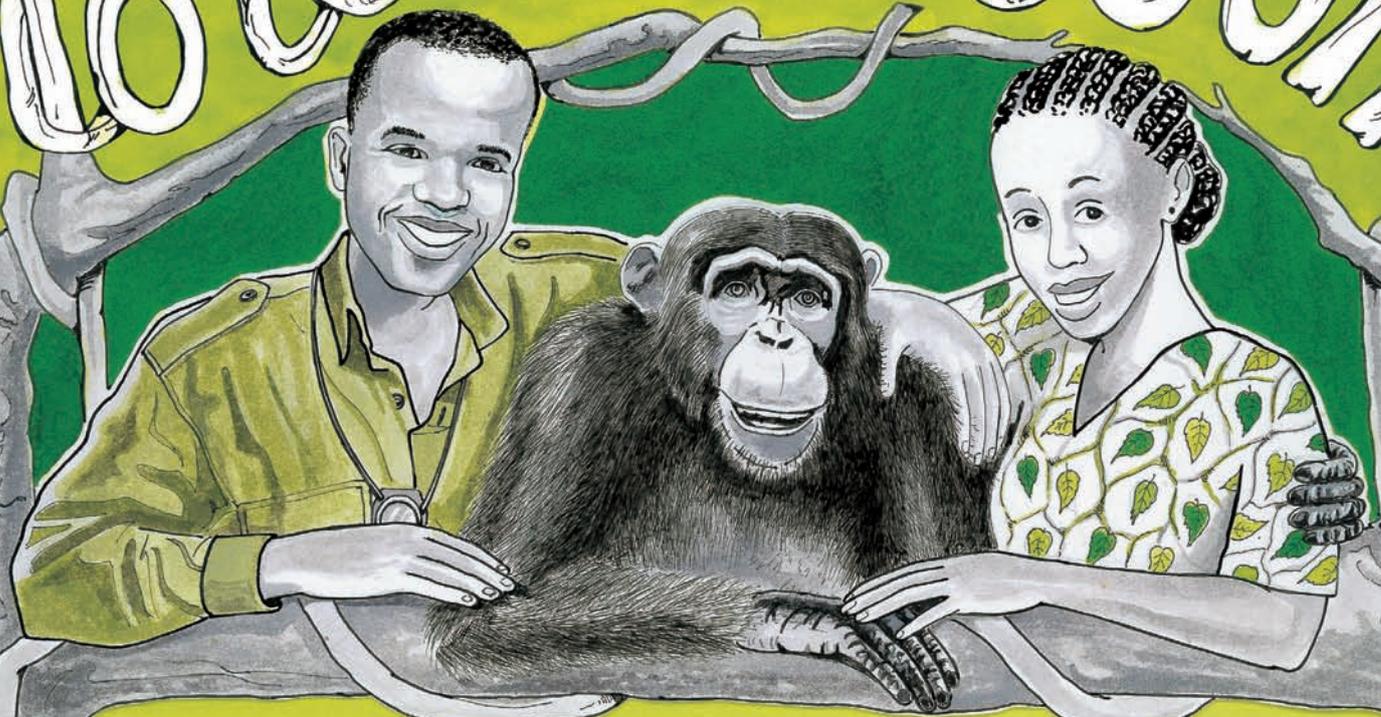


Forest Wins Down



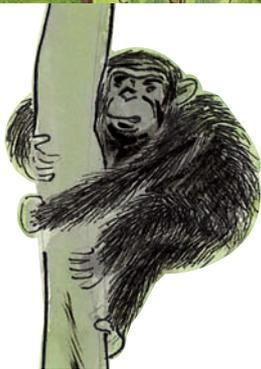
Journal No. 13
October
2015

My man, we suffer
and we not find them and
we will kill some of these
chimpanzees them!

WAIT! Don't shoot!
Look at what the chimpanzees
are doing! They using tools just
the same way we can use tools
in the town!



FOREST WISDOM



A NEWSLETTER FOR ALL OF YOU

- Communities who live near a national park
- Anyone who works for the conservation of forests

FOREST WISDOM

- Tells the story of special forest inhabitants: chimpanzees
- Shows the problems and threats to the forest
- Provides information
- Answers questions and invites you to contribute to this newsletter
- Invites you to protect the great forest, a national heritage that is yours

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Christophe Boesch,
WCF-President

Hello everybody,

This year, I am pleased to announce that the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF) has decided to make an issue of “Forest Wisdom” dedicated to Liberia.

