

Lolesha Luangwa's education centre is fully open for business

It's been a labour of love, and taken longer than we wanted, but the doors are finally open for the Lolesha Luangwa education centre. The construction and fit out has been a multi-donor project over many years and it's still evolving, but everything we had down on paper is now a reality.

Claire Lewis | Technical Advisor, North Luangwa Conservation Project

We've wanted to bring school children into North Luangwa National Park (NLNP) for many years, but had neither the vehicle nor facilities to transport or house the trips. So the fundraising began and, thanks to USFWS, in 2013 we bought an ex-overland safari truck, to which we added seatbelts and a PA system so we could safely deliver the children into the Park, down the Muchinga escarpment.

The visits began in the dry season 2014, but it soon became apparent the facilities we had were inadequate for the scale of the trips. Each visit brings in two teachers and 20 school children, a Department of National Parks and Wildlife officer, and a cook, each needing a bed, feeding and bathroom facilities. The tired old rondavel chalets we had were cramped and dark, and the two wood-fired showers struggled to cope with the volume of showering at the end of hot and dusty days.

So we began another round of fundraising to upgrade services – a new borehole and water tank, a 200-litre solar geyser and a huge solar panel set up with deep-cycle battery bank for lighting and plug points. We designed a new layout for a purpose-built Lolesha Luangwa education centre incorporating two dormitories (girls and boys) with five bunk beds in each, complete with mattresses, mosquito nets, and animal-print bed linen. New showers and toilets were built, as were individual rooms for the teachers, DNPW officer and cook. While we were at it, we included a new room for the Lolesha Luangwa officers, Sylvester and Michael, a store with shelving and solar powered deep freezer, a dining area, a kitchen prep area and an outdoor (traditional) kitchen nsaka with fuel-efficient stoves. Phew!

But although the best teaching resource is surely the Park itself, we needed to create a space for more formal sessions within the choreography of the visits. We had a building that had been used variously as a teaching space, temporary accommodation, store room, anything really, but the bottom line was that it was big enough to house an office, store and classroom for the LL visits. It needed some TLC and refitting – new roof and insulation, replastering, removal and redesigning

of windows, and smashing out some old cupboarding – but once all that was done we were ready for some creative input.

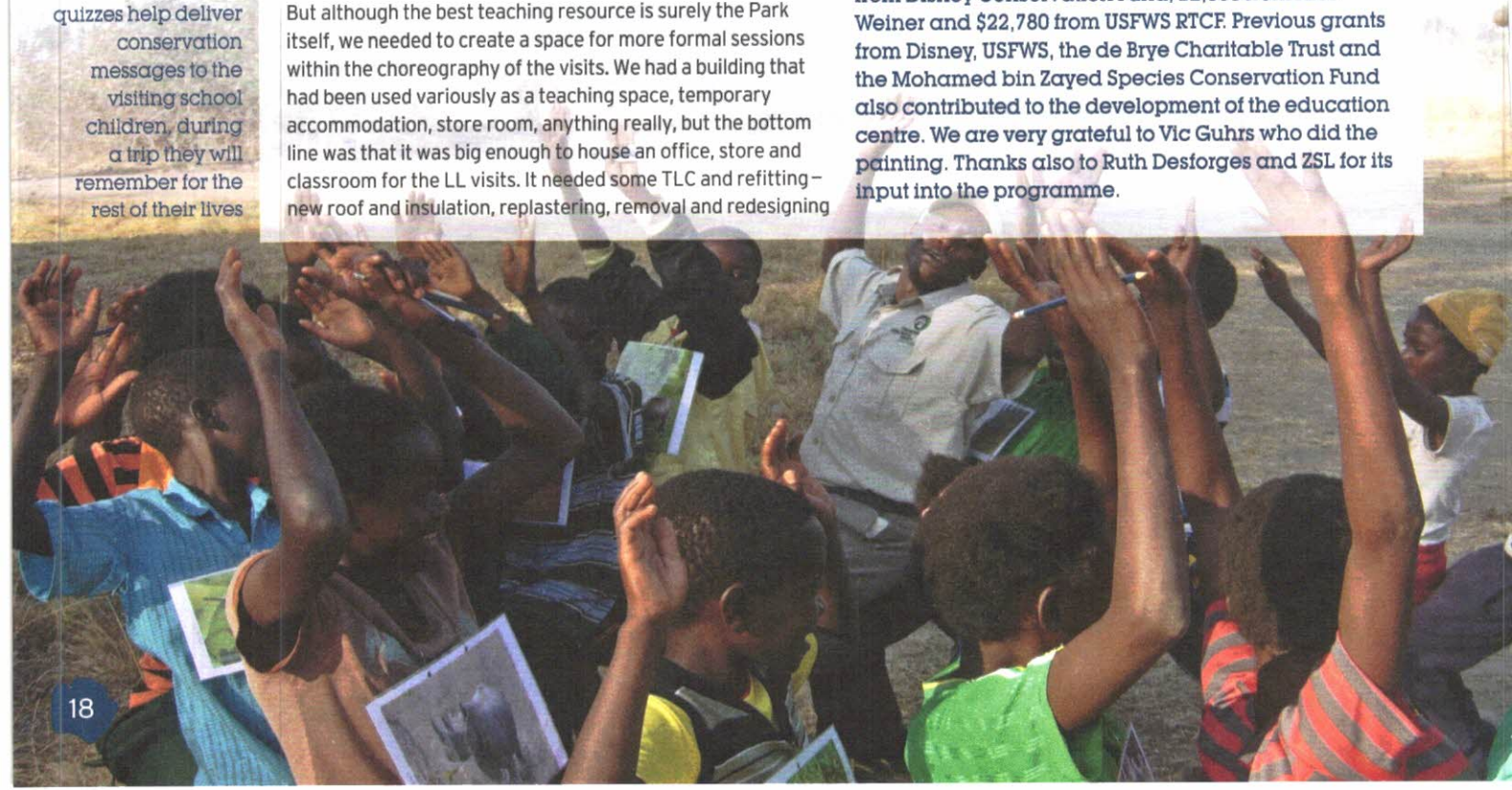
Vic Guhrs, a friend and long-time Luangwa Valley resident, kindly offered his services to paint the classroom. Vic is a renowned wildlife artist and we are very lucky he's doing this for us. His style and intimate knowledge of the wildlife and landscape of North Luangwa means he is able to capture the light and colours so well that the views through the windows perfectly match the painted walls. The room has been designed to flow from the doorway (village) through rivers and waterways on the left-hand wall with people fishing and washing, to forests and the escarpment on the right showing firewood collection and caterpillar harvesting, to the National Park full of animals on the opposite wall. Elements of the Lolesha Luangwa curriculum have been included in the paintings to aid Sylvester's teaching and provoke discussion from the school children.

