



2025

ANNUAL REPORT

Rising to the challenge



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Custodians of a connected landscape

Safeguarding a critical corridor of the greater
Serengeti ecosystem

The Friedkin Conservation Fund (FCF) is a non-profit organization focused on impactful philanthropic and conservation initiatives in Tanzania. Together with our affiliate companies, Legendary Expeditions and Mwiba Holdings Limited, we manage a vast and ecologically significant tract of wilderness: the Greater Mwiba Protected Wildlife Area.

Spanning approximately 2,000 km² — an area roughly the size of Luxembourg — this protected landscape forms part of a much bigger picture: the

interconnected network of the greater Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater ecosystems. Here, FCF holds a position of extraordinary responsibility: our work directly impacts the long-term conservation of two of Africa's most important ecosystems and the home of the Great Migration.

At the heart of our work is the vision and unwavering financial commitment of the Friedkin family, who have championed Tanzanian safari tourism and conservation since 1987.

Foreword

FCF’s 30-plus-year legacy in Tanzania has been defined by our willingness to rise to a unique challenge — protecting one of Tanzania’s most ecologically important yet demanding landscapes.

Poised between pristine wilderness and the realities of human settlement, the Greater Mwiba Protected Wildlife Area sits at the intersection of conservation and community. Recognizing its extraordinary significance within the greater Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater ecosystems, we have embraced the complexity of its conservation — making it our mission to ensure that this landscape, and the communities that live alongside it, thrives for generations to come. Our decision in 2024 to renew its lease for a further 20 years is a testament to that enduring commitment. Three decades of operating in this complex landscape have forged a model of community-centered conservation built on a core tenet: that wildlife protection, ecological wellbeing, and community empowerment are inseparable. This model has driven — and will continue to drive — tangible transformation across our protected wildlife area and surrounding communities, while evolving alongside an ever-changing conservation landscape.

As you read through this report, you will see progress across all our programs as well as the demonstrable results they have delivered — from increased

enforcement as a result of the comprehensive restructuring of our anti-poaching operations to the significant tracts of grassland that have been reclaimed as we continue our efforts to clear invasive plant species.

Community empowerment remains a fundamental aspect of our work, with our community programs reaching deeper into the region than ever before. Launched in April, our Economic Empowerment Program is poised to open new pathways to entrepreneurship in our communities. Our beekeeping groups have more than doubled their harvest. Our School Nutrition Program is actively driving school attendance. Most importantly, in 2025, we witnessed growing community ownership of our initiatives, marking a shift toward shared responsibility for community well-being and, by extension, conservation.

These achievements would not be possible without our dedicated team, whose tireless work on the ground fuels the results we’re seeing across our programs; our partners, who amplify our efforts; and the ongoing support of the Friedkin family, which makes this work possible.

Together, we are proving that the most challenging conservation landscapes can yield the most meaningful results — if we’re willing to rise to the challenge.

“Community empowerment remains a *fundamental* aspect of our work, with our community programs reaching deeper into the region than *ever* before”



Connecting the dots

Understanding the challenges facing conservation
in a connected landscape

The Greater Mwiba Protected Wildlife Area comprises an impressive 36% of all protected areas surrounding the Serengeti National Park and Ngorongoro Conservation Area. As a result, our conservation efforts within our areas create a ripple effect — one that can be felt across the vast ecological tapestry they form part of.

Here, we are a part of something bigger.

Ecological connectivity

As wild spaces across the world become increasingly fragmented in the wake of human expansion, Tanzania's open systems have become a blueprint for ecological connectivity. With no fences surrounding the country's protected areas, wildlife can move freely between ecosystems — allowing for genetic diversity among species and resilience to climate change, as well as reducing the pressure on resources such as food and water.

It's this ecological connectivity that lays the foundation for the Great Migration's iconic journey.