Let me tell you about a very important matter: Two eco-guards were walking in the forest that will become the Grebo-Krahn National Park, when suddenly they smelled bad meat...It did not take them long to find a dead elephant in this deep part of the forest. Thousands of maggots were crawling on it, but the most shocking – it was obviously a breast-feeding mother the poachers had shot, and thus, somewhere in the forest, a starving baby elephant was fighting for its life! Yes, there are still elephants in the Liberian forest, and it is worrying that they are so badly threatened.

When we hold meetings in the local communities, we are amazed by how much the community people know, especially the hunters, about the forest and animals that live inside the Proposed Grebo-Krahn National Park. But because the animals are finishing from the forest, the hunters want to stop hunting, even though hunting is what they’ve always been depending on. “These days,” they tell us, “we have to walk for hours way deep into the forest to kill any animal whereas just few years ago, we used to sit in the town and see monkeys jumping from tree to tree”. It is these hunters who tell WCF and FDA that the animals are finishing in the forest, and that people are hunting too much. “It good to Eat some and Leave some” they often say, “Because if we not

do this one, maybe tomorrow there will not be any animals in the forest for our children to see in the future”.

Did you know that Liberia has the largest forest in all of West Africa, and one of the largest populations of chimpanzees? This is something that all Liberians should be very proud of! Forests are being cut down and destroyed all over the world. Liberia now has the chance to show everybody how it keeps the forest for the people, and also for the unique wildlife in their forests. In our organization, the WCF, we work with the FDA (Forestry Development Authority) to protect these important populations of chimpanzees of Liberia, that you, the town’s people have told us are **our cousins of the forest!!**

At the WCF, we are helping the FDA to create the **Grebo-Krahn National Park** in Grand Gedeh and River Gee counties. This forest is still home to nearly 250 chimpanzees, as well as a small population of elephants, pygmy hippopotamuses, forest buffalo and lots of monkeys and duikers (bush deer). We must do all we can to keep this forest untouched for these animals to survive. And, just as important, the local communities must manage their community and customary land to keep their forests intact also outside the national park to have access to fruit, firewood, and wood to build their houses. In this way, the animals will no longer finish in the forest!



