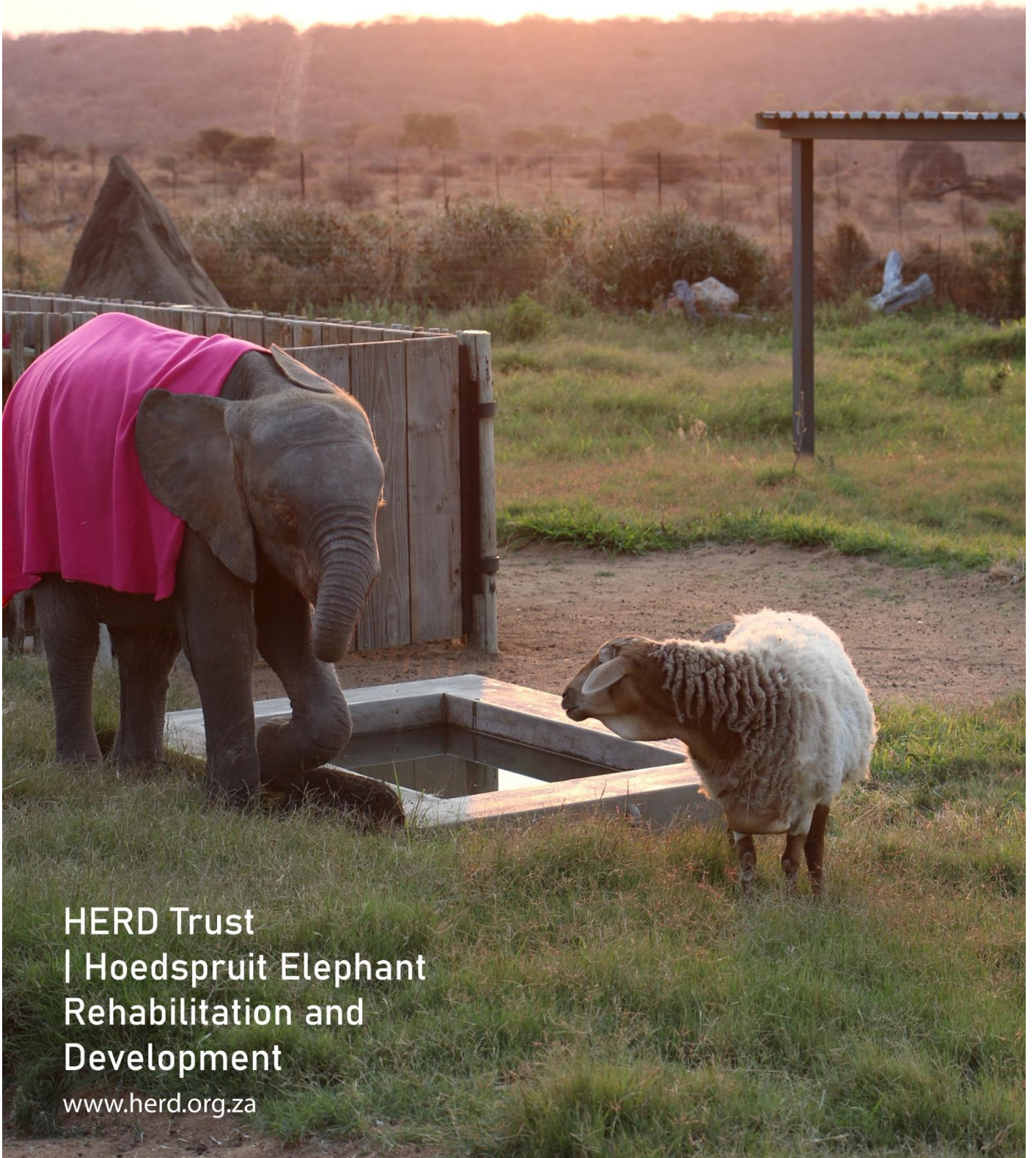




HERD **TRUST**
HOEDSPRUIT ELEPHANT REHABILITATION
and DEVELOPMENT



HERD Trust
| Hoedspruit Elephant
Rehabilitation and
Development

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OUR ELEPHANT JOURNEY

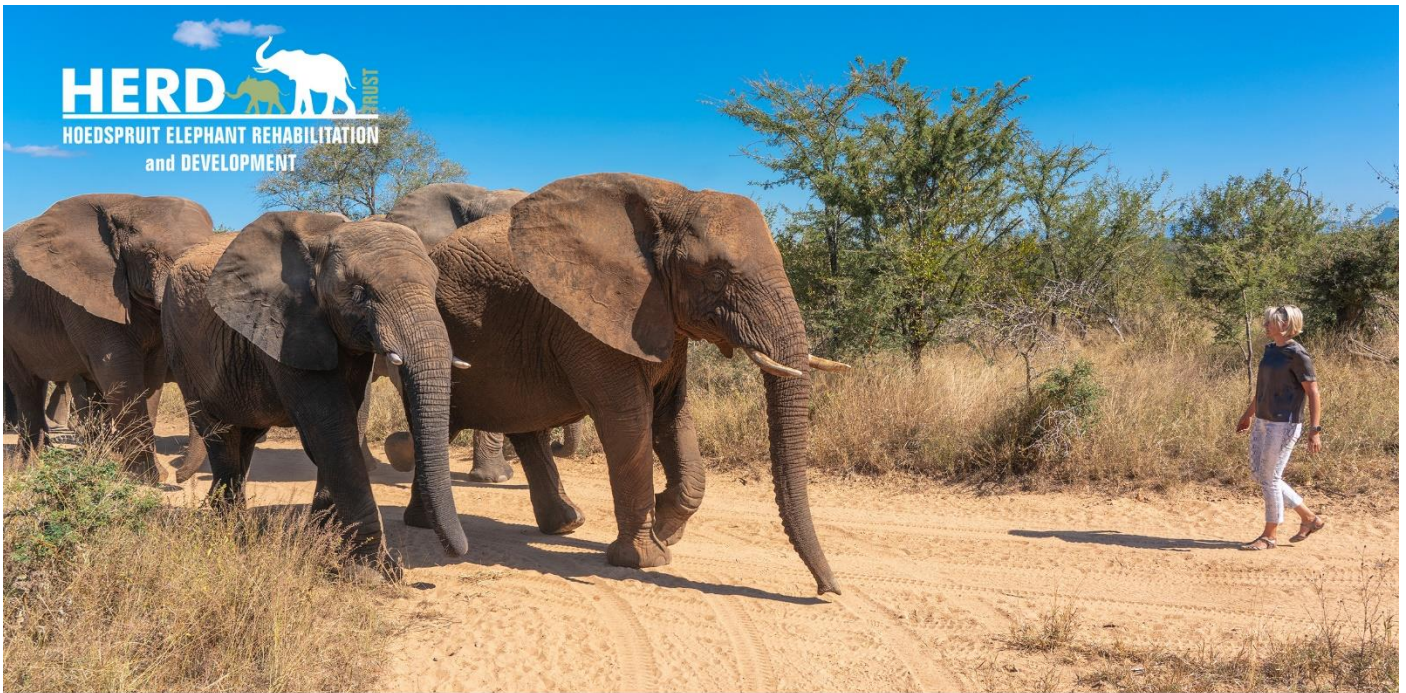
HERD TRUST is a registered Public Benefit Organisation (PBO ref number 930072153).

With the growing numbers of orphan and displaced elephant calves in recent years, as a result of increasing poaching of elephant mothers as well as human-elephant land conflict, Adine Roode, Managing Director and Owner of Jabulani, took the step to build our dedicated elephant orphanage to provide a unique adoptive family structure for baby elephants in need.