“Every year, more than *1.5 million* wildebeest, accompanied by *hundreds of thousands* of zebras and gazelles, travel in a continuous circular route across the Serengeti-Mara ecosystem”

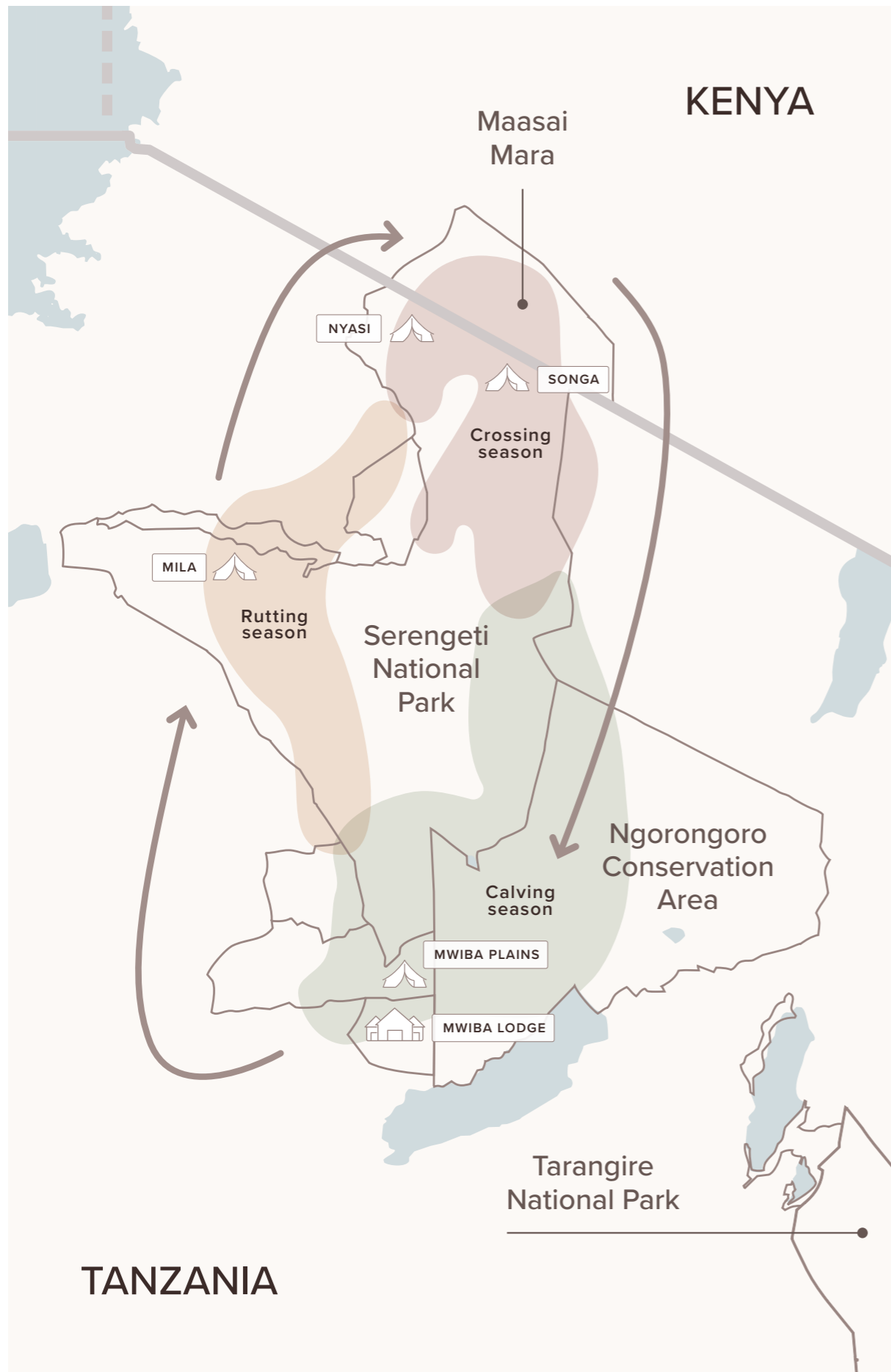
The Great Migration: A symbol of connectivity

Every year, more than 1.5 million wildebeest, accompanied by hundreds of thousands of zebras and gazelles, travel in a continuous circular route across the Serengeti-Mara ecosystem. Their journey, however, does not stop at park boundaries. With no fences obstructing their movement, the herds

spill out of the Serengeti National Park into our protected wildlife area, as well as the Ngorongoro Conservation Area in the south — and across the Kenyan border into the Maasai Mara in the north.

