

**"Impact of Community - Based Conservancy on Community's Livelihoods:
A case of the !Khob !Naub Conservancy, Southern Namibia"**

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DECLARATION

This article represents the original work of the author and has not been submitted in any form for any degree to another University. Where use has been made of the work of others, it has duly been properly referenced and acknowledged in the text.

Signature.....

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ACRONYMS

ADMADE	Administrative Management Decision
AGMs	Annual General Meetings
AME	African Methodist Episcopal Church
CAMPFIRE	Communal Area Management Programme for Indigenous Resources
CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resources Management
CBO	Community Based Organizations
CGG	Community Game Guard
CGP	Community Goats Project
CMC	Conservancy Management Committee
CSD	CBNRM Sub-Division
CSP	Contracted Service Provider
DRWS	Directorate of Rural Water Supply
DoF	Directorate of Forestry
ELCIN	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ICEMA	Integrated Community-Based Ecosystem Management Project
IRDNC	Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation
LAC	Legal Assistance Centre
LIFE Plus	Living in a Finite Environment
MAWF	Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry
MET	Ministry of Environment and Tourism
NACOBTA	Namibia Community Based Tourism Association
NACSO	Namibia Association of CBNRM Support Organizations

NDT	Namibia Development Trust
NGO	Non-governmental Organisations
OVC	Orphan and Vulnerable Children
USAID	United States Agency for Development
SADF	South African Defence Force
SRL	Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Framework
UNAM	University of Namibia
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

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Abstract

The !Khob !Naub Conservancy, registered and gazetted in 2003 is the largest of the four conservancies in southern Namibia. It is established with the purpose of introducing game to the area, protecting and managing game and other natural resources, exploring tourism development and attracting tourists as well as creating jobs and generating income. The Conservancy is run by the Conservancy Management Committee with the support of 10 support agencies comprises of government institutions and NGOs. There are also Conservancy Coordinator and eight Community Game Guards.

The study was undertaken to assess and analyse the status of assets (natural, social, human, financial and physical) prior and current to the !Khob !Naub Conservancy establishment; to determine the impact of the Conservancy establishment on the community's asset base, livelihoods, and income streams; to assess the success and failure of the support agencies to provide livelihoods of community; and to make recommendations for future policies and programmes related to CBNRM in southern Namibia.

The research findings shows that the Conservancy project did not make any difference in the livelihoods of the community and there is no improvement in the resources assets base namely natural, physical, social, human and financial. Game has slightly increased and community receives 2-3kg of meat benefits occasionally. Only few employment opportunities were created. The

Conservancy is heavily relying on the support agencies for any assistance as they could not generate sufficient income to cover their own costs. Recommendations are made for further researches and exploration of joint venture and business enterprise opportunities in areas of tourism development and natural resources exploitation.

Key Words: CBNRM, community participation, Conservancy Management Committee, Conservancy, support agencies, southern Namibia, assets

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1. Introduction

Over the past century, the worldwide human population has increased dramatically (> 6 billion people) (Meffe *et al*, 2006:3), and most people depend on natural resources for their livelihoods. They exploit nature in order to meet their needs (Adams and Hulme, 2001), consequently putting pressure on natural resources which lead to resource degradation globally (Ghimire, 1994; Manning *et al*, 2002). Local communities, particularly the poor, are mostly affected and their livelihoods are threatened, while sustainable development is compromised. Carroll and Groom (2006:602) state that some areas of high biodiversity coincide with some densely populated areas on the globe and often experience the highest level of poverty with many people living under poverty line. Manning *et al* (2002), suggest that many rural poor rely heavily on a range of natural resources and ecosystem services for their livelihoods. This includes both subsistence and economic benefits such as agricultural commodities, oil, gas and minerals. Meffe *et al* (2006), point out that forest, aquatic ecosystems and wildlife are highly exploited for food, medicinal and economic reasons. Bwalya (2003:42) maintains that wildlife is one of the natural resources that offer multiple benefits with or without market qualities that span across subsistence, commercial and environmental interests. Some of the natural resources can be restored, while others are irreversible once exhausted.

Sustainable conservation of natural resources will only be guaranteed if ecological, economical and socio-political benefits are equally considered. Some

analysts suggest that the lack of sustainable development and unsuccessful resources management is exacerbated by the lack of power sharing between the central government, grassroots and other actors (Bwalya, 2003). In such cases community participation in decision making regarding development at all levels of planning and implementation is lacking. Carroll and Groom (2006:603) emphasise that for any program to be successful, it needs the active support of the local community during planning, because involving community members will help to address concerns and identify solutions to issues such as land tenure, natural resources management, livelihoods relationships to biodiversity, poverty and indigenous people's rights. In other words, central government and private sectors should work in partnership with the local governments and communities to promote good governance and decision-making power over natural resources (land, water, forest, fisheries and minerals) use and management. However, the government should provide the policy framework and regulations required to ensure proper coordination of such a process. Different initiatives have been developed worldwide in general and Southern Africa in particular to improve the governance including Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM). The CBNRM concept aims to promote community participation in natural resource management, address the environmental, economic and social justice (Bwalya, 2003). A CBNRM programme is one of the strategies developed to improve the status of natural resources in Namibia through promoting conservation and sustainable use of wildlife and other biological diversity (Jones 2003a).