It is our mission through HERD (Hoedspruit Elephant Rehabilitation and Development) to care for and rehabilitate these orphaned elephants, to give them a second chance at life with a herd of their own. The orphanage lies adjacent to the Jabulani herd homestead on a private game reserve in South Africa, which allows us to integrate each baby elephant into the herd according to their individual emotional needs.

Our elephant management plan runs hand-in-hand with the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEAT)'s norms and standards of elephant management, and follows the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) guidelines and standards.

In these documents, you will find outlined the purpose of HERD, our objectives and principles, as well as a description of what it takes to care for orphaned elephants by Adine Roode.



A MESSAGE FROM ADINE ROODE, HERD FOUNDER

Adine Roode is the driving force behind HERD, working closely together with her highly skilled and experienced team that includes Elephant Manager, Tigere Matipedza, and our long-standing elephant carers and operations team.

Having spent many years growing up in the natural wilderness of her father's game reserve, Adine's passion for wildlife and their welfare was instilled from a very young age. Adine is recognised in the conservation industry for her work with rhinos, however, her most significant work has been in elephant conservation, which began in 1997, with the successful rearing of Jabulani, the first orphaned elephant.

Adine has been instrumental in the care and wellbeing of the rescued herd through the years. Conservation and ethics are at the core of her approach, a combination of heart and soul and mind.

"In my time spent working with Jabulani, elephants and the conservation of their species has become my life, my passion, my purpose. With the rescued Jabulani herd of elephants, I have been fortunate to become a part of their herd in many ways, just like the carers who spend night and day with them.

"I have felt the sense of belonging with the embrace of their trunks, the vigour in the babies with each head-butt during feedings and the very real the power of a fully-grown elephant while sharing the ground with them. I have learnt so much over the past years through my work in elephant conservation, rehabilitating and reintegrating elephants in need, and am driven and excited to keep providing this on an even bigger, more dedicated scale through HERD.

"I am so grateful for each and every person that is walking this path with us and I invite you to be part of the journey with us and to follow our story as South Africa's first dedicated elephant orphanage."

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THE ELEPHANT ORPHANAGE

Adine Roode made the decision to build a dedicated elephant orphanage close to the Jabulani herd homestead, giving new elephant orphans access to their own species, for comfort during the rehabilitation phase and later, easing their integration into the herd.

Being in the company of adults, sub-adults and juvenile elephants during their development stages is highly beneficial for baby elephants. It has a positive impact on their mental and physical health. Although the younger orphans will enter the orphanage area on arrival, we will have the opportunity after assessing their health, to discern when they could join the Jabulani herd for days out on the reserve, in our Big 5 wilderness.

In the evenings, the calves return to the orphanage, where there are three individual nurseries, each with an additional area for an elephant carer to sleep beside the elephants, as they take shifts to ensure the orphans have 24-hour care and company. Two companion sheep, Lammie and Nungu live at the orphanage to provide animal support, stimulation and friendship to the calves.

The orphanage is a well-controlled environment created with the sole purpose of caring for elephant orphans and maintaining hygiene standards and minimal foot traffic, which is equally important to an elephant calf's delicate nature.

We have successfully introduced four orphans between 2002 and 2018 that were rescued by elephant conservation companies or national parks. Younger elephants must be weaned first, as the Jabulani herd females are not lactating and unable to provide them with essential milk that their bodies need for healthy growth and survival. That is where our hands-on care is vital at the orphanage.



OUR PURPOSE & FUTURE

As South Africa's first dedicated elephant orphanage, our purpose is to ensure that we have the optimal environment to care for the growing numbers of elephants orphaned or displaced due to the increased poaching of elephant mothers and human-elephant land conflict.

Our primary goal is for every orphaned elephant that is brought into our care at HERD to be rehabilitated and integrated into a stable and nurturing elephant herd that will provide them with the love and emotional security they need to survive, and to give them a second chance at life with a herd that will accept them without prejudice.