While the benefits of open systems are many, they also pose a complex challenge. With no fences to keep wildlife in — or people out — human-wildlife interactions at their boundaries are a daily reality.





Buffer zones: the seams that bind two worlds

The Greater Mwiba Protected Wildlife Area is not merely an extension of the Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater ecosystems — it is also a critical buffer zone. In an interconnected ecosystem like this, buffer zones serve a vital purpose: shielding the national parks from the pressures of human settlement. In essence, buffer zones are the seams that bind the two worlds together.

Conservation within buffer zones demands careful navigation. Here, we must balance two competing priorities: the needs of wildlife that roam freely across unfenced landscapes, and the livelihoods of communities who farm, graze livestock, and raise families at their boundaries. The relationship between the two is complex — shaped by generations of coexistence, but strained by growing populations and shrinking resources.

The human equation

In conservation, a fundamental truth often gets lost: the long-term protection of wild spaces is inextricably linked to the people who live alongside them.

This is especially true in buffer zones like ours, where communities have lived alongside wildlife for generations. They understand this land in ways that outsiders never can. But they also bear the tangible

“Conservation within buffer zones demands *careful navigation*. Here, we must balance two competing priorities: the needs of wildlife that *roam freely* across unfenced landscapes, and the *livelihoods* of communities who farm, graze livestock, and raise families at their boundaries.”

costs of living in close proximity to protected wildlife areas — their crops destroyed by elephants, livestock killed by predators, and children who can't safely walk to school when wild animals are near.

In this interconnected landscape, our work sits at a delicate crossroads: to maintain ecological balance and protect wildlife while recognizing the intricate cultural and historical ties that shape how our communities interact with the landscape. Here, lasting impact is as much about enforcement as it is empathy and partnership.

A year of impact in numbers



11
vultures



& 30
black rhinos

tagged as part of the
darting initiative



2,700

people enrolled in our Economic
Empowerment Project



2,500

daily meals provided
to school students



46

children received life-changing
medical treatment



3,000 kg

of honey harvested by our
community beekeeping groups



672

students received
conservation education



57

students supported through our
Scholarship Program



13,200

hectares of invasive plant
species were cleared
across the Greater Mwiba
Protected Wildlife Area



43
wheelchairs



& 2
prosthetic limbs

were provided to people
with disabilities



Conservation

Safeguarding wildlife, restoring ecosystems and supporting community coexistence

Anti-poaching and wildlife protection

Re-energizing anti-poaching

THE CHALLENGE: Detecting and preventing poaching across approximately 2,000 km² of open wilderness is no small feat.

In 2025, we strengthened our field teams by restructuring our anti-poaching units, introducing enhanced training programs, and upgrading critical resources.

Combined with expanded ground and air patrols, this reinvigorated approach has delivered measurable results: more arrests facilitated through our efforts, higher prosecution rates, and a clear message: the rule of law prevails in the areas we manage.

Protecting our predators

THE CHALLENGE: In landscapes without fences, wide-ranging predators such as lions and leopards don't recognize boundaries — they follow prey into community areas, increasing the risk of conflict.

To address this, we've significantly expanded our monitoring capacity over the past year. Working alongside the Tanzania Wildlife Authority (TAWA), the Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI), and Panthera, we've deployed camera traps across our protected wildlife area, to survey key predators, track population dynamics, and identify important habitats that need protection.

This coordinated, data-driven approach allows us to monitor predator movements in real time and provides the insights needed to enhance our protection efforts.