The issue of rights of access to natural resources among different interest groups plays a vital role in resources management and governance. Bwalya (2003:42) points out that in Zambia, natural resources governance institutions, particularly those responsible for wildlife, face challenges of striking a balance between managing private activities and ensuring that the rights of access to wildlife benefits by the poor adjacent communities to resources is secure. Old systems of planning for parks tended to neglect environmental, ecological and socio-

economic considerations, because they prioritised tourist attractions rather than effectively managing tourist visits for the sake of biodiversity conservation (Carroll and Groom, 2006).

The study was undertaken with the following objectives in mind: to assess and analyse the status of assets (natural, social, human, financial and physical) prior to the !Khob !Naub Conservancy establishment and compare to the current situation; to determine the impact of conservancy establishment on the community's asset base, livelihoods, and income streams; to assess the success and failure of the support agencies to provide livelihoods of community; and to make recommendations for future policies and programmes related to CBNRM in Southern Namibia.

2. Why Community Based Natural Resource Management in Namibia?

Namibia is blessed with natural resources and rich wildlife diversity, but the majority of the population, particularly in the communal areas, could not derive economic benefits from them prior independence in 1990. This is because of the colonialism and apartheid history. During the 29 years of German colonial rule, the indigenous population were forced out of their traditional areas, while during the South Africa apartheid era, the South Africa government continued the practice of farmland seizure and restricted the indigenous population to 'native reserves'. With the implementation of the Odendaal Commission in the 1960s, Namibia was divided into 10 'homelands' through forceful removal of some communities from most of their country's fertile land (Hopwood, 2005:04). Other Southern African countries such as Zimbabwe and South Africa also have a common problem of a lack of devolution of full land rights to the local actors in communal areas (Murombedzi, 2003).

By law all wildlife on both commercial and communal lands belongs to and is controlled by the state. Following the decline of wildlife numbers in the late 1960s, the then apartheid government of South Africa gave conditional and

limited rights of ownership over wildlife to freehold farmers in commercial farmlands, allowed them to utilise and exploit game by trophy hunting and tourism (Jones, 2003a:147), through the passage of Nature Conservation Ordinance Act of 1975 (NACSO, 2006; Weaver and Skyer, 2003). The ownership and conditional usufruct rights were given over certain common game species and other species can be utilised through a permit system. For the farmers to qualify, they should have the land of a certain size and a certain type of fencing (Jones, 2003a:147), consequently individual farmers pooled their land to provide wildlife with the required habitat and formed large private commercial conservancies (Bandyopadhyay *et al*, 2004:3). Since then, the number of wildlife on commercial farmlands has recovered tremendously.

These apartheid discriminatory laws and policies over land and other natural resources gave the privilege to minority settlers in commercial farmers or freehold landholders, while excluding the majority of Namibians (Ogbaharya, 2006; Weaver and Skyer, 2003). This resulted in imbalance in land distribution and land use practice. The similar practice took place in Zimbabwe in 1970s (Jones, 2003a; Jones and Murphree, 2001).

Land is the main property that drives and controls the accessibility to natural resources utilisation, and land tenure has been a burning issue in Namibia since independence (Ministry of Land, Resettlement and Rehabilitation, 1998). Land distribution in Namibia has been uneven and a dual tenure system exists due to colonial history. For example, about 1, 2 million black Namibian populations have been allocated the least suitable land (41%) for subsistence farming resides in “former homelands” or communal land. Less suitable land for subsistence farming is evident especially in the former Kaokoland and Damaraland in the western part of the country, now Kunene Region, and in the southern part of Namibia including Karas Region. In contrast, the white population has been allocated 43% of land as commercial farmland under freehold title and the remained 16% is allocated to conservation and other state land (Jones,

2003b:18, Jones and Mosimane, 2000:83). According to the 2001 population and housing census 67 percent of the population lives in rural areas or communal land (National Planning Commission, 2003:4). According to the Ministry of Land, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (1998) communal land under customary land rights on which the majority of people depends cannot be used as collateral. The communal land which belongs to the state can only be utilized for residential and subsistence farming purposes.

Mogaka *et al* (2001: 86) indicates that 95% of the Namibian farming population live in communal land and derive their livelihood directly from natural resources. National Planning Commission (2003:8) reveals that 46% of the population in Karas Region in the south of the country resides in rural areas. In comparison with Namibia, in South Africa, 48% of rural communities lives on the 14% of communal land in former homelands and live off subsistence agriculture and other natural resources (Els and Bothma, 2000). According to Corbett and Daniels (1996), like South Africa, Namibia's communal land was subdivided into native reserves or tribal lands based on ethnic groups.

Excess exploitation of natural resources resulted in land and environmental degradation and natural resources depletion (Meffe *et al*, 2006). Jones (2003b:41) relates that overgrazing, land clearing for crop farming and/or inappropriate cultivation techniques in communal land caused land degradation and desertification in Namibia, hence reduces the production potential of the land. The depletion and degradation of resources and environment have a detrimental impact on people's lives, in particular the poor. Degraded habitats may need to be restored and locally extinct species may need to be re-introduced (Carroll and Groom, 2006:605).

Jones (2003a, 2003b) states that while injustice was done by the pre-independence governments, the post colonial governments have tried to reverse the devolution process. Soon after Namibia's independence in 1990, the new

government realised that an injustice had been done in terms of natural resources ownership rights to the communal land residents. The mandate was given to the Ministry of Environment and Tourism to see to it that certain rights over natural resources particularly wildlife is devolved to communal areas communities. Consequently, the conditional rights of ownership over wildlife granted to freehold farmers in commercial farmlands were extended to communal land farmers through the amendment of Nature Conservation Amendment Act of 1996 whereby communities are allowed to form conservancies (Republic of Namibia, 1996).

