

Lion Kids Camps

Despite living in close proximity to world famous National Parks and Reserves, many Kenyan children have never had the chance to observe wildlife at close range and to experience what attracts thousands of tourists to their country each year. In rural areas, their perceptions of wildlife are instead shaped by largely negative interactions: they see elephants chasing people, the remains of a camel after a lion attack, or a leopard snatching their goats. Children's attitudes may also be influenced by longstanding cultural beliefs and practices. In urban areas, children tend to be even more disconnected from wildlife and typically have limited knowledge about native fauna. Recognising that children are the future custodians of Kenya's wildlife, Ewaso Lions launched its Lion Kids Camp programme in 2013.

OUR VISION:

To educate & inspire a new generation of wildlife conservationists in Kenya

To date, we have run **35 LKCs**, providing **over 984 children** from across **four Counties** with a fully immersive wildlife experience. Currently, we focus on two key demographic groups:

- **Students:** by engaging students, we hope to inspire the next generation of conservation leaders, park wardens, safari guides and wildlife biologists.
- **Livestock herders:** by engaging herders, we hope to have an immediate, positive impact on wildlife.

LKC: OCT 2023

We held a Lion Kids Camp with 26 livestock herders from Lekiji location in Meibae Conservancy between 16th and 20th October 2023.

The Camp combined wildlife education, safaris and conservation-themed games and activities. The children were taught about:

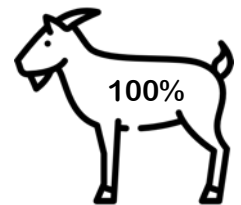
- The value and importance of lions/large carnivores and other wildlife species;
- The threats facing wildlife in Kenya;
- Techniques local communities can adopt to promote peaceful coexistence.

Emphasis was placed on topics of particular relevance to herders, such as adoption of wildlife-friendly livestock husbandry practices.

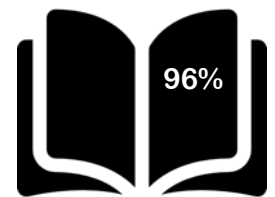
*1 out of 26 of these herders had attended a previous LKC.



Livestock herders:



Had a family member in a wildlife/ conservation role



Had never received any formal teaching about wildlife/conservation

Evaluation: Methods & Results

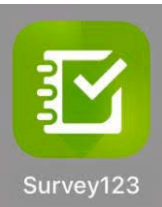
Multi-choice Quiz

All attendees completed a pre-camp and post-camp quiz containing a series of multi-choice questions aimed at assessing changes in attitudes and knowledge. The quiz was administered using Promethean Activotes, a type of student response device (pictured left).



Questionnaire Survey

All attendees also completed a short pre-camp and post-camp questionnaire containing open-ended questions which could not be answered using the Activote devices. The questionnaire surveys were administered by Samburu enumerators using Survey 123 app on mobile devices.

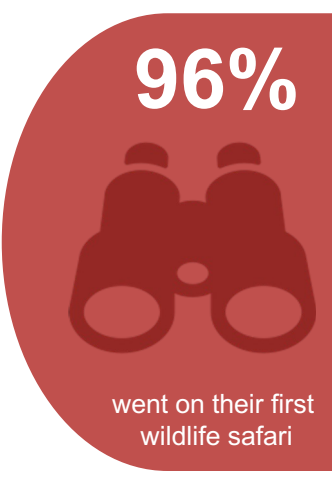


Objective: To provide Kenyan children, many of whom live adjacent to national reserves but have not seen wildlife close up, with a positive and enjoyable wildlife experience.



Maso closely watching Lions on her first wildlife safari

We set off before dawn, the children very excited to be going for their first ever game drive in Samburu National Reserve. We saw two beautiful male Lions Ldere and his brother Lolkiripa. We also saw lots of herbivores including reticulated giraffe, Grant's Gazelle, gerenuk, Grevy's zebra, Warthog and beisa oryx. The group also had a fantastic sighting of large herds of elephants resting in the shade by the river - they were fascinated! We also saw Ostrich, Monitor Lizard and a large black necked spitting Cobra explaining the importance of each species in the e



Objective: To increase knowledge about wildlife, and conservation of wildlife species and their habitats, amongst LKC attendees.