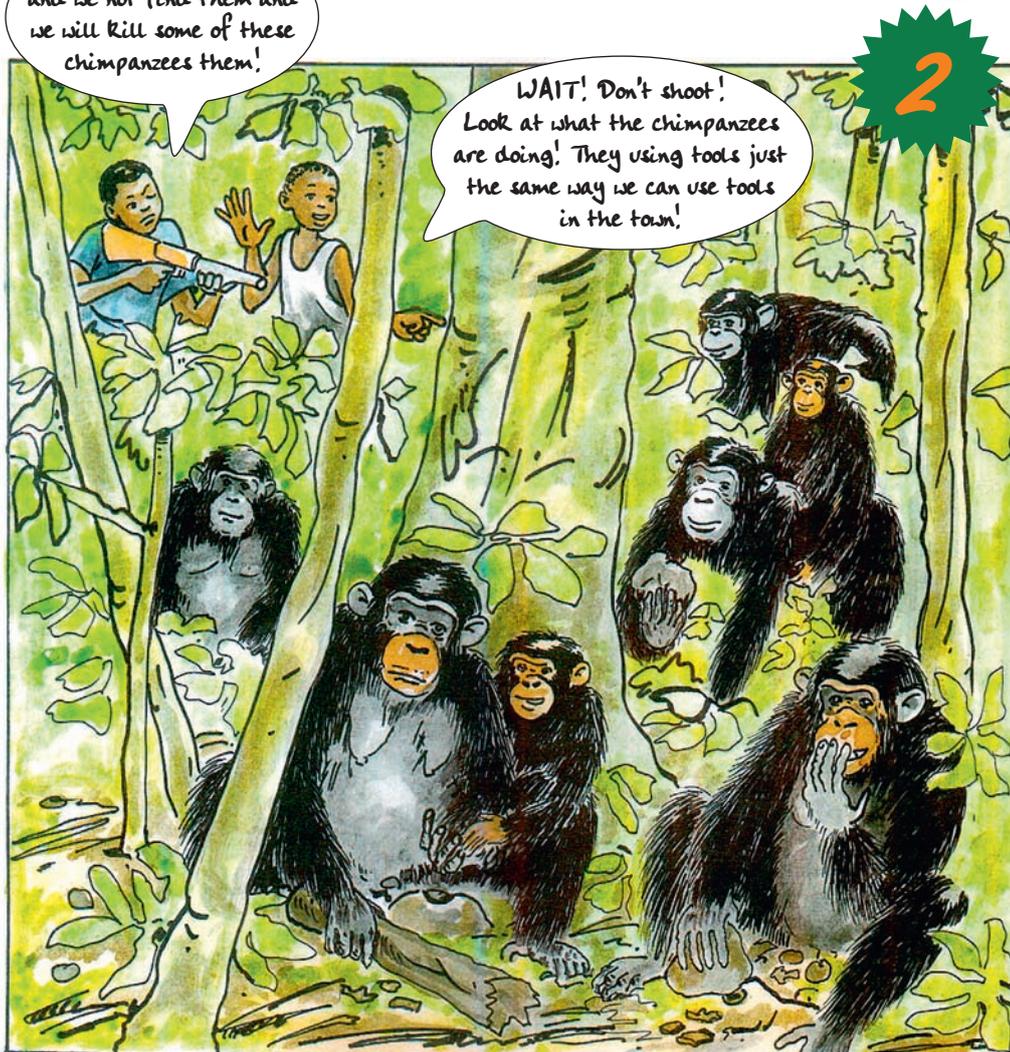
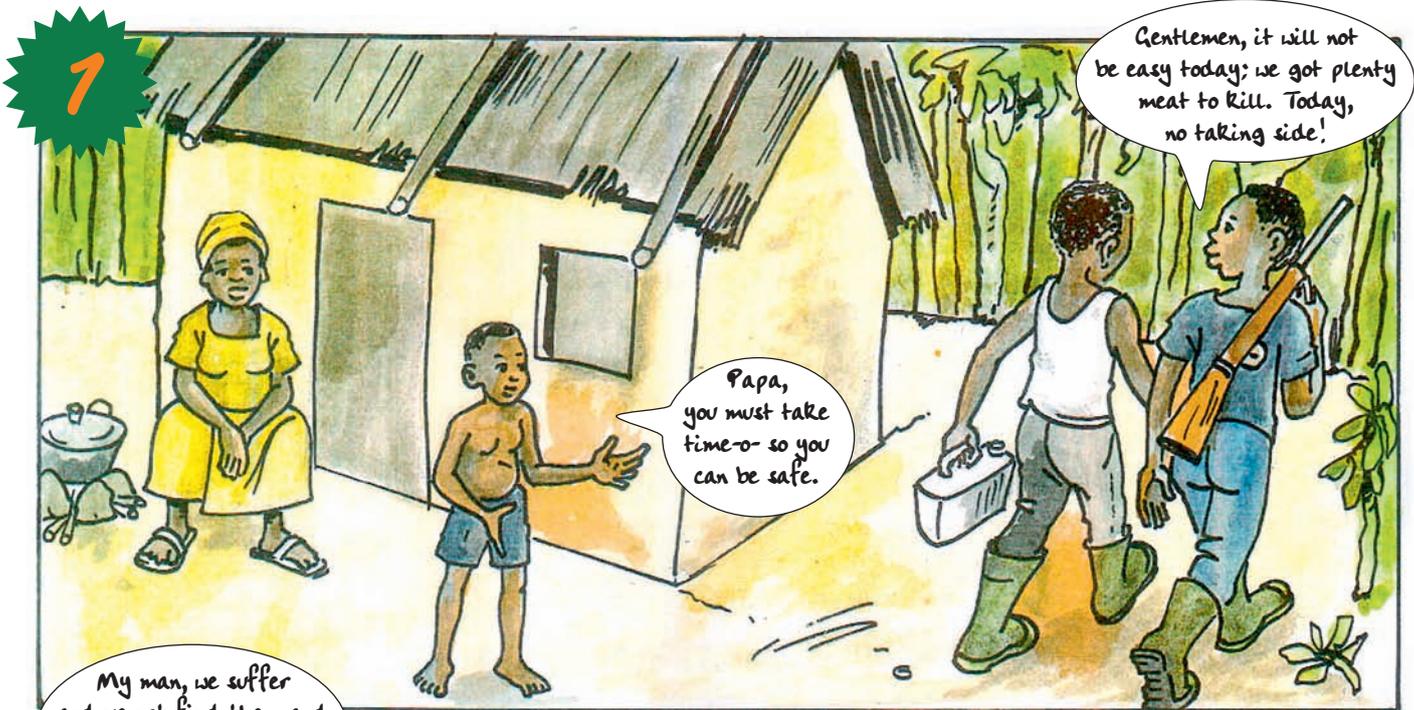
WCF Liberia Team



Soloblo Biomonitoring team A with two local community members.