Before the enactment of the policies and legislations regards to the devolution of conditional right to the communal land communities in 1996, the degradation of the natural resources prompted certain communities in Namibia's communal land in 1970s to practice community based natural resources management in their respective areas (Long, 2004). The Ministry of Environment and Tourism created a CBNRM Sub-division in 2002 to deal with CBNRM programme through conservancies' establishment and re-introduction of wildlife to their historic habitats.

Namibia emulates the example of other Southern African countries' programmes such as CAMPFIRE (Communal Area Management Programme for Indigenous Resources) in Zimbabwe and ADMADE (Administrative Management Decision) in Zambia (Ogbaharya, 2006; Jones, 2003a; Murombedzi, 2003). These initiatives attempt to promote the highly inspiring environmental, economic and social justice goals by combining both conservation and development initiatives into an integrated approach. The CBNRM programme aims at promoting rural development based on natural resources as well as encouraging conservation awareness (UNDP, 2000). Some authors regard the CBNRM programme as one of the strategies developed to improve the status of natural resources through promoting conservation and sustainable use of wildlife and other biological diversity. The initial idea of creating conservancies in Namibia was to integrate

wildlife conservation with rural development objectives in attempts to reverse resource degradation and counteract the long history of impoverishment, political and economic marginalization of rural communities and deprivation of natural resources dependant communities at grassroots level (Long, 2004). The reversal of resource degradation would support communities who depend on natural resources for subsistence livelihoods to obtain adequate benefits, particularly wildlife (Bwalya 2003).

The CBNRM programme in Namibia aims to achieve the goals of conservation and economic empowerment of rural households through communities' participation in natural resource management. The state devolves sufficient authority and control over the management of wildlife and other natural resources to rural communities in communal land (Bandyopadhyay *et al*, 2004). Some authors regard the CBNRM programme as one of the most effective tools that supports better management and utilisation of a broad spectrum of natural resources, bring rural people into the economic mainstream through wildlife and tourism development (Bandyopadhyay *et al*, 2004; Jonga *et al*, 2003). It opens the door for other opportunities such as empowerment of rural communities (Ogbaharya, 2006), hence leading to the improvement of communal farmers' livelihoods. It offers direct cash benefits in the form of cash dividends from tourism lodges and other enterprises, and earnings from employment and other benefits such as improved livelihoods through improved natural resources status (NACSO, 2006; Long, 2002).

NACSO¹ (2006) elaborates that communal land communities are able to benefit from the conservancies' activities in the form of hard cash in terms of income from trophy hunting, small enterprises (campsites), and joint venture tourism lodges (levies) and employment created (employed as Community Game Guards, in lodges and other tourism related activities). Other benefits are in the

¹ **NACSO**: *Namibia Association of CBNRM Support Organizations, an association of 12 local NGOs, the University of Namibia and individual associate members that provide non-government assistance to CBNRM programme and conservancies.*

form of non-cash products (meat, skin, developmental projects etc) and communities are participating in decision making regarding the utilisation of the natural resources at their disposal (NACSO, 2006). The study intends to investigate whether those goals are fulfilled in the !Khub !Naub Conservancy or only achievable in some areas. The CBNRM programme current strategy in Namibia is to integrate natural resource management from wildlife through water, fisheries, rangeland and forestry (Long, 2002).

CBNRM also aims to improve the capacity of local communities to be able to manage their resources. This entails increasing wildlife population, promoting of community based tourism enterprises, and generating revenue for community development. Some authors believe that CBNRM is a new land use option integrated with existing livelihood strategies in order to conserve wildlife and improve the welfare of rural populations through institutional and tourism enterprises development (Long 2002). Apart from natural resources improvement and economic benefits the conservancies could bring about, other resources or assets including social, human and physical assets need to be improved if poverty is to be reduced among rural people and their livelihoods to be improved.

2.1 Why the Sustainable Livelihoods Paradigm is useful?

Many protected areas in Southern Africa including Namibia are surrounded by small and medium-sized communities, farms and other subsistence activities. Most conservation programmes were still focusing on wildlife as a point of departure, and not on the interaction between human development needs and the principles of wildlife management (Els and Bothma, 2000). The new approach to improve human–wildlife relationships at community level is to adopt and incorporate communal/rural community development as an integral part of the overall wildlife conservation and management to respond to the question of how environment and wildlife resources can be managed to the benefit of human population (Els and Bothma, 2000). Wildlife is not the only natural resources that can contribute to the improvement of local communities' livelihoods; therefore

other assets including physical, human, social, and financial and land use systems that benefit the people should be explored.

Most of communal areas' natural resources are degraded due to many factors that include high population density in some areas, common property and open access regime of communal land use of natural resources; and the fragility of most of the Namibian environment. Consequently, they offer little benefits to the communities. The livelihoods of poor people depend on the assets they possess, and the strategies they adopt are influenced by the external environment (Goldman, 2000). After the Brundtland Commission in 1987, the concept of sustainable livelihoods was introduced and applied to the analysis of resource ownership and access, basic needs and livelihood security in a rural situation (UNDP, 2000).