REINTEGRATION & REHABILITATION

The unusual family structure of the Jabulani herd that are largely orphans themselves presents a unique solution for orphaned baby elephants in Southern Africa that vitally need a second herd to ensure their emotional wellbeing and survival.

Together with our highly experienced elephant carers, we can provide a safe and regulated reintegration process for the calves and monitor their growth and development within their new herd, while documenting and recording invaluable data for research for the species.

In time, with the anticipated increase in the Jabulani herd's numbers, we suspect they may naturally split into two separate herds, as wild elephants do. Once that happens, given the right conditions and environment that will enhance their current wellbeing, the next step would be to integrate them into a separate and secure wildlife reserve.

Elephants are a highly intelligent and emotional species, and the impact of forcing a division of their herd would have a severe impact on their emotional wellbeing. Our approved management plan allows us to adjust and improve under the guidance of our respected elephant advisors, as unknowns become clear.



KEY OBJECTIVES

1. To recognise and accept the responsibility for taking care of animals on behalf of broader society, and to acknowledge society's wish for and expectation of the protection and enhancement of vulnerable animals' quality of life, which is planned and sustained for their full lives.
2. To provide a safe rehabilitation alternative for elephant orphans that prioritises the long-term well-being of the elephants.
3. To provide a protected and supportive environment for the rescued Jabulani herd that promotes and enhances their overall well-being through rewilding (as much as possible) and understanding the ongoing need to provide direct care and supervision for their lifetime.
4. To take advantage of the availability of a habituated wild elephant herd, the Jabulani herd, which provides a stable and controlled environment and elephant social system into which orphan elephants can be reintegrated for their enhanced lifetime wellbeing.
5. To reintegrate the orphans into the habituated Jabulani elephant herd and/or other appropriate rehabilitation options that may become available in the future.
6. To establish a strategy and long-term plan for elephant rehabilitation through rewilding that includes ways to mitigate the long-term chronic stress of releasing elephants directly into the wild when, as orphans, they don't have a proper social structure. The focus is on building the orphans' ability to deal with a wild system independently, in such a way that allows them to develop that capacity at a reasonable pace, and within a stable and nurturing system. Thus, the rewilding of captive elephants that takes elephant biology and local context into account.
7. To base our processes and procedures on the best available evidence and expertise, find innovative solutions to the challenges faced to enhance the elephants' well-being, and, thereby, be the go-to entity in South Africa to rehabilitate orphan elephants.
8. To lead in the development and the best practice for sustainable, long-term, orphan elephant rehabilitation, and contribute to the development of ethical and responsible industry standards, and the development of norms and standards that are credible, a credited, endorsed by stakeholders, and set a gold standard.
9. Contribute towards the conservation value of elephants in a holistic way, by providing land to a flagship species that is not otherwise available. The conservation value lies not only in the conservation of the species, but promoting natural capital and natural land use for the benefit of people, while providing a safe rehabilitation context, and a sanctuary for partially rewilded elephants over their lifespan.
10. Develop and leverage the potential role of elephants in contributing to local development, in the context of the sustainable development goals, including sustaining life on land, improving social cohesion, enhancing environmental and natural resource education on the reserve and in local schools, reducing poverty through employment and economic development of SMMEs associated with the elephants in their context, reducing gender inequality and broader inequality through the empowerment of women, youth and the poor and disadvantaged, through our operations and our broader footprint outside the reserve.
11. Take a holistic approach to leveraging elephant goods (including dung) and services (including ecotourism, cultural value, existence value), that ensures the sustainability of the land-use and protection of the elephants on the reserve, but that also provides access with tenure to the local community to enhance the broader value of the current land-use relative to other options.
12. Expanding career opportunities and building a career path for elephant carers, as a critical resource for natural capital enhancement.
13. To provide opportunity for research and student training to enhance our knowledge and capacity for sustainable development.



KEY PRINCIPLES

In addition to these objectives, there are several principles that will determine our approach in the short and long terms. These are the key rules for all strategies, planning and actions taken at HERD.