56%

Attendees' ability to identify resident mammal species improved, with 56% attaining higher scores post-camp. However, the average score only increased by 6%, so there is still much room for improvement. One limiting factor could be the lack of game sighted during the wildlife safari - minimizing the opportunity to reinforce what the children learnt during their classroom ID session.



50%

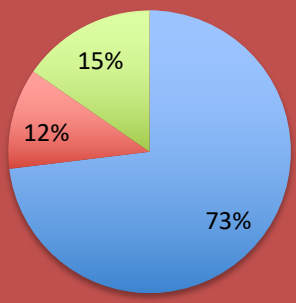
Attendees' ability to identify carnivores by tracks, signs or sounds improved, with 50% attaining higher scores post-camp and the average score increasing by 22%. The greatest percentage increase from pre-camp to post-camp was 57%, attained by 3 children.



Children playing matching game after Tracks and signs activity

“Are there any THREATS facing Lions in Kenya?”

■ Yes ■ No ■ Do not know



INCREASE
from pre-camp to post-camp in the average number of threats identified per child from:
2.3 to 6.6

Food & water

- Lack of food (↑46.2%)
Pre: 7.7% | Post: 53.8%

Threats

Drought

- Drought (↑23.1%)
Pre: 42.3% Post: 65.4%

Pollution

- Pollution (↑30.8%)
Pre: 3.8% | Post: 34.6%

Habitat loss

- Habitat loss – general (↑19.2%)
Pre: 26.9% | Post: 46.2%
- Burning habitat (↑26.8%)
Pre: 3.8% | Post: 30.8%
- Deforestation (↑38.5%)
Pre: 0.0% | Post: 38.5%
- Development (↑26.9%)
Pre: 7.7% | Post: 34.6%
- Encroachment (↑26.9%)
Pre: 23.1% | Post: 50.0%
- Human population (↑46.2%)
Pre: 3.8% | Post: 50.0%

Killed by people

- Retaliatory killing (↑19.2%)
Pre: 57.7% | Post: 76.9%
- Non-retaliatory killing (0.0%)
Pre: 0.0% | Post: 0.0%
- Poaching (↑34.6%)
Pre: 3.8% | Post: 38.5%

Objective: To foster and sustain positive attitudes towards wildlife, and wildlife conservation, in LKC attendees – with an emphasis on lions and other large carnivores.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS WILDLIFE

Pre-camp, 11% of children disagreed or strongly disagreed that, “living with wild animals brought [them/ their] family more benefits than problems”. However, there was a significant change in their response post-camp – 85 % agreeing or strongly agreeing that the benefits outweighed the problems.

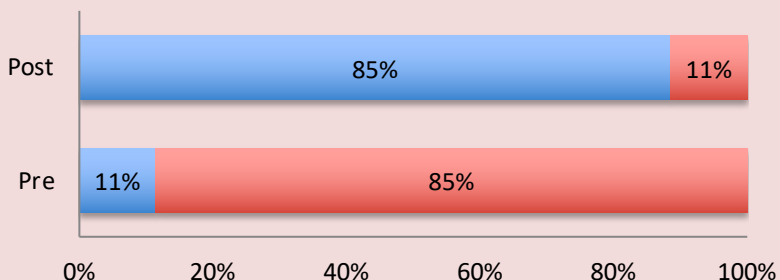


“VERY BAD”

100 % of children, following the camp, thought killing wild animals was “very bad” compared to 61 % pre-camp.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS CARNIVORES

A similar trend was also observed when children were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement: “Living with carnivores brings me/my family more benefits than problems” the proportion agreeing or strongly agreeing increasing from 11% to %.



**BENEFITS
> COSTS**

+19%

Following the camp, 19% more children strongly agreed that it was “possible for [their] community to live alongside carnivores peacefully” (77%, compared to 58% pre-camp). The total agreeing or strongly agreeing was 77% post-camp.