The sustainable livelihoods approach is regarded as a powerful integrating concept that offers a way to link socio-economic and ecological considerations that could improve the community asset base. Environmental education, community engagement, and commitment are the key components that help to develop sustainable livelihoods (Carroll and Groom, 2006). Carney (1998:4) defines the concept of "livelihood", based on original definition developed by Chambers and Conway as comprising the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. The Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Framework (SRL) is built around assets that are influenced by the external environment such as the vulnerability context within which people operate, and policies, institutions and process that shape the people's choice of livelihoods strategies. The vulnerability context comprises of trends, shocks and culture, and can influence people's decisions and their livelihoods strategies. The policies and institutional structure, and processes have effect on how people use their assets in pursuit of different livelihood strategies (Carney, 1998). Goldman *et al* (2000a:1) state that rural people have needs, and also resources or assets. However, they are vulnerable to a range of

challenges and higher priority could be given to how to reduce vulnerability by diversify their livelihoods to reduce risks instead of increasing the existing assets. The !Khub !Naub Conservancy case is used to analyse how communities utilise different asset portfolios for the short and long terms to secure social, economic and ecological sustainability of natural resources, particularly wildlife.

Sources of rural communities' subsistence livelihoods include agriculture (crop and livestock), fisheries, game, plants and wild fruits for food, cash, and medicines. Bwalya (2003:46) gives an example that the livelihoods of inhabitants around Blue Lagoon Game Management Area in Zambia depend mainly on agriculture for food and cash crops, and livestock at limited scale. So, natural assets are one type of assets amongst a suite of different and complementary assets, in other words, people do not just depend on nature or agriculture, but both.

3. Southern Namibia as special case

A large number of conservancies have been established countrywide during the last decade. These include Torra, #Khoadi //Hôas in Kunene Region and Salambala in Caprivi Region are self-reliant at this stage (Bandyopadhyay *et al*, 2004). The conservancies are self-reliant in the sense that they are fully responsible for all their own operation and management costs without external financial assistance from donor agencies, although they could still need technical support. It is recorded that since the official registration of conservancies in 1998, the number has grown to 29 in 2003 (NACSO, 2006; Weaver and Skyer, 2003). A total of 44 conservancies were registered by the beginning of 2006 (Ogbaharya, 2006). Most of the Conservancies depend on NGOs and international donors' financial support to cover the costs (Jones, 2003b)

The registered conservancies in Namibia have different characteristics due to different factors. They are found in different biomes of the country. They vary in terms of the climatic conditions and rainfall patterns, topography, wildlife status,

human population densities and geographical sizes (Long, 2004). For example Uukwaluudhi Conservancy in the North-Central Region of the country is about 1437 km², but accommodates roughly 25 000 people who are expected to benefit from the conservancy. The self-reliant Torra Conservancy is approximately 3522 km² populated by about 1200 people (NACSO, 2006).

The existing land uses within conservancies also differ. In Kunene Region for example, communities depend more on livestock, while in North-Central, Kavango and Caprivi Regions, the main land uses are mixed subsistence farming of cropping and livestock. In Nyae Nyae Conservancy in Otjozodjupa Region, communities are more dependent on subsistence wildlife (Long, 2004). There are those conservancies blessed with plenty of wildlife and tourism potential from which communities can benefit. Some conservancies are located in much higher rainfall areas characterised by woodlands and river systems, while others are in desert areas (NACSO, 2006). These factors influence the economic potential of conservancies. Other aspects are variations in geographical location, access to markets, extreme isolation (Long, 2004), and culture as well as social, political and economic influences (NACSO, 2006).

Southern Namibia is one of the arid and unique environments in Southern Africa. Sources of livelihood in the southern Namibia are different from other parts of the country due to its aridity and lesser wildlife diversity. The government and NGOs underestimate other economic potential such as tourism appeal, and stunning scenery the southern part of the country could offer that could enable local communities to participate in CBNRM activities. But, according to Stuart-Hill (2003:74), some economic studies shown that wildlife is a more suitable land use in an arid environment compared to agricultural and livestock land use which are more appropriate in wetter areas. Naturally, there are wildlife species that are adapted to desert conditions (Kalahari and Namib) and open habitats in the south of Namibia such as springbok (dominant), gemsbok, kudu, ostrich, steenbok, klipspringer and duiker as well as some predators including jackal and hyena

(Barnes and De Jager, 1995:2). These species can be utilized for consumptive and non-consumptive purposes (the terms are elaborated below).

The CBNRM programme has a long history in Namibia. It started in the early 1980s, when high value wildlife species such as elephants, black rhinos and other species were declining at an alarming rate in most of the communal areas particularly in the north-west, now Kunene Region, Owamboland, now the North-Central and north eastern (Caprivi Region) parts of Namibia. The drought, loss of habitats, heavy poaching at the hands of local residents, outsiders and the South African Defence Force (SADF) were some of the contributing factors to the declining of wildlife. In response, local traditional leaders, Directorate of Nature Conservation and local NGO in the north-west/Kunene Region established the Community Game Guards programme, the goal of which was to contain poaching (Bandyopadhyay *et al*, 2008:5; Long, 2004:27). However, there was no appropriate legislation that promotes such a programme until 1996 when the Nature Conservation Ordinance 4 of 1975 was amended.

The initial plan of introducing the CBNRM programme in Namibia in 1996 concentrated more on wildlife conservation and tourism enterprises development and paid less attention to other natural resources such as fish, thatching grass and valuable plants, grazing, land, water amongst others which could be managed and utilized to the benefits of the local community. The government and other CBNRM support agencies provided a great deal of assistance to the conservancies in the north-west and north-eastern part of Namibia and little attention was paid to the southern part of the country, despite the high tourism potential and other natural resources.