Vulture tagging project

Our vulture tracking project, launched in 2023, remains a key focus. In 2025, we tagged 11 new

vultures in a joint operation with the Peregrine Fund, Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS), TAWA, Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA), and TAWIRI.

These remarkable scavengers help maintain healthy habitats by consuming animal carcasses and preventing the spread of deadly diseases. Yet worldwide, vultures are threatened by habitat loss and poisoning. Our tagging program helps protect these ecosystem guardians while providing essential data on poaching activity and poisoning events across protected areas.

Supporting Tanzania's National Rhino Management Plan

Between October 14 and 22, we provided support for a black rhino darting initiative within the greater Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater ecosystem, including substantial financial, logistical, and in-kind support — provision of a helicopter and all associated costs, as well as veterinary supplies.

The National Rhino Coordinator led the exercise centrally, in coordination with FCF and FZS. Dan Friedkin piloted the tagging helicopter, providing critical support to ground teams from TANAPA, TAWA, TAWIRI, and the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority.

The operation, aligned with Tanzania's National Rhino Management Plan, will substantially strengthen monitoring and long-term protection of the Serengeti's black rhino population — one of the largest free-ranging populations in Africa, which is growing at a faster rate than the national target of 5% per year.

Since 2017, there has been only one poaching incident, and the horn was recovered; this shows that anti-poaching, intelligence, and cross-border cooperation are making an impact.

From an impact perspective, these results clearly demonstrate that sustained conservation measures and partnerships are paying off, resulting in the improved long-term survival of Tanzania's black rhino population.

Turning the tide on Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC)

Creating pathways for communities and wildlife to coexist.

THE CHALLENGE: HWC is one of the most pressing issues facing wildlife in Tanzania — and the Greater Mwiba Protected Wildlife Area stands on the front lines.

In 2025, we deepened our commitment to working towards coexistence between people and wildlife. Working with TAWA, we implemented a comprehensive HWC mitigation plan built on four pillars:

- **Identifying hotspots** – Mapping where conflict occurs most frequently
- **Rapid response** – Acting swiftly when incidents happen
- **Community education** – Strengthening awareness and creating effective reporting systems
- **Long-term prevention** – Implementing solutions that protect both livelihoods and wildlife

This multi-layered approach tackles HWC at its source, aiming to reduce retaliatory killings of predators and livestock losses — thereby safeguarding wildlife. Understanding where and why conflict occurs allows us to deploy targeted interventions before tensions escalate. And, most importantly, by involving communities as partners in solutions rather than treating them as obstacles, we’re laying the groundwork for lasting coexistence.

Ensuring ecological equilibrium

As an extension of the greater Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater ecosystems, our work in the Greater Mwiba Protected Wildlife Area does not end at invisible boundary lines. Rather, we bear the responsibility for maintaining ecological balance within it to ensure that the entire interconnected system thrives.

Reclaiming the grasslands

THE CHALLENGE: During calving season, the Great Migration spreads across the southern



Serengeti and into the short grass plains of our protected wildlife area. But invasive whistling thorn acacias had overrun these vital feeding grounds, choking out the grasslands and blocking migration routes.

In 2025, we doubled down on our restoration efforts, clearing approximately 13,200 hectares of invasive whistling thorn acacias across the region. The transformation has been remarkable. As the grasslands reopen, wildlife is returning: grazers reclaim their ancestral feeding grounds, predators follow the herds, and land that was once lost is restored.

Building infrastructure for conservation

Bringing water to the wild

THE NEED: Water is life. In the dry season, it becomes the difference between survival and loss.

In 2025, we invested in strategic water sources to sustain wildlife during upcoming dry seasons. We constructed several new dams as well as expanded an existing dam. We also undertook to rehabilitate the Mwiba weir by clearing it and constructing an upstream silt dam to reduce future sedimentation.

Each dam has been strategically positioned to draw wildlife deeper into core conservation areas and away from community lands — reducing encounters that can spark human-wildlife conflict.