As this edition of *The Horn* goes to press, we are about to receive Ruth Desforges, from the Zoological Society of London, who mentors and supports the monitoring and evaluation of Lolesha Luangwa, to go through the room, the resources and the school trips to refine, refocus and refresh the formal sessions to better use the room and give us some more ideas on an interactive teaching and learning space.

Thanks and grants

Since November 2015, we have sent £3,664 raised by three Artillery staff members who ran the London Marathon in 2015, €738 from rhino's energy, \$20,000 from Disney Conservation Fund, £2,000 from Ales Weiner and \$22,780 from USFWS RTCF. Previous grants from Disney, USFWS, the de Brie Charitable Trust and the Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund also contributed to the development of the education centre. We are very grateful to Vic Guhrs who did the painting. Thanks also to Ruth Desforges and ZSL for its input into the programme.

Main: Games and quizzes help deliver conservation messages to the visiting school children, during a trip they will remember for the rest of their lives





We are thrilled that **Sylvester Kampamba** (above), Lolesha Luangwa's Education Officer, came third in the Rhino Conservation Awards' category for "Best Education, Awareness and Fundraising." Sylvester was also chosen as one of the 2016 Disney Conservation Heroes, winning \$1,500.

Congratulations to Sylvester, and not forgetting **Michael Eliko**, Lolesha Luangwa Schools Officer, and **Claire Lewis**, who together make the programme such a success.

Santa's sleigh

Faster with rhinos than reindeer

By purchasing a Little Ndaba rhino toy you're helping to support both rhino conservation and women's entrepreneurship in Zambia.

Grace Dibden | Former Michael Hearn Intern

Little Ndaba produces a huge range of toys for children, all designed and hand-crafted by its members using 100% organic cotton. A growing number of women's groups in rural villages are joining the scheme, benefitting from extra income and flexible work. As well as bringing financial empowerment, learning new skills is building their confidence (below).

Little Ndaba's knitted and crochet rhino toys joined the Save the Rhino family in late 2015 and have been flying off the shelves ever since! These special little rhinos are each named after individual rhinos monitored in the North Luangwa National Park in Zambia and come with their own unique history.

Show support for Save the Rhino and the Zambian women's group by purchasing these adorable rhino toys from our online shop.



Kango



Kango, meaning 'chief', was born in South Africa. Since moving to the Park, Kango has never become a dominant male and suffers at the horns of his rivals. Luckily, protection from the rangers means that he is able to lead a less stressful life with additional support and food provided to him.

Intanda



Intanda, meaning 'star', was born in 2005 in South Africa and travelled to North Luangwa as part of an exciting operation to introduce black rhino back into the otherwise poached-out Park. She was very shy and nervous when she first arrived but soon found comfort in staying close to the Park rangers. In 2013 she became the proud mother of a male calf, Kamti.

Julila



Named after the mother of Chief Chikwa who reigns over a kingdom in North Luangwa, Julila was born in 2006 in South Africa and was transferred to Zambia with her daughter Twikatane. She was pregnant when she arrived and gave birth to a female calf named Twibukishe meaning 'We remember'.

Londokeni



Londokeni, meaning 'We are back', was born in South Africa and travelled to North Luangwa when he was seven. Now aged 12, he is father to many of the calves born in North Luangwa.

See more on page 45 or at www.savetherhino.org/shop

Little Ndaba crochet rhino

£15 each

Choose your rhino online. Handcrafted using 100% organic cotton. Approx 14cm horn to tail.