CHIMPANZEES ARE OUR COUSINS *Devla Dowd and Simon Furnell*

In a town near the forest, the chief hunter and his men are going into the forest. They are going to hunt and bring some bushmeat back to town to sell at the market.



Deep in the forest, the two hunters come across a group of chimpanzees (what we call baboon). The chief hunter points his gun at one big female chimpanzee, but his young apprentice wants him to stop. "Look", he tells the chief hunter, "the chimpanzees are cracking nuts with large rocks and wooden sticks, just like human beings do with hammers." The chief hunter's apprentice wants to watch and learn about how chimpanzees live in the forest.

CHIMPANZEES ARE OUR COUSINS



3



The hunters begin to follow the chimpanzees as they travel through the forest and spend the whole day watching and being impressed by how the chimpanzees live in the forest. They see the chimpanzees using a sponge made of leaves to drink water. They see them using sticks (more tools!!) they peel down to the correct size, to fish for ants. They also see that the female chimpanzees are caring for their young, just like we do back in town. They decide to head back to town to tell their community about what they have seen today.

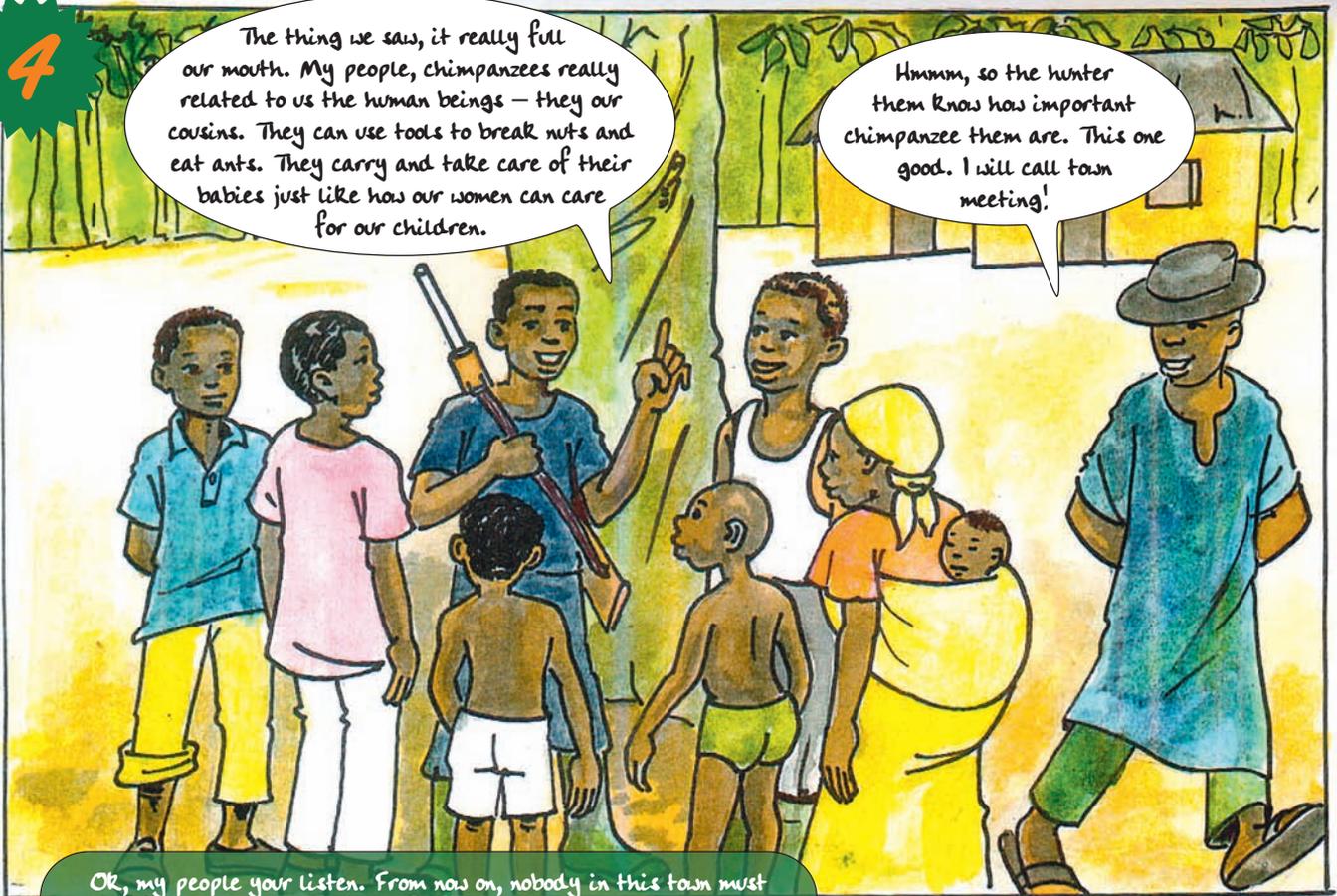
CHIMPANZEES ARE OUR COUSINS