- a. In the short and long-term, the key focus is the rehabilitation and rewilding of elephants.
- b. For this to occur, attention must be on the social and sentient nature of elephants, their longevity, and the need for their learning and social development to take place in a protective, nurturing and safe context and environment. We acknowledge the importance of social learning, bonding and role building for orphans by creating a novel system of responsibly wilding or reintegrating elephants.
- c. It is unethical to release orphans into the wild without allowing them an opportunity to develop a robust social decision-making and behavioural system, within a structured support system, which people can, and have an obligation to, provide.
- d. To mitigate the impact of hand-raising and caring for orphan elephants, and the effect of this on the orphan, the herd into which they are introduced, and society as a whole, we must create sustainable, responsible and transparent mechanisms, which engage with broader society, to ensure the overall well-being of the elephants.
- e. This operation must be ethical, accredited and credible, with a fully constituted ethics committee and an advisory committee with the appropriate expertise.
- f. As animals are under the custodianship of people and the value of elephants exists for all of humanity, it is necessary to take on a custodianship role on behalf of broader society, and to ensure that people know the animals are being well-protected and supported in an ethical way, thereby enhancing global humaneness and humanity.
- g. As a species, we have a collective responsibility to ensure the protection of orphaned elephants throughout their lives. We must build and maintain a long-term strategy for rewilding orphan elephants that enhances wellbeing, and takes into consideration their longevity.
- h. We must enhance and expand the contribution of elephants to human social and economic development, and human livelihoods and well-being, especially locally.
- i. Do not cause unnecessary suffering or harm.
- j. There is no breeding of captive elephants.
- k. New orphans increase the well-being of the Jabulani elephant herd - the emotional well-being and behaviour - by improving the social structure of the herd, and providing the conditions for natural social interactions and processes. While the introduction of calves can play a positive role in of the Jabulani herd, the herd also provides the most humane way to reintegrate orphans into elephant society that is available.
- l. There is no promotion of the removal of any babies from the wild.
- m. It is not the first choice to take in captive elephants considering the risks posed by the complex social nature of elephants.
- n. There are clear and specific criteria for taking in orphans for rehabilitation, such as when orphans are the direct consequence of human interference and human-created problems, such as poaching of their mother. Elephants are only accepted as a result of confiscation, donation or rescue.
- o. All orphans accepted are approved by official government agencies and are properly permitted.
- p. We do not promote or drive the operation as a way to create a market for orphans. Orphans are accepted in their own interests, and, as such, do not to have any resale value.
- q. The Jabulani herd were rescued from a perilous situation and are being provided with a protected and comfortable environment that meets their biological and social requirements, within the limitations of being a previously tamed herd.
- r. We are committed to the Jabulani herd and ensuring their well-being for their natural lives.



THE RESCUED JABULANI HERD

The HERD story started in 1997...

Jabulani, an elephant calf of just four months, was rescued and rehabilitated at HESC (the Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre) after he had been found injured, abandoned and stuck in the mud of a silt dam. Once he was recovered and weaned, we introduced Jabulani to the wild elephants of our private reserve. However, they were not interested in him and he kept returning to the comfort and familiarity of the people he had come to know.

In 2002, a herd of orphan elephants in Zimbabwe were at risk of being killed during the country's land reformation process. Adine's mother, Lente Roode worked with a team to successfully rescue and move the herd of elephants and their dedicated carers to the safety of our reserve, where they could live out their days. The idea was to introduce Jabulani to the rescued herd as every elephant needs a family. Fortunately, Tokwe, the matriarch of the herd, accepted Jabulani lovingly and gracefully. Jabulani had finally found a family and the Jabulani herd was created.

This was a significant moment in both our history and our future, as the original herd are all believed to have been orphans too. Their unique family structure would create a favourable environment for orphaned elephants in need of a herd. They have since warmly welcomed other orphaned elephants that we have introduced to them, including Kumbura, Timisa and Khanyisa.