In their evaluation of the impacts of communal land conservancies in Namibia, Bandyopadhyay *et al* (2004) conclude that well established conservancies have more positive welfare gains to households compared to new conservancies. Barnes and De Jager (1995) determine the financial profitability and economic

values of establishing conservancies on commercial farmlands in Namibia by either consumptive or non-consumptive uses through modelling. "Consumptive use" refers to "the utilisation of individual game by its permanent removal or removal of its parts, from or within an area", and "non-consumptive use" means "use not entailing the permanent removal of individual game, but use for recreational, educational, research, cultural, or aesthetic purposes" (Republic of Namibia, 1996). Their findings were that the conservancies that are established in the south with the purpose of pure 'non-consumptive' game ranching are significantly profitable financially. However, Barnes and De Jager (1995:19), also point out that 'consumptive use' of wildlife in the south is more economically profitable than that in the north of the country. This might be a positive benefit for private land owners relative to communal land communities who have to share the benefits amongst the large group.

Apart from natural resources improvement and economic benefits the conservancy could bring about, other resources or assets (including social, human and physical assets) need to be considered if poverty is to be reduced among rural people. Thus, the investigation was to determine the impact of conservancies' establishment on the livelihoods of the local communities in communal land, particularly in the arid environment of southern Namibia. This was done within the theoretical framework of sustainable rural livelihoods.

The evidence is that, 12 years after the amendments of Nature Conservation Ordinance Act of 1975, only four communal conservancies are established in the arid environment of southern part of Namibia of which !Khob !Naub (2747 km²) in the Karas region is targeted for the study. The conservancy was officially registered in 2003 (NACSO, 2006).

4. The Namibian Government Approach to Community Based Natural Resource Management: assumptions, goals and policies

Namibia's land tenure right system is divided into state land, freehold, and communal land. The state land includes protected areas and any other unoccupied and not owned land; freehold comprises mainly commercial farmlands and urban areas; and communal land consists of all former homelands - rural areas, which the overall custodian is still the state (Malan, 2003; Weaver and Skyer, 2003; Ministry of Land, Resettlement and Rehabilitation, 1998). The land ownership type cannot be divorced from the systems of natural resources ownership, control and management that can be referred to as open access, regulated common property and private property regimes (Bwalya, 2003).

The promotion of wildlife-based activities in the economies of Namibia and Zimbabwe was made possible by amendments to existing wildlife laws in the 1960s and 1970s, resulting in an explosion of both wildlife populations and related enterprises. The then apartheid government gave conditional rights of proprietorship over wildlife to freehold farmers in commercial farmlands, allowed them to benefit through the utilisation and exploitation of game by trophy hunting and tourism (Jones and Murphree, 2001; Long 2004). This was done through the enactment of Nature Conservation Ordinance of 1975 (NACSO, 2006; Weaver and Skyer, 2003; Jones 2003b).

After independence, the Namibian Constitution was enacted with a provision in Article 95(l) for the conservation and sustainable utilization of natural resources: *“the maintenance of ecosystems, essential ecological processes and biological diversity of Namibia and utilization of living natural resources on the sustainable basis for the benefit of all Namibians, both present and future as well as for international community”* (Republic of Namibia, 1990). This was adopted as a mission for the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET). To fulfil its obligation, the Nature Conservation Ordinance Act 4 of 1975 was amended to enable communities in communal areas close to protected areas to benefit from

natural resources including wildlife and at the same time to manage those resources. This was done to remove the discriminatory policies that granted conditional rights of ownership over wildlife to freehold farmers in commercial farmlands.

The central government is the custodian of the CBNRM programme to ensure that the policies and legislation are followed accordingly. However, it is impossible for the government to fulfil the implementation process on its own. In Namibia, the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) is the legitimate body that spearheads the national programme to support CBNRM through the CBNRM Sub-Division (CSD) established in 2002 in partnership with Namibia Association of CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO) to ensure that the implementation of CBNRM process is effective (Long, 2004). NACSO is an association of 13 CBNRM service organizations (12 NGOs, and the University of Namibia). NACSO's main role is to coordinate and support the work of the conservancies and implementing agencies, to advocate the policy and legislation change and to monitor the effectiveness and impacts of conservancy development. It also approves grant applications from conservancies and support organisations. CSD's role is to encourage community participation and the improvement of the livelihoods of all Namibians, particularly the rural poor through the establishment of the conservancies.

According to the Nature Conservation Amendment Act 5 of 1996, a Conservancy is defined as a geographically and legally demarcated area whereby communal land communities pool their resources together with the intention to conserve, manage, utilise and benefit from natural resources on a sustainable basis (Republic of Namibia, 1996). Due to the collective ownership titles required by law for the process to be participatory, the decision to use and manage these resources within the conservancy are also done collectively.

It is believed that if the benefits to the communities outweigh the costs and gain sufficient ownership, local communities could be motivated to adopt compassionate and sustainable wildlife management practices (Bwalya, 2003). CBNRM is based on the assumption that local communities would be interested and willing to accept and implement a wildlife conservation programme once they are entitled to legal ownership of wildlife resources and associated benefits (Long, 2004; Bwalya, 2003:42). It is also assumed that the individual communities' behaviour and interest would be affected once economic incentives are realised amongst the community, this would consequently transform local residents into conservationists (Bwalya, 2003:42). However, a strong emphasis on conservation might jeopardise the effort as community might not see an immediate contribution to their livelihoods.