Once back in town, the two hunters begin to tell their story to all who will listen. They know what they saw was important and want everyone to know how chimpanzees are just like humans. And how they decided not to hunt the chimpanzee but protect it instead. After seeing them, they agreed that chimpanzees are their cousins of the forest, and they will never hunt them again.

4

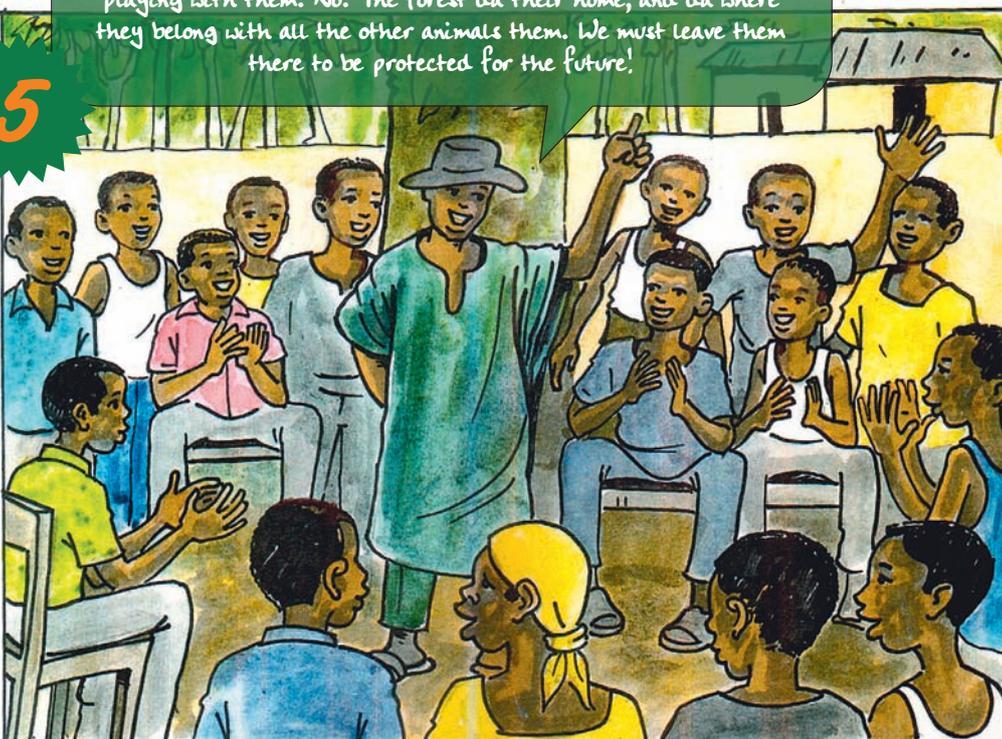
The thing we saw, it really full our mouth. My people, chimpanzees really related to us the human beings – they our cousins. They can use tools to break nuts and eat ants. They carry and take care of their babies just like how our women can care for our children.

Hmmm, so the hunter them know how important chimpanzee them are. This one good. I will call town meeting!



Ok, my people your listen. From now on, nobody in this town must hunt for chimpanzee, nobody must eat it, and nobody must sell it. At the same time, we must not keep them in our house or yard to be playing with them. No. The forest da their home, and da where they belong with all the other animals them. We must leave them there to be protected for the future!

5



The town chief has gathered everybody in his community together. He wants everybody to know about the important decision the hunters made today by not killing the chimpanzees. He tells the people that in their village no one should kill or eat chimpanzees and that they must be protected in the forest. Everybody agrees!