96% of children, following the camp, said that when they think of a lion it is something they ‘like’ or ‘strongly like’. The proportion stating that they ‘strongly like’ lions increased by 23%, but even before the camp most children had positive perceptions of lions.



92% of children, following the camp, said that they wanted the number of lions in their home area to ‘increase’ or ‘increase a lot’, compared to 57% pre-camp.

Objective: To develop and sustain a sense of responsibility to protect wildlife and other natural resources in LKC attendees.



80% → 100%

Before the camp, 80% of children considered themselves as responsible for conserving wildlife and other natural resources in their home area. Following the camp, this increased to 100%.

30.8% → 69.2%

Before the camp, 30.8% of children considered themselves as responsible for conserving carnivores. Following the camp, this increased to 69.2 %

76% → 100%

Before the camp, 76% of children considered themselves as responsible for protecting their livestock from predation. Following the camp, this increased to 100%



Objective: To promote coexistence between people and large carnivores by empowering LKC attendees to help conserve large carnivores, their prey and habitats.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP PROTECT WILDLIFE/ THE ENVIRONMENT IN MY HOME AREA?

Actions listed by **>20% more** children post-camp:



Not kill/ injure wildlife



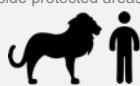
Not graze livestock inside protected areas



Report dead/injured wildlife



Follow grazing plans



Report human wildlife conflict



Raise awareness about wildlife/conservation

WHAT MEASURES CAN I TAKE TO PROTECT LIVESTOCK FROM PREDATION?

Measures listed by **>20% more** children post-camp:



Use scarecrows



Use guard dogs



Use fire/ lights/ torches



Put bells on livestock



Herd away from bushy/rocky areas



Locate home away from bushy/rocky areas



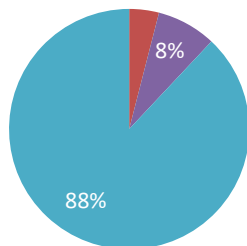
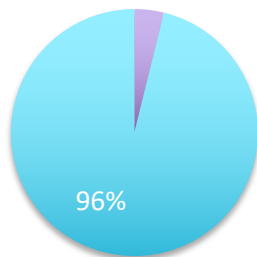
Strengthen boma

Average number of actions listed per child increased from:
3.4 to 6.6

Average number of measures listed per child increased from:
3.5 to 6.6

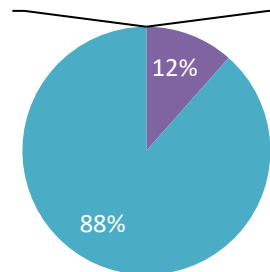
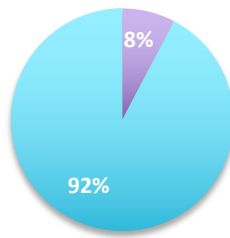
Attendee Feedback

"I enjoyed the LKC and would attend another if given the opportunity"



"My attitude towards wild animals has improved as a result of this camp"

"My knowledge of local wildlife has improved as a result of this camp"



"My knowledge of conservation has increased as a result of this camp"

■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly agree

Room for Improvement?

Despite some encouraging results, we feel there is always room for improvement. Some specific areas identified include:

- ◆ Amendments to the curriculum to ensure herders' understanding of key concepts. For example, difficulties were experienced when teaching children about changes in the lion population in Africa and Kenya because geographical boundaries of countries and continents are not well understood.
- ◆ An extra car during game drive would be helpful in helping find lions.
- ◆ Consider Murals/Models for Education topics to enable more interactive lessons and move kids round the classroom.
- ◆ Consider dividing the class into smaller groups for more personalized instruction when we have herding children.



Photo Collage



Acknowledgements

We are very grateful to our local partners **Meibae and Westgate Community Conservancies, Samburu National Reserve and Samburu County** for enabling this camp to take place. We also extend special thanks to **Cheyenne Mountain Zoo** for financial support. Thank you all so much for bringing conservation education to Meibae's herders and for inspiring them to become conservationists!

Credits: photos © Ewaso Lions

Ewaso Lions
P.O. Box 14996, Nairobi 00800, Kenya
info@ewasolions.org | Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#)
www.ewasolions.org