Roads to protection

THE NEED: In conservation, access enables impact. Without reliable roads, anti-poaching teams can’t respond to incidents in time, and wildlife monitoring becomes guesswork.

In 2025, we upgraded 54 kilometers of road infrastructure across our protected wildlife area, and maintained another 40 kilometers — transforming once impassable tracks into accessible routes for wildlife monitoring and enforcement.



Community

Creating sustainable opportunities for financial independence

Fostering financial independence

Introducing our Economic Empowerment Project

THE CHALLENGE: For families in remote rural areas, economic opportunity is scarce. When supporting your family means choosing between conservation and survival, survival wins every time.

Launched in April 2025, our economic empowerment project — in partnership with Hand In Hand (HiH) Tanzania — aims to change this equation. By providing business and technical training, facilitating access to credit, and opening new market opportunities, we're

creating new routes to financial independence for people living alongside the areas we manage.

Over the next three years, the project aims to:

- Empower 2,700 individuals (80% women)
- Create or expand 1,890 microenterprises
- Generate 2,475 new jobs within our communities
- Focus on sustainable income-generating opportunities, including climate-smart agriculture, beekeeping, poultry, and sunflower farming

The project has garnered significant support, including high-level political involvement from the Meatu District Commissioner and widespread media coverage across national and local platforms — reflecting strong recognition of the vital link between economic empowerment and conservation.

Beekeeping: A sweet success

Harvested from beehives in our apiaries at Mwiba Lodge, Legendary Lodge, and Makao Village, every spoonful of honey savored at Legendary Expeditions' camps and lodges is a testament to the success of our beekeeping project.

Under the leadership of Makis Kossioris, the project has become a model for what's possible when you invest in communities. Beyond simply teaching beekeeping skills, we mentor and build capacity — in doing so, creating pathways to prosperity. And the growth has been extraordinary:

- First harvest (2023): 500 kg of raw organic honey
- Second year (2024): 1,500 kg
- 2025 (on track): 3,000 kg

These are more than just numbers. They represent people who now earn enough to support their families. They represent the women (who comprise 80% of our beekeeping groups)

who are achieving economic independence and reshaping the role of women in their communities.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

Our beekeeping project goes beyond honey harvesting — we're developing the skills that turn every harvest into sustainable livelihoods. This includes teaching hive construction and maintenance, helping beekeepers plant tree species that sustain both bees and the broader ecosystem, and guiding them in marketing their honey and its by-products.

INVESTING IN INFRASTRUCTURE: THE MINI HONEY PROCESSING PLANT

This year, we also completed work on a mini honey-processing plant — a facility that serves double duty. It provides the hygienic, efficient conditions that improves honey quality and market value, ensuring our beekeepers can command fair prices for premium products. And, it serves as a training center where community members learn advanced techniques that will serve them for decades to come.



Investing in the next generation

Food for thought: School Nutrition Program

THE CHALLENGE: For many families in rural areas, education takes a backseat to survival — especially when children are needed to work at home.

Our nutrition program is designed to change this narrative. By providing daily meals, we're giving parents a compelling reason to send their children to school and giving students the fuel they need to learn.

Today, we provide meals to nearly 2,500 children every day: 1,366 at Olosiva Primary in Arusha and 989 at Makao Primary School.

The transformation has been dramatic. At Makao Primary School alone, student absenteeism has dropped significantly as a direct result of daily meals:

- 2022: 30% absenteeism rate
- 2023: 10% absenteeism rate
- 2024: 5% absenteeism rate
- 2025: 2% absenteeism rate

“Today, we provide meals to nearly *2,500 children* every day”



Engaging our youth: Conservation Education Program

THE CHALLENGE: For children living alongside protected areas, wild animals represent a threat to crops, livestock, and safety. If we do not shift these perceptions, the next generation won't champion conservation — they'll resist it.

