



## The Gorongosa Project



Lion and waterbuck in Gorongosa National Park  
Photo by Michael dos Santos

### GOALS

- Effective enforcement of conservation laws and regulations;
- Improved application of scientific knowledge in planning and management;
- Increased local support for GNP conservation;
- Enhanced resilience of buffer zone household economies;
- Increased adolescent girls' access to education services and support.

### ACTIVITY TIMEFRAME

February 2015 to February 2020

### USAID FUNDING

\$ 11.4 million

### GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

Gorongosa National Park and buffer zone, Sofala Province

### IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

Gorongosa Project (GP)

### USAID CONTACT

Nathan Sage

[nsage@usaid.gov](mailto:nsage@usaid.gov)

### OVERVIEW

During the 1960s and early 1970s, Gorongosa National Park (GNP) was considered one of the premier protected areas in Southern Africa, renowned for its abundance and diversity of wildlife. However, after Mozambique's liberation and independence in 1975, civil strife and rampant poaching decimated wildlife and destroyed tourism infrastructure. In 2008, the nonprofit Carr Foundation created the Gorongosa Restoration Project as part of an initial 20-year agreement with the Government of Mozambique (GMR) to return GNP to its pre-conflict exuberance. Since then, reduced poaching through improved ranger capacity and the reintroduction of several key wildlife species, has helped wildlife populations to naturally recover. However, to ensure long-term success of conservation efforts, investments must extend beyond the park's boundaries. Effective programs to improve environmental governance and the lives of people living around the park are essential to secure Gorongosa's future.

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Integrated Gorongosa and Buffer Zone Program (IGBZ) is a Global Development Alliance with the Gorongosa Project that aims to strengthen environmental governance, reduce threats to the park's biodiversity, and improve livelihood opportunities for buffer zone communities. This long-term partnership has committed to creating a conservation culture that extends beyond just teaching people about the importance of biodiversity conservation, and recognizes that we must also address their immediate health, education, and food needs if we are to reduce threats to the park.

To achieve this, the IGBZ is working with local communities, government and international partners to enhance the application of science in conservation planning and management, increase the resilience of buffer zone households, and strengthen enforcement of conservation laws and park regulations. The IGBZ takes a systems-based approach that includes activities in biodiversity conservation, education, food security, health and nutrition to support the overall prosperity of approximately 175,000 people living in the surrounding area.

In 2008, USAID joined restoration efforts through a seven-year, \$8.5 million grant focused on general operations support. In 2015, USAID

renewed its commitment through a five-year, \$10 million Global Development Alliance (GDA) and cooperative agreement with the Carr Foundation. In 2017, USAID contributed an additional \$1 million (with a \$1 million match from the Carr Foundation) to advance girls' education programs. In 2019, USAID provided \$440,900 in disaster assistance to support food security and recovery of water systems after Cyclone Idai. In addition to the U.S. Government, the

Gorongosa Project leverages an extensive funding network of development partners, foundations and the business community.

The USAID-Carr Foundation partnership has turned Gorongosa National Park into an engine for development, and is helping to improve food security, health, education and livelihoods. It has helped to improve the lives of the thousands of people living in and around the park, creating better living conditions, and preventing vulnerability and illegal activity, such as bushmeat hunting. It is also restoring wildlife habitats, increasing numbers of endangered species, and working with local communities to find safe ways to live harmoniously with the wildlife that surround them. Gorongosa is now recognized as a global model for integrated biodiversity conservation and human development.

#### **KEY IMPACTS:**

- **Biodiversity conservation** - 260 park rangers (249 men and 11 women) trained, resulting in increased law enforcement capacity and a 72% decrease in wildlife poaching incidents;
- **Education** - 34 Gorongosa Girls' Clubs created, resulting in improved academic skills and school retention for 1,300 girls in three districts;
- **Food Security** - 11,000 farmers trained in new farming practices, resulting in improved crop yields and increased nutritional status for buffer zone communities;
- **Health** - 630 local health professionals trained in nutrition, maternal, neonatal, and child health, resulting in 8,100 children vaccinated, 1,700 malaria cases treated, 2,400 anti-malaria bed nets distributed, and over 30,000 children-under-5 nutritional interventions conducted.