Communities of Grebo Forest are creating a national park



Community and FDA in Peab discussing the creation of Grebo-Krahn National Park

Community meeting with people of Yeob town, mapping their community land



For the past 3 years, WCF and FDA have been engaging with over 50 communities living around the Grebo National Forest to create a new national park in Liberia. The communities and FDA all agree that the Grebo Forest is very important and that it should be protected to save the animals from finishing in the forest, but to also save the forest for our children and even our children's children. One of the best ways to do this is to create a national park. In all national parks, nobody can hunt or make their farm. In this way, the animals have a safe place to live and the forest

can continue to grow and provide for the communities. Remember, without the forest, we would not have all the rain that allows us to have productive farms! And remember, it is the animals in the forest that spread the seeds of the trees, and this helps the trees to grow and become big and strong. So, we need to make sure that we create a national park so that the animals can move freely and not cause any embarrassment to the communities. We thank the communities of Grand Gedeh and River Gee for working with us and the FDA to save the home of the chimpanzees!

Communities protect the Proposed Grebo-Krahn National Park



Awareness given to people creating a new farm by the FDA and community eco-guards

Community eco-guards with the WCF team in Grebo-Krahn National Park



© Marianne Knecht / WCF

Community members from different towns and villages around the Proposed Grebo-Krahn National Park are working as community eco-guards to help FDA protect the forest and the animals that live inside. The teams patrol in the forest with an FDA and WCF Supervisor to find areas in the forest that are in need of protection. This means, they look for areas where people are doing illegal activities such as hunting, mining and even pit-sawing. If the community eco-guards

meet any people in the proposed park, they talk to these persons to explain why they should not be there, and why it is important to protect the park. We want to thank all of our community eco-guards who have worked so hard in the past year, walking many many many miles in the forest, and showing to their friends and families that protecting the forest is important for all of us! Let's work together for the Grebo-Krahn National Park!



Deep inside the Grebo-Krahn National Park, a farmer talks to the chief about his intention to brush of a piece of the forest to make his cocoa farm. He has chosen some thick forest, full of chimpanzees and other animals. But the Chief, knowing that chimpanzees are important animals, does not agree for the farmer to make his farm in the national park, because it is a protected area. According to the forest law, no farming, hunting or mining is allowed to take place because the animals and the forest are supposed to be protected.