At its core, the program aims to reshape these perceptions. But we're not just helping young people understand the importance of nature; we're also engaging students in ways traditional lessons do not — increasing attendance and improving academic performance in the process.

Through our Jasiri Environmental Ambassadors Program:

- **672 students** received conservation education across 10 schools
- **192 students** embarked on life-changing Serengeti field education tours
- **44 peer educators** were trained in life skills, wellbeing, and environmental awareness — and we aim to reach 4,200 students in 2025–2026 through peer education

Teachers have reported improvements in both attendance and academic performance since our conservation sessions began. But the real transformation goes deeper: we're inspiring a generation that sees wildlife not as a threat, but as a source of pride.



A new perspective: Taking school children on safari

Despite having the wilderness on their doorstep, most Tanzanians will never experience the wonder of a safari. Our Jasiri Environmental Ambassador trips to the Serengeti National Park aim to change this by giving students a chance to see nature through a new lens — and, in doing

so, inspire them to take an active role in protecting their natural heritage.

For many, this is their first time witnessing the scale of these breathtaking landscapes and encountering wildlife without fear. With every student we reach, we take another step toward building a future where conservation is woven into the fabric of community life.

Habi's story

Habi Masule started as an intern at Legendary Mwiba Lodge in February 2025 — just ten months later, she's a kitchen steward. She describes the experience as "life-changing," crediting it with building her confidence, developing her skills, and strengthening her Swahili and English communication, all inspired by her mentors.

Stories like Habi's demonstrate that investing in youth and opening doors to the hospitality industry empowers local communities to thrive alongside conservation efforts.

“She describes the experience as “life-changing,” crediting it with building her confidence”



Creating pathways to opportunity

Supporting future success: Scholarship Program

THE CHALLENGE: In rural Tanzania, school fees can equal months of family income. For many bright students — especially girls — financial barriers close the door on education before it truly begins.

Our Scholarship Program opens those doors. In 2025, we supported 57 students (28 female; 29 male) from Meatu and neighboring regions — a significant leap from 37 in 2024 and 17 in 2023.

While we support deserving students regardless of gender, our focus remains on girls from remote areas, where cultural and economic barriers to education have historically run deepest.

A cycle of inspiration: Mentorship Program

THE CHALLENGE: In remote areas, young people often lack role models who've walked the path from local schools to meaningful careers. Without seeing what's possible, ambition remains abstract.

This year, we launched our mentorship program to bridge that gap. We've paired 17 seasoned FCF employees with three motivated young individuals from the Meatu region, creating connections that inspire possibility.

Through regular engagement, our mentors are helping to ignite a passion for education, improving academic performance, and demonstrating the real-world value of staying in school. At the same time, these young people are gaining firsthand insight into FCF's conservation work, seeing how protecting wildlife can translate into careers, purpose, and community impact.

Opening doors to the hospitality industry: Internship Program

THE CHALLENGE: Although world-class tourism happens on their doorstep, without training, connections, or knowledge of hospitality careers, the industry remains out of reach for young people in our region.

Our hospitality internship program in collaboration with Legendary Expeditions (LEX) is breaking down these barriers. Now in its second year, it creates a direct route into meaningful employment in one of Tanzania's most dynamic industries.

The results speak for themselves:

- Year one (2023/2024): All 7 interns secured jobs at LEX — a 100% employment rate
- Year two (2024/2025): 8 of 12 interns are now employed at LEX, with 4 still completing their training

This program is becoming a proven employment pipeline for Meatu and surrounding areas. Young people are being given the opportunity to build careers in tourism, earning stable incomes, and proving that local talent can thrive in world-class hospitality.



Healthcare that transforms lives

Kafika House Partnership

THE CHALLENGE: In rural Tanzania, children born with treatable disabilities can face a lifetime of isolation. Cultural misconceptions, distance to medical care, and financial barriers mean that conditions easily corrected through surgery go untreated.

