Community Christmas Gifts:

Imire Sable Lodge clients donated 8 Christmas boxes filled with food, gifts and clothing for local children over the 2016 Christmas season.

Fire Fighting Support:

Firefighting within the surrounding community, including Inora, Bristol and Markwe areas with farm equipment i.e. fire engines, tractors and manpower.

Problem Animal Control:

Imire assisted local communities on three separate occasions with problem animal control, removing hyenas who were wreaking havoc on local livestock populations in Inora, Markwe and Numwa.
Wire and Fencing Donations:

Community residing on the Imire Conservancy Boundary fence were donated fencing wire and poles: (16 strands x 15 kms) amounting to a total 240 km of fencing wire.

The entire fencing contract for the Chiwawe Section of the conservancy was awarded to a local fencing team.

Supporting Local Produce Suppliers:

Imire’s Sable Lodge purchases $15.00 worth of Covo and Rape per week, $10.00 of locally grown tomatoes every week of the year, as well as locally grown butternut, carrots, onions, watermelon when available.

Sable lodge has also employed a local vegetable supplier to grow fresh produce on a regular basis (including: aubergine, marrow, carrots, green beans, tomatoes, parsley, basil)

Community Beekeeping Project:

In 2014 Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation hosted and paid for 120 members of the local community to attend a Beekeeping Workshop. Since this time attendees of this workshop have formed their own Co-Operative, the “Rhino Busy Beekeepers Association”. The association was formed on the 29th of May 2016 and has 11 active members who all financially benefit from this income generating scheme. The association endeavours to preserve the natural state of the environment though the preservation of trees, to promote co-operation and help each other in problem solving and maintain competency and professional conduct amongst members while creating employment. The association has manufactured 110 hives in 2016 and hung 42 in at Imire. The association has also benefitted from beekeeping advice and literature provided by Imire.

Supporting Local Brick Suppliers:

Imire and Kurima farms have bought 250 000 bricks from surrounding community brick suppliers which amounts to approximately $7500

Imire’s Sable Lodge have purchased 55 000 bricks from surrounding community brick suppliers in 2016 amounting to approximately $1650.00.

The Conservancy has purchased 40 000 bricks from surrounding community brick suppliers in 2016 amounting to approximately $1200.00
Farming and Agricultural Assistance:

Imire and Kurima farms facilitate assistance visits and loans of farming equipment to surrounding farmers. This includes:

- The supply to the community of loaned irrigation pipes to plant crops
- The use of the Imire farm workshop for community maintenance and repair needs
- The supplying of community with low cost tobacco seedlings
- The supply of poles for Markwe dip rehabilitation.

Donations for Community Gatherings:

- Donations of $500.00 cash for 2016 Zanu PF conference.
- Assisting local community with game meat for important meetings and political events including:

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Markwe Caves:

Imire refer well over 100 clients a year to visit the Markwe Caves. Fees are paid to the community for the privilege of visiting this natural heritage site as well as for an informative cultural and historical talk offered once at the caves. This is an income generating project for the community of the Markwe area.
From the 13th to the 16th September 2016 Veterinarians for Animal Welfare Zimbabwe (VAWZ) in partnership with Imire completed a successful canine spaying and neutering campaign. 53 animals were sterilized, having been brought in from villages including Sheffield, Bath, Corby, Leeds, Bristol, Fels, Numwa and Matabwa. The dogs were either spayed or neutered by highly qualified veterinarians completely free of charge, as well as checked over for general health purposes. This campaign is of vital importance to communities not only reducing numbers of rabies infections from stray dogs that are produced by bitches having too many litters but also by reducing the amount of food needed to feed dogs in disadvantaged households and ensuring that existing dogs within homesteads are in a healthy condition and not transferring disease.

VAWZ Rabies Vaccination Campaign

During this same period VAWZ and Imire, represented and greatly assisted by Mrs Judy Travers, and the Imire Volunteer Programme team vaccinated 454 local dogs against rabies. This programme is far reaching, having substantially reduced cases of human and canine rabies infection in the area.
CLEOPAS MUSHONGWE

Our conservation and anti-poaching efforts at Imire are supported by our wonderful community and thus we make it our top priority give back wherever and whenever possible. Cleopas Mushangwe is only 5 years old, but has already spent much of his short life in hospital with a Wilms' tumour, a rare kidney cancer that primarily affects children. Cleopas has had several rounds of chemotherapy and two operations. Imire has raised well over $1000.00 to assist Cleopas and his family with the high costs of treating a young child with cancer. His treatment is ongoing.