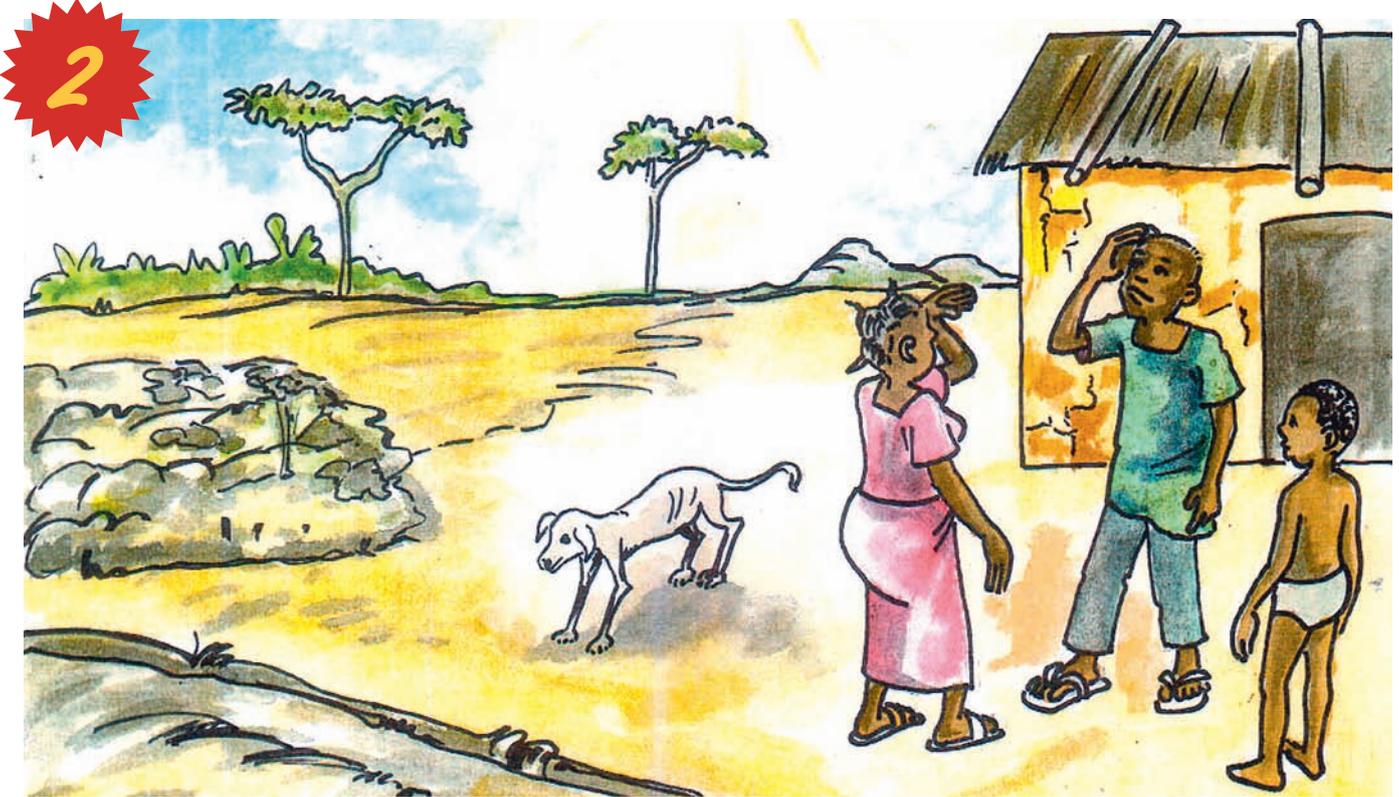


Chief, looka this fresh land. Papay, if you agree, I want to make one big cocoa farm here.

My man, I sorry. But this place, not place for you to brush and make farm. This place da the national park and by law, it protected. This means that nobody must make farm inside here.