Our partnership with Kafika House, now in its second year, provides comprehensive pre- and post-operative care for children with surgically correctable disabilities, enabling them to lead full, active lives. Here, we identify children in need of treatment and arrange their transport to and accommodation in Arusha, ensuring families can access this life-changing care.

In 2025:

- 46 children received treatment for conditions like clubfoot, cleft lip, and limb deformities
- Families are increasingly seeking treatment voluntarily — a sign that stigma is giving way to hope and what began as outreach has evolved into communities actively pursuing care for their children

Support for people with disabilities

THE CHALLENGE: In rural areas, without wheelchairs or prosthetics — and with limited infrastructure — people with disabilities are often confined to their homes, cut off from work, education and the rhythm of community life.

This year, in partnership with Chair the Love, we strengthened our commitment to changing that reality:

- 43 wheelchairs donated to those in need — 32 to individuals and 11 to local dispensaries for community access
- 2 prosthetic limbs provided to individuals who had lived as amputees for years, giving them back mobility they had long been without

A wheelchair means a child can get to school. A prosthetic limb means a farmer can return to the fields. This support restores dignity and enables participation.

“46 children received treatment for conditions like clubfoot, cleft lip, and limb deformities”

Michael Marcus Mahona's journey of hope

Six-year-old Michael from Buganza village in Meatu District, struggled with a leg deformity that limited his mobility and isolated him socially. In September 2024, Michael began treatment at Kafika House. By November, the transformation was remarkable.



“Now I *play* with my friends, and I'm *not afraid* to go to school anymore.”

Pictured clockwise from left: Michael Marcus Mahona, Leah Emanuel Sumbuka and Lucy Mfesi before and after their operations.





Amplifying our impact

Connecting conservation with tourism

There's a powerful connection between conservation and tourism that's often underestimated. When managed responsibly, low-impact tourism can become one of conservation's most powerful tools.

Our affiliate, Legendary Expeditions, operates world-class safari camps within the areas we protect. Every guest who stays at these properties can support our conservation and community programs through an optional contribution model. But the benefits extend beyond financial contributions.

Tourism creates jobs for people in the region. When communities see tangible benefits from tourism — employment, infrastructure improvements, education opportunities—the value of protecting wildlife becomes clear.

This is tourism as it should be: transformative, respectful, and regenerative. It's a model that demonstrates how economic development and environmental protection can reinforce each other.



Harnessing the power of collaboration

Collaboration is the key to conservation success. The many achievements we've celebrated in 2025 would not have been possible without the partners who share our vision



Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI)



Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA)



Tanzania Wildlife Authority (TAWA)



Grumeti Fund



Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS)



The Peregrine Fund



Hand In Hand Tanzania



Panthera



Lessons In Conservation



Chair the Love



Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority (NCAA)



Kafika House

Conclusion

Our journey is just beginning

FCF began with the Friedkin family's connection to the Tanzanian wilderness — a connection that set in motion the journey that led us to become a key force in conservation and community empowerment in the country.

Our renewed 20-year commitment to protecting the Greater Mwiba Protected Wildlife Area honors this foundation while driving us toward an even more ambitious goal: building a conservation model that creates lasting change for both wildlife and the people who share this land.

The path forward depends on stronger partnerships with government agencies and conservation partners to amplify our impact. It depends on continued partnership and engagement with our communities, centering empowerment in everything we do. And it means championing ecological connectivity as we play our part in safeguarding the Greater Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater ecosystems.