JACOB GONDO (SHEFFIELD VILLAGE)

Imire have continued to assist the Gondo family in 2016 with the ongoing monthly upkeep of Jacob Gondo, a young man with Cerebral Palsy related disabilities since birth, including provision and upkeep of his wheelchair and other disability related tools, sanitary wear, medical supplies, personal toiletries and e’Pap porridge and food supplements to assist with his health.

SPECTACLE DONATION

Over the course of 2016 Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation have donated over 100 pairs of magnified reading glasses to those who are suffering from poor vision. Spectacles and reading glasses feature on the “Imire Wishlist” – a suggested list of items required by needy community members and sent to international volunteers and guests to Imire. The reading glasses are brought out by visitors in quantity on an ongoing basis. This has enabled many members of community the gift of sight.
Prior to January 2016, community members at Matsine primary were collecting water from a large open & extremely unhygienic well. Opportunities for Life, in partnership with Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation, arranged and funded the installation of a brand-new manual bush pump, along with a water trough for cattle and a wash stand for the community, now servicing well over 750 children and the wider community with fresh clean water.

WHEELCHAIR: MR GOTO

On the 28th March 2016, Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation Donated a wheel chair to Mr Goto, a courageous man without the use of his legs. The family had been unable to afford the expense of a wheelchair and thus Mr Goto had simply pulled himself over rough terrain, or was transported in a wheel barrow. Mr Goto was living under extremely harsh conditions, without any provision for his disability and the he gift of a wheelchair has uplifted not only his life but the life of his family and carers as well.

MOUNT ST. MARY’S

On the 28th January 2016, Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation was extremely grateful and proud to partner with Canadian based Zimbabwe Gecko Society on their donation operation at Mount St Mary’s in Hwedza. The Zimbabwe Gecko Society is a non-profit organization based in South Surrey, British Columbia, Canada. The Society was founded in 2008 by Susan and Frank Janetti and began its partnership with Judy Travers and Imire in 2015. Mount Saint Mary’s, a Mission Hospital gratefully received 10 tonnes of hospital equipment donated by a hospital in Vancouver, Canada, all facilitated by the Zimbabwe Gecko Society. This was a day of great celebrations for not only the hospital doctors and nurses, but also for the people of Hwedza, as vital pieces of equipment were offloaded by the box full. The Mount Saint Mary’s delivery included hospital beds, linen, surgery equipment, maternity packs, delivery beds, nurse and doctor’s uniforms, books and toys for the children’s ward and curtaining material to brighten up the wards.
Pretty Madaya

Pretty Madaya is a local member of the community who was suffering terribly from a goitre growth on her thyroid and an overactive thyroid problem. Imire volunteers raised funding in order to diagnose, medicate and treat Pretty’s condition and paid for all her treatment to take place at Karanda Mission Hospital to the value of $2250.00. Imire facilitated Pretty’s payments and the logistics of her transportation and treatment at Karanda Mission Hospital. The operation has been completed and was a huge success, Pretty is completely healed – a life changing gift for both her and her family.

ESNUT GOITRE SURGERY

Imire volunteer Zoe Cawthorn has raised over USD $2000.00 to assist Esnut who has severe thyroid goitres, and an enlargement of the thyroid gland. This is a treatable condition which she urgently needs surgery for, which has been funded by Imire Supporters and the payment of which will be facilitated by the Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation Trust.

IDUBE CLINIC

21st March 2016 Zimbabwe Gecko Susan and Frank Janetti, donated medical equipment to Idube Clinic. Idube Clinic serves most of the community around Imire and is run by a very committed man Mr Musekiwa, a district nurse. In yet another tremendous act of generosity Zimbabwe Gecko Society have supplied much needed equipment to assist this rural clinic including crutches, syringes, nurse’s uniforms and 3 hospital beds for the maternity unit. The Zimbabwe Gecko Society also supplied a roll of material, which was made into curtains by the Women’s Support making the entire clinic look fresh and welcoming. Thank you to the Zimbabwe Gecko Society once again for your wonderful and thoughtful donations to the community of Hwedza

Imire farm in addition assists Idube Clinic with mowing their grounds monthly.

Imire donated a blood pressure monitor to the clinic. This piece of equipment was desperately needed not only for ailing patients but also for the maternity unit. Prior to this the clinic was not in possession of a machine at all and it has thus been most gratefully received.

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