5. Non Governmental Organisations involvement in CBNRM

Establishing a conservancy is not an easy process. It normally requires considerable support and assistance as well as a great deal of stakeholders' participation (Long, 2002). Many projects and programmes implemented in the communities are initiated from the central government with the support of NGOs and in most case these institutions dictate how the affairs of the project should be run. So in most cases, CBNRM programme is an external driven project, introduced to the communities by the government and local NGOs with international financial contributions. The impact of a conservancy on the livelihoods of the local community depends profoundly on whether the project is initiated by the communities or by outsiders. For instance the community may initiate the project, but the outsiders (government, donor agencies and NGOs) would not be interested in supporting the project, hence the communities are discouraged. These agencies may also come up with the programme which the communities could reject. So, huge support financially and technically is required from support agencies, and communities/participants need to be persuaded to accept changes. The king of the Uukwaluudhi's ethnic group, one of the eight tribes in the region convinced the central government to return game to historic

place. This resulted in the Uukwaluudhi Conservancy in the North Central of Namibia, registered in 2003 as one of the examples of community initiated project.

There is a great collaboration by government agencies, donor funded projects, NGOs and other organisations involved in implementing different aspects of CBNRM (Long and Jones, 2004). NACSO (2006) points out that the development of communal conservancies is made possible by the international community due to substantial assistance provided through donor support in the form of financial aid and technical support.

Different NGOs have different objectives, hence their roles and levels of support in CBNRM activities differ. They normally assist newly formed Conservancy Committees to develop the skills necessary for running the conservancies. They are involved in assisting conservancies in developing their wildlife monitoring systems, game counting, land use planning and tourism enterprise development plans and organizational management (Long, 2004). They also provide advice and support for conservancies in negotiations with the private sectors, professional hunters and tourism companies (Long and Jones, 2004).

Living in a Finite Environment programme (LIFE) started supporting CBNRM initiatives by providing training in the early 1990s with funding from WWF-USAID, while IRDNC (Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation) plays a similar role in Kunene and Caprivi Regions. LIFE programme is a USAID funded project that provides funding and technical assistance to Namibia CBNRM implementing organizations. In each community, IRDNC assists in the development of a conservancy constitution, clarifying the roles and responsibilities of conservancy committee, assisting in the conservancy formation process and designing a financial management system (Long, 2004). A community based tourism organisation known as NACOBTA (Namibia Community Based Tourism Association) provides key support for core tourism

activities, and provides training and practical support for the development of tourism products and accommodation establishments. It also provides local entrepreneurs and conservancy members training in business skills and tourism awareness.

There are 10 support agencies that support the !Khob !Naub Conservancy. These are the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), Namibia Development Trust (NDT), United States Agency for Development – Living in a Finite Environment (USAID LIFE Plus), World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Ministry of Agriculture Water and Forestry (MAWF), Legal Assistant Centre (LAC), University of Namibia (UNAM), Namibia Community Based Tourism Association (NACOBTA), Directorate of Rural Water Supply (DRWS) and Directorate of Forestry (DoF) (NACSO, 2006). The specific roles of each agency in !Khob !Naub Conservancy were identified during the research work instead of generalising their responsibilities.

6. Case study

6.1 Study Area

The study was conducted in the !Khob !Naub Conservancy to be referred to as the Conservancy, one of the largest of four conservancies established in the southern part of Namibia. Registered and Gazetted in 2003, the !Khob !Naub Conservancy is located in the Karas Region, one of the thirteen administrative regions in Namibia. It is about 2747km² and accommodates approximately 5,000 inhabitants who speak four different main home languages of Khoekhoegowab, Otjiherero, Oshiwambo and Afrikaans (NACSO, 2006). The Conservancy is located about 40 kilometres North East of Keetmanshoop with Tses as a main town, but Blau-wes serves as the centre of the Conservancy where its office is stationed. The main (tarred) road from Keetmanshoop to Mariental forms the border on the south and western part of the Conservancy, while the gravel road to Asab forms the boundary to the north and the road to Koes forms the border to the east.