As the Jabulani herd is semi-habituated, they needed more protection. We therefore built them a spacious homestead area, providing indoor and outdoor shelter. It is into this loving and welcoming family and home that we hope to introduce the HERD orphans once they are older, stronger and ready. The herd roam, forage, swim and bond out in the wilderness of the reserve during the day.

The entire rescued herd and newly-integrated orphans remain our responsibility at HERD Trust for the duration of their lives.

WHAT IT TAKES TO CARE FOR ELEPHANTS

When a rescued orphan arrives at the orphanage, it is traumatised and in many cases starving, dehydrated, sunburnt and possibly injured. Because of their high intelligence and complexity, elephant orphans are very different to other wild animals. Their needs are diverse and nuanced and require a special kind of management, one with heart, soul and respect in addition to milk and medicine.

ELEPHANT CARERS

HERD has a sizable team of dedicated elephant carers, who assist in 24-hour-shifts to ensure that the orphans are never alone. The carers are the sole nurturers until the new orphans are strong enough to join the other elephant orphans and then the Jabulani herd. Consistency of this core team is crucial, as the second loss of a 'herd' member can be extremely traumatic and can bring on a sudden change in an orphan's health. Our carers play a significant role in the nurturing of the orphans with sustenance, healthcare, love, support, motivation and guidance.

STIMULATION

A stable sleep pattern and routine are essential for the calves' wellbeing, as is stimulation - using toys, rubbing posts, frequent mudbaths and exercise. Our carers make use of the natural environment to enhance and strengthen the orphans' natural instincts such as through sand-dusting and trunk exercises.

FAMILY

With elephants' complex social systems, they receive immense value from a family structure. The discipline and peer support created by the herd benefits not only the orphan introduced to its new herd, but also the wellbeing of the herd by allowing them to 'show' and to fulfil their maternal instincts and dynamic socialisation by adopting the new calves.

TEAMWORK

In addition to the people on the ground, we have a team who don't deal with the day-to-day caring of the elephants and help to strengthen our operation, and form part of our back-of-house. These individuals manage financials, media and communications and fundraising and are part of the management plan.

FUNDING

Monetary funding is crucial for the daily operations of the orphanage during orphans' critical formative years, as well as the potential long term financial impact of caring for a fully grown elephant if reintegration into the wild is not feasible. These potential reintegration projects would include the need for new land which will add additional costs to HERD operations.

MILK

A baby elephant's milk formulation is exceptionally delicate and needs frequent adjustment, with extra nutritional supplements as they grow, as their mother's milk would change naturally through the weaning stages and evolving needs. The gut of a baby elephant is extremely sensitive. When an orphan has diarrhea, it has a ripple effect. It starts by impacting their gut lining, which in turn changes their energy levels, impacting their emotional wellbeing. They can move from hero to zero in a short period. Daily records of their feeding and bathroom habits are essential so to monitor whether they are excreting or urinating more than what they take in. Like human babies, they are very delicate and can quickly dehydrate.

PLANNING

Consistent management planning is essential to the success of an elephant conservation project such as HERD. Our objectives, our principles, international, national and provincial legislation as well as animal welfare and protection acts, have to be continuously reviewed in order to adapt and include any changes that arise. A solid management plan includes the long-term responsibility of elephant care, including research of the species, ethics and the possible reintegration into the wild.

ETHICS

Ethical business operations are imperative to HERD's success. The way we treat our team and the elephants must always enhance their mental and physical wellbeing. We educate and train our staff daily, knowing that their knowledge and learned passion for wildlife and elephants will be passed on through future generations. HERD has immense value in contributing to a resilient socio-ecological system where humans and animals can share common resources and live harmoniously together, ensuring the sustainable development of our wildlife, environment and communities.



MEET THE HERD OPERATIONS TEAM

The management of the orphanage environment and surroundings forms part of the task of caring for the elephants in our care. The HERD operations team oversee the maintenance of the orphanage buildings, sustainability projects, reserve management and other general operations, to ensure that they are of the highest standards to meet our objectives.



