



the Jane Goodall Institute

About the Tchimpounga Chimpanzee Rehabilitation Center

JGI provides a safe haven for orphan chimpanzees in Africa's largest ape sanctuary.

Every year poachers in the Congo Basin kill thousands of chimpanzees as part of the illegal bushmeat trade. Typically, the hunters spare the lives of the smallest, confiscating them and selling them as pets despite laws forbidding such trade.

JGI works to end the illegal commercial bushmeat trade through education and awareness programs, community-centered conservation activities including development of alternate sources of protein, and policy efforts. But, until demand for bushmeat subsides, illegal hunting will continue. To help the youngest victims—the orphaned babies—JGI operates the Tchimpounga Chimpanzee Rehabilitation Center, a safe haven in Pointe Noire, Congo, where orphans who government officials have confiscated from the black market can get needed care and attention.

JGI opened Tchimpounga in 1992. Originally designed to house and care for 60 chimpanzees, it now houses 139—a sad sign of poaching's toll in the region.

In 2007, to accommodate the unanticipated pace of growth and provide better accommodations and care to the resident chimps—many of whom have reached adulthood—JGI embarked on an extensive expansion and renovation effort. The new and improved Tchimpounga Chimpanzee Rehabilitation Center includes:

- **Two new dormitories and enclosures** that provide expanded living and sleeping space for the chimpanzees;
- **A new, secure vet lab** that has chimpanzee-proof windows and doors and an auxiliary door to safely bring chimpanzees in for treatment;
- **A new food storage and prep area** adjacent to the main dormitory to create efficiency—cutting the need for one person to be fully occupied transferring food from a remote building;
- **A much-needed water system** so that all of the chimpanzees have continual access to drinking water in their dorms and enclosures; and
- **Researcher housing and office space** to accommodate the needs of visiting researchers and JGI staff.

-more-

Now that the Sanctuary's infrastructure has been upgraded, JGI will focus on expanding Tchimpounga to include rehabilitation sites on three Kouilou River islands. The islands offer a major advantage—a controlled and optimally secure environment, which is ideal for the chimpanzees and local community alike. JGI also is investigating the feasibility of reintroducing sanctuary chimpanzees into the wild. The islands can better accommodate some of the older chimpanzees who will never be able to join a full-release program, while providing a pre-release space for the younger chimpanzees.

#