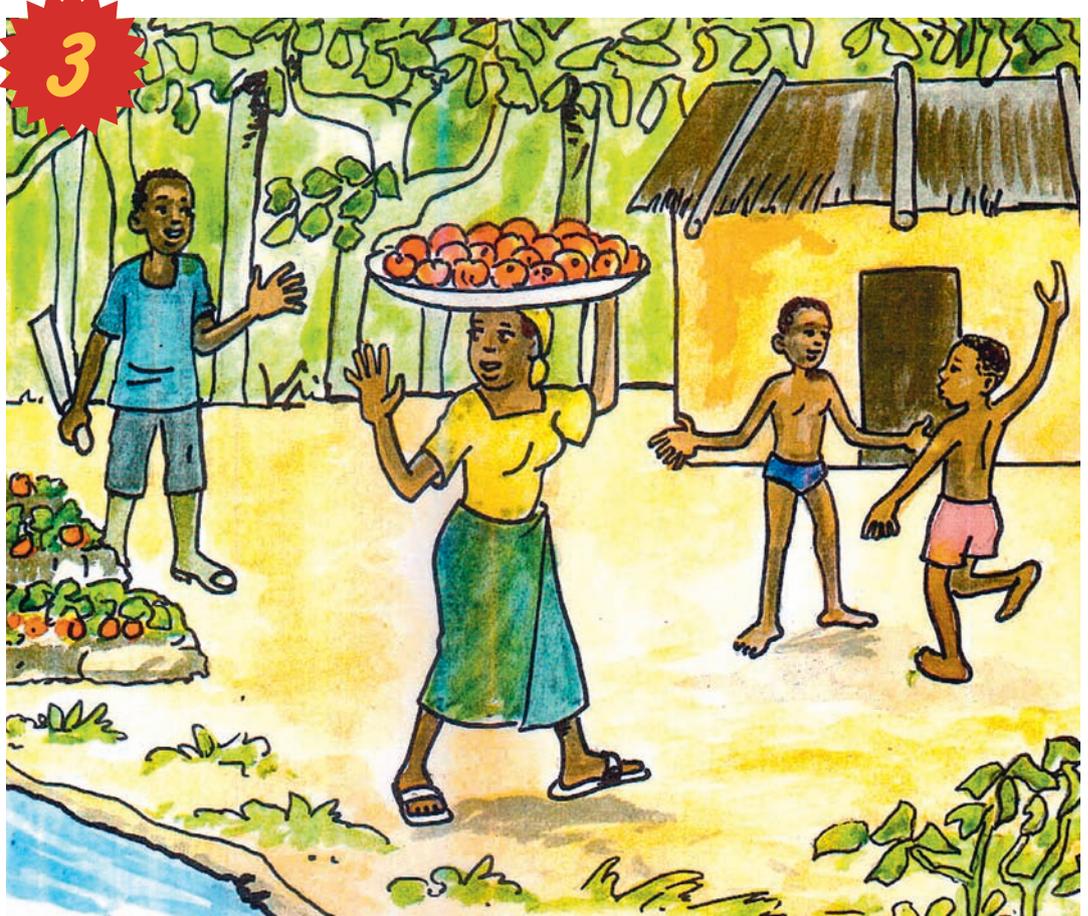
LET'S PROTECT THE FOREST

The Chief explains: "Look, if all of us go way deep in the forest to brush farm, not too long, no forest will remain there and everything will die. Da the forest can make the rain to come down and da it can make our farm to grow good and make the weather to be fresh for us. Let me tell you, without the forest, the land will get dry and the whole place will turn to desert. Nothing will grow again, and people will have to leave because they have no crops and no food."



The Chief continues:

"When we be keeping our forest intact, the rains will continue and our crops, them will start growing fast fast. This means that our village will be blessed with plenty food and we will be able to sell some. So you must know that just by brushing farm in the national park, you breaking the law. But if we protect the forest, it will always provide for us and our children and our children's children to come. So for this reason, we got to protect the forest!"



LET'S PROTECT THE FOREST

The Chief continues and tells the farmer about why the animals and the forest need each other. This is because all animals, including chimpanzees (the animal we call baboon), elephants and even birds in the forest, can help the forest to grow. They eat fruit and then spread the seeds all around the forest when they go toilet or when traveling from place to place in the forest. Without the animals, the forest will not grow and at the same time, we will not have rain to make our cocoa or other farm crops to grow. The forest, we the human beings and all the animals, we all depend on each other, and this is why we must protect the forest and the animals. He then explains that it is for this reason, that he and his community are working with the FDA to put the national park together and protect it.

4



LET'S PROTECT THE FOREST

Thank you so very much, chief, for this good land. And thank you for teaching me about the forest. I will not go to the National Park to make farm and will only make farm near the town.

Look, my brother, take this good land. This one close to town. You can manage it and make good use of it by protecting it and making it your farm.



The Chief brings the farmer closer to town and shows him good land to make his farm. The land is near and so for this reason, he is not breaking any laws by making his farm on any protected land.

Education on the radio

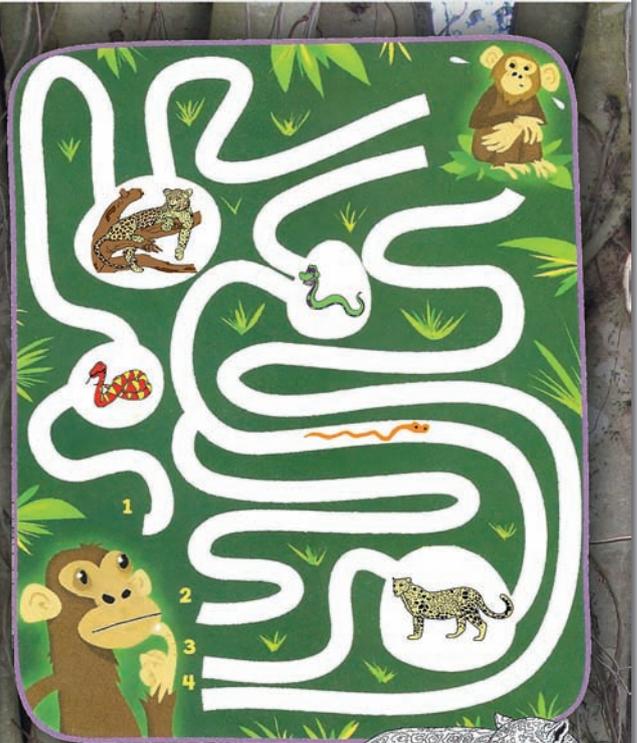
Local communities can tune into Radio Smile in Grand Gedeh and Radio Gee in River Gee to learn more about chimpanzees and the forest. Listen to the dramas about all the protected wildlife of Liberia; about how chimpanzees are just like us; and why its important to protect the forest for our livelihoods! We look forward to hearing what you thought about the radio dramas! Make sure you tune in!!!



Find the 6 differences !



Find the way – watch out for the leopards and the snakes!



Find the matching shadow!