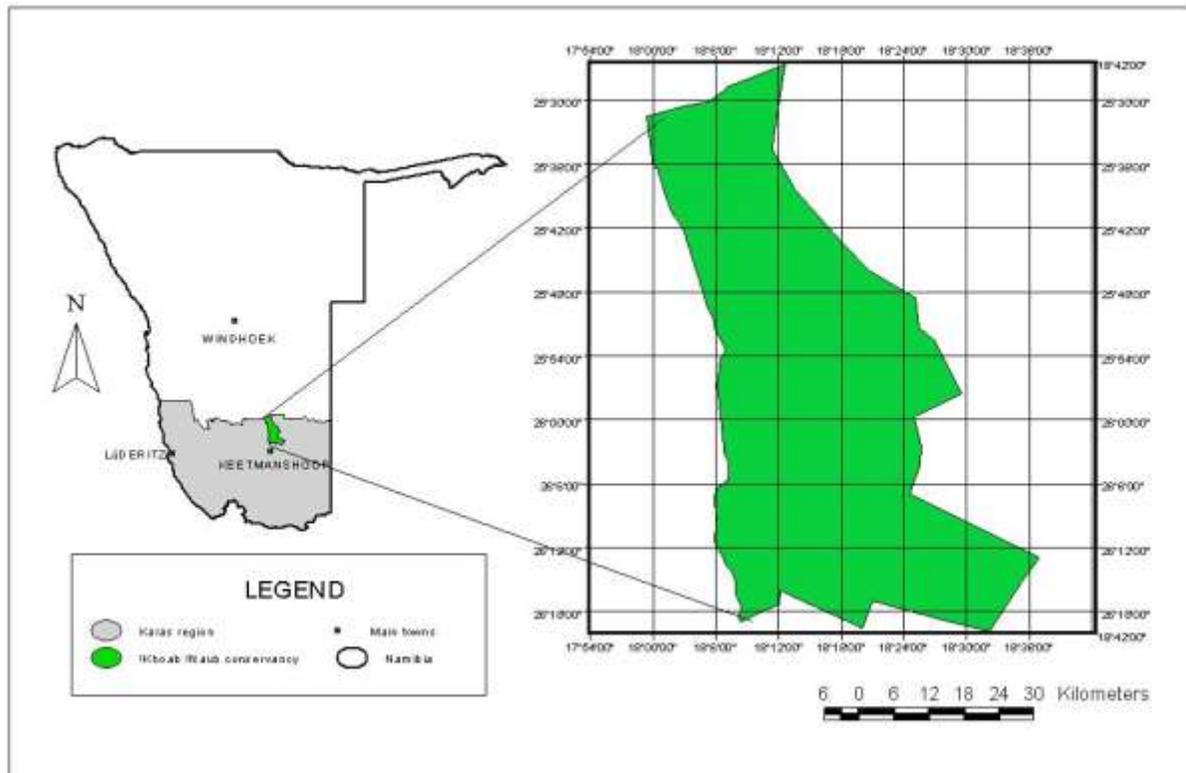


Figure 1: Study area map: !Khub !Naub Conservancy (courtesy of Lisao, 2007)

Namibia is the most arid country in Sub-Saharan Africa. The country experiences variable, scarce and unpredictable rainfall, hence it is prone to drought (Jones and Mosimane, 2000:83; Barnard, *et al*, 1998:16). The country is located on the south western part of the African sub-continent between latitudes 17° 00" and 22° 00" S and longitudes 11° 00" and 25° 00" E (Mendelsohn *et al.*, 2002). Namibia is divided into three main vegetation zones namely deserts, savannas and woodlands. The !Khub !Naub Conservancy area is situated in a semi-desert area and it falls within the Dwarf Shrub Savanna that covers the southern inland plateau (kalk plateau). It hosts the giant quiver trees on top of the plateau with sparse savanna and grassland. It is dominated by plateau in the northern part, flat on the eastern and western parts with rolling sand dunes towards the central area (NACCSO, 2006:58). The average rainfall of Namibia ranges between 0mm-750mm per year. The Conservancy area generally receives between 100-150mm of rainfall per annum with a water deficit (rainfall minus evaporation) of -

3800 to -3400 due to the high evaporation rate (Barnard *et al*, 1998). The average maximum temperatures are 34-36 °C during the hottest months of the year, while average minimum temperatures range within 4-6 °C during coldest months of the year (Lisao, 2007:5).

6.2 Methodology

Before the initial research work, a familiarisation tour was undertaken to the !Khob !Naub Conservancy in order to get first hand information on what to expect during the research. It was learned that the Conservancy is divided into nine zones based on the settlements or villages in the area within the Conservancy, excluding Tses. The zones are Blau-wes (Conservancy Centre), Itsitsawis, Blau-pits, Blau-oost, Blaukheil, Vergenoeg, Kalk, Khomnarib and Wortel.

Semi-structured, open ended questions were developed in the form of questionnaires, structured to gather primary data from the support agencies, key informants and households' heads. Face to face interviews were held with households' heads and key informants to find if their livelihoods have improved and they were satisfied with what the Conservancy has brought about as well as their level of involvement in the Conservancy's activities. The support agencies could not be interviewed through face-to-face interviews due to time constraints. Consequently, the questionnaires were communicated to their representatives by e-mails, faxes, and hard copies were provided to those individuals who could not be reached through these means. The information was gathered to inquire about the role of each organisation in the !Khob !Naub Conservancy and assess their perspectives on the future of the Conservancy.

During the research period, the Water Point Association Registers for each zone were used to draw the samples, and the names were randomly selected by selecting every fourth name on the list. This led to 27 households been selected depending on the number of households per zone and expected to participate in the interview. There were a number of limiting factors during the whole research

process. The study area is about 1350km from the researcher's residence and duty station (Oshakati in the North Central). There is a lack of literature related to the study area and Karas Region in general. There are long distances between the zones, and the roads are rough. In addition, limited time was spent on research work in the field due to official duties of both the researcher and the MET field staff who assisted in driving and translation of responses to the questions from Khoekhoegowab to English. The language barrier has also contributed to more time being spent per interview. As a result, only 16 households' heads were interviewed (7 women and 9 men) which were within the planned number of households (10-20) to be interviewed. Five key informants mainly the Conservancy Management Committee members and the Conservancy Coordinator were also interviewed. It was envisaged that all 10 support agencies could be interviewed to give their opinions. However, after a lot of persuasion, only six of them responded namely MET (field staff only), NDT, ICEMA, WWF/LIFE, DRWS and DoF. The efforts to get responds from LAC, UNAM and MET CBNRM programme head were in vain as the staffs either could not be reached through all communication mechanisms (fax, telephone and e-mails) or they indicated that they had no time to respond as they were busy.