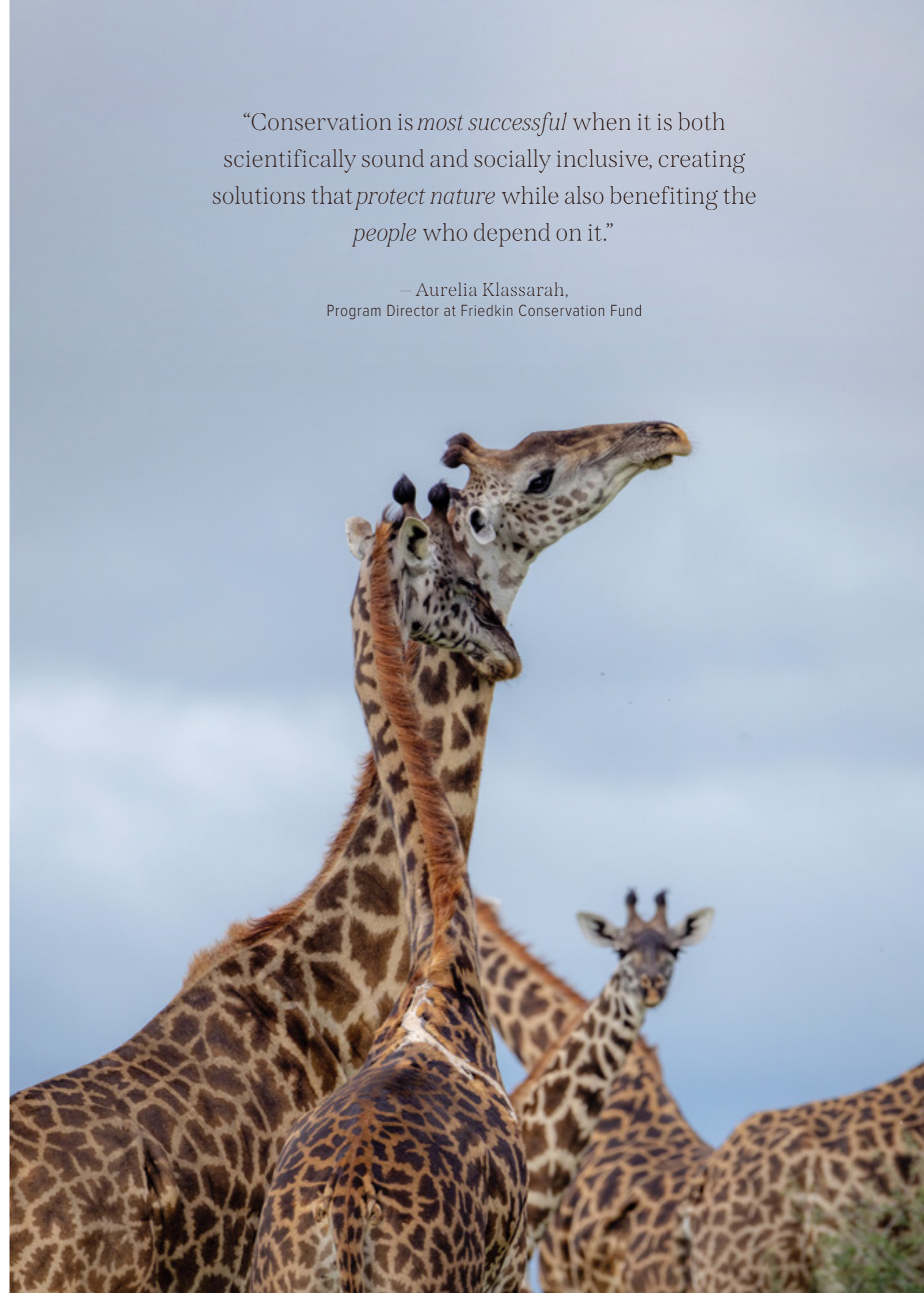
In the end, everything is interconnected. The health of the Serengeti and the flow of the Great Migration depend on the buffer zone that we protect. Conservation success relies on community support. Communities benefit when tourism and wild spaces create opportunity. And all of it rests on recognizing that we're part of a vast, living system — one we have the privilege and responsibility to protect for generations to come.

To find out more about our work and to contribute to our projects, please contact:

andrea.frey@friedkinfund.org

“Conservation is *most successful* when it is both scientifically sound and socially inclusive, creating solutions that *protect nature* while also benefiting the *people* who depend on it.”

— Aurelia Klassarah,
Program Director at Friedkin Conservation Fund





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