ADINE ROODE
FOUNDER



TIGERE MATIPEDZA
ELEPHANT MANAGER



JUAN FERREIRA
OPERATIONS MANAGER

MEET OUR TRUSTED ELEPHANT CONSERVATION ADVISORS



DR PETER ROGERS
WILDLIFE VET



BRETT MITCHELL
ELEPHANT REINTEGRATION
TRUST



PROF ROB SLOTOW
UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL



DR JOHAN MARAIS
WILDLIFE VET



DR EDDIE WEBB
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA



PROF ANDRE GANSWINDT
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA



DR RICKY DIPPENAAR
NEONATOLOGIST



OUR ELEPHANT CARERS

Our carers are the orphans' essential family and nurturers during their rehabilitation and gradual integration. They care for the calves around the clock, feeding, stimulating, bonding with and protecting them, while helping them to explore their new world. Our carers guide the orphans in their recovery and in adapting to the dynamics of the social structure of the Jabulani herd.

We have dedicated elephant carers who work at the orphanage nurseries in shifts as well as a team who accompany the greater herd in the reserve from sunrise to set. Our senior carers help to train and oversee new carers, guiding them in how and when to be a nurturer, a peacemaker and a rule-enforcer.

These appointments have created jobs for the local community - jobs that are set to be the start of a long career, as the responsibility of being an elephant carer extends for decades. Some carers might move on with the orphans when they join the herd, while others will stay with the orphans at the nursery.

Taking care of elephant orphans requires not only husbandry training and a healthy, safe and clean environment, but also good and stable emotional health. The carers' moods affect the orphans. When they feel low, it brings the animals down. If an elephant orphan is in the presence of someone who exudes happiness, they are likely to feel upbeat.

The carers deal with the calves' many ups and downs - times of illness and even loss. These emotions can be overwhelming, but our carers are trained in handling these situations and understand how fragile an orphan calf is. We monitor our team's emotional wellbeing regularly and make quick changes to the team dynamics if the need arises, always considering the strain of watching over an elephant orphan.



THE HERD CARE TEAM

Our “Human Herd” plays an important role in each orphaned elephant’s wellbeing. Our highly passionate and experienced team gives each baby elephant the best round-the-clock care and are well-equipped emotionally and physically to react to any situation that may arise at any time of day or night. Our Care Team work together with Adine and our Elephant Manager, Tigere Matipedza.

Tigere has been working with elephants since 1996 and has been key in the success of the Jabulani herd’s wellbeing. Tigere oversees and manages the important integration process of the orphaned elephants to the herd and works closely with our team to ensure a successful introduction and integration.

Our team of elephant carers work shifts with certain carers dedicated to working either at the orphanage nurseries or accompanying the herd and orphans out in the bush. We purposefully employ only local carers to add to the original team that travelled with the rescued herd from Zimbabwe.

We are incredibly grateful to work with such kind-hearted and dedicated men and women.





ANTI-POACHING UNIT

We are grateful to be situated in the Greater Kapama Area and to be guarded by a dedicated anti-poaching unit, helping to ensure the safety of the elephants in our care at HERD as well as the wild elephants and other animals in our reserve. The strict and dedicated APU is now renowned in the greater Kruger area, and works with the police as well as the CIS in the Kruger National Park, and several other anti-poaching units.

The Kapama APU patrols in the high-risk areas of the reserve and conducts daily foot patrols on the reserve looking for traps and poachers. It also conducts occupational safety inspections on a regular basis. In an effort to combat poaching, the Kapama APU has been using tracking dogs as part of its anti-poaching initiative. The canine unit is comprised of both Bloodhounds and Belgian Malinois dog breeds, who have been trained to track potential poachers.



CONTACT HERD TRUST

LOCATION

Jabulani Safari, Hoedspruit
South Africa

+27 12 460 5605

info@herd.org.za
www.herd.org.za

