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THE ELEPHANT FOUNDATION

Junior Newsletter



How attitudes influence actions taken with human–wildlife conflict.

Welcome to Vol. 14 of our weekly junior newsletter.

In this edition of our junior newsletter, we continue to discuss the topic of human-wildlife conflict, how do people closest to wildlife deal with current conflicts. Please click ([here](#)) for previous editions.

Learning objectives:

- Attitudes and how they influence actions
- How do local Botswana farmers deal with elephant confrontation
- How Indonesian farmers protect their crops whilst not harming hungry elephants.

Attitudes and how they influence actions

A study on 217 villagers impacted on elephant crop raids.

In a study conducted on Human-Elephant conflict in Xishuangbanna Nature Reserve in China, researchers interviewed more than 217 villagers whose economic gains are mainly derived from crop gains. With rapid economic and population growth in China, huge demands for resources (e.g., food, water and land) have added pressure on wildlife resources and their living environment.

Researchers found that, when Asian elephants raid villager's crops, 95% of financial loss was due to crop loss. You may think now is that, villagers must really dislike elephants. The answer is no. In fact, most villages responded that they still have a favorable impression of Asian Elephants.

Why?

–Through the influence of traditional culture and natural education. In addition, financial compensation of crop loss by insurance companies in cooperation with the government.

From the study, 64.1% of villagers expressed a favorable attitude towards Asian Elephants and did not want to see elephant population shrink. In addition, even though villagers suffered financial losses to elephants and their crop raids, 43.8% of villagers liked Asian elephants as they claimed they carried a symbolic value to the village and also represented their own local environment and culture. A portion of villagers (22.3%) also highlighted that they have positive attitude to elephants due to them being classified as 'Protected Animals'. Religion also influenced attitudes and actions, villagers (33.8%) followed Southern Buddhism, whilst white elephants have a special significance, they also practice refrain from taking life.

More information and source: <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17238910>

Human-elephant conflicts and villagers' attitudes and knowledge in the Xishuangbanna Nature Reserve, China

Botswana's heroes and a solution to wildlife conflict with elephants.



Nthoboga Samokwase's father was traveling from the fields where he typically stayed during the cropping season. Four years ago, Samokwase's father was rushed to the hospital but pronounced dead on arrival. "It was a very sad day," Samokwase recalls. Until recently, Samokwase dreaded her sons would face a similar fate as her father as they walked each day almost 4km (2.5 miles) from their cattle post to their local primary school, crossing paths trodden by elephants along the way.

Her Solution.



Samokwase now runs Elephant Express where 2 minibuses cover a stretch of 200km daily. Ensuring safety for young people and villagers needing to travel.

Botswana is currently home to roughly 130,000 elephants. According to Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis, between 2009 to 2019, elephants were responsible for 67 human deaths.

In the depths of the Sumatran forest, villagers deal with elephants with sound.



Junaidi (the person in the picture) heads a volunteer elephant patrol team in Cot Girek. He formed a patrol team to protect farmers' livelihoods and claimed, "Unlike government officials who receive a monthly salary, we [farmers] can only rely on our crops for money," he said.

Junaidi crafted a device using a PVC pipe and lights it with methylated spirit to alert villagers whenever a wild elephant comes near the village.

Junaidi said he's encountered elephants from a very young age. "Elephants are human too — they have strong feelings," he said. Elephants typically roam the village at 3 in the morning, ravaging the huts and crops for food. "We use cannons and clanking noises to chase them away while saying 'surut, surut, surut, tuk!' [return, return, return, grandpa!] — that's what we call them, Datuk [grandfather], as a sign of respect."

The hamlet is frequented by three herds, consisting of 7, 10 and 15 elephants, respectively. Instead of killing or hurting the elephants for invading their farms, the farmers provide them with space to feed and chase them away gently using loud noises. Even as increasing habitat loss for the Sumatran elephant and poverty for the villagers complicate efforts to address the human-elephant conflicts, local farmers are still exhaustively conducting voluntary patrols to protect the elephants and save their livelihoods.

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CONTACT US

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To help us continue our work TEF has launched 'Friends of The Elephant Foundation' to engage more with wildlife animal lovers in Hong Kong. Through a monthly donation, you will become a Friend of the Foundation and will enjoy benefits such as Ranger Insurance, Elephant Adoption, Weekly and Quarterly newsletter, the ability to work with us in our campaigns to raise awareness, take part in various activities and seminars and at the same time support our partnered charity on the ground in Kenya.

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