Table1: The !Khob !Naub Conservancy zones, household numbers with expected and interviewed numbers of households

No.	Zone	Number of household	Expected No of household to be interviewed	No. of household interviewed
1	Blau-wes	43	8	4
2	Itsitsawis	8	2	2
3	Blau-pits	10	2	2
4	Blau-oost	7	1	1
5	Blaukheil	12	3	2
6	Kalk	12	3	2
7	Khomnarib	12	3	1
8	Vergenoeg	10	2	2
9	Wortel	12	3	0
Total		126	27	16

There are different approaches and techniques when it comes to analysing and interpreting data. However, due to a small sample (n=16), data collected was analysed manually using Microsoft Excel Spread Sheet.

7. Experiences of community

Most people in rural areas in Namibia have no secure income and reliable source of livelihood (Republic of Namibia, 2003). The main source of livelihoods in terms of income for the !Khob !Naub Conservancy community is state pensions for elderly that is received on a monthly basis and shared with their dependants. Most of the households sell livestock mainly goats, and also sell donkeys/horses and chicken at rare occasions. Some receive remittance from relatives employed elsewhere in the country, while three households receive social grants meant for orphan children.

7.1 The nature of community participation

The Government of the Republic of Namibia creates an appropriate environment for community to participate in CBNRM programme as per amended legislation. The programme is developed with the aim of assisting rural communities to enable them to protect, manage, utilise and benefits from natural resources. Communities in a given area are expected to play a role in participating, supporting and cooperating in all activities regards to natural resources management, either as individual or through the available structure. To fulfil this requirement, the Conservancy is run by elected committee of local people known as the Conservancy Management Committee (CMC) on behalf of its members to whom the government devolves user rights over wildlife within the Conservancy boundary.

According to the households' heads and key informants' perspectives, they perceived the idea to establish a conservancy as originally initiated by outside agencies. The idea was introduced to the community by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism through a workshop, whereby the community were informed of what to expect in terms of benefits. This is a top down approach because it was created outside the targeted community. But after the community was persuaded, they formed a conservancy based on the following objectives:

1. To introduce and translocate game to the Conservancy
2. To protect and manage game and other natural resources, and gain skills and knowledge related to conservation;
3. To explore tourism development potential and attract tourists;
4. To create job and generate income in order to eradicate poverty.

The key informants state that only few objectives were partially achieved such as job creation, introduction and translocation of game and protection of natural resources, and skills enhancement.

Although it was mentioned that the community had decided to form a Conservancy, the term “community” is generalized in this context, as the outcome of the interview showed that the !Khob !Naub Conservancy community members are not fully participating in Conservancy’s activities.

There are conditions of membership laid down in the Conservancy Constitution that include:

- a) A member needs to be 18 years old and above, she/he has been residing in the area for three (3) years and required to pay a certain membership fee.
- b) Only those who have ability to contribute to the growth of the Conservancy can be members and their application for membership needs to be screened before it is approved or rejected;

All respondents interviewed were aware of the existence of the Conservancy through various platforms. These include meetings, the Traditional Authority, relatives/family members and villagers who attended the meetings, MAWF, over the radio, and through the Community Game Guards. However, not all the interviewees are members of the Conservancy. Half of the interviewees (8 of 16) have registered and indicated that they did so through initial registration and during the meetings after they were provided with information regards to the establishment of the Conservancy and the benefits that could be generated in the future. Although a person needs to stay in the area for three years before acquiring membership, two people were registered shortly after they resided in the area in 2003 and 2006 respectively. The other half who did not register were because some did not know the purpose of the Conservancy, therefore they wanted to see the benefits gained before they register, while others were willing to become members, but they heard it late and did not get a chance of being registered. But according to the CBNRM policies, registration of members is an ongoing process, therefore, it is not clear how and why some of the eligible community members cannot be registered. The elderly claim that membership is

only meant for the youth, because the people who conducted the registration process were selective which also against the CBNRM policies.

According to 40% of the respondents, the Conservancy establishment process was spearheaded by the Traditional Authority, while 33.3% of that 40% indicate that community has also played a role in the process. Thirty one percent (31%) of interviewees do not know who were involved in the process, while 29% prefer not to comment. One of the problems the interviewees mentioned was that some people have opposed the idea of forming a Conservancy during the establishment process, citing that projects were always established on empty promises and benefiting few individuals. Others indicate that illegal hunting is occurring as before, and information is not reaching them as they are far from the centre of the Conservancy where the meetings are normally held. Twenty five percent (25%) of the registered respondents point out that they have lost interest as their expectations were not met and were given empty promises. Jones and Mosimane (2000) emphasise that a Conservancy Management Committee should ensure that there is flow of information to the community and they should be involved closely in major decision-making process, if positive attitudes are to be developed or maintained. Fifty percent 50% of the interviewees state that they do not know whether there were problems during the process of establishing a Conservancy and while another 38% indicate that they do not know what is currently happening because they were and are not involved in the Conservancy activities and were never be informed of the progress made.

The findings show that the community members never attended meetings despite being invited mainly through the radio (citing that it always announced late). Due to the absence of community members from the meetings, 62% of the respondents including some registered members do not know who is responsible for the daily activities of the Conservancy and who normally chairs the meetings or makes decisions on matters pertaining to the Conservancy. Fifty percent (50%) of respondents do not know who appoints the Conservancy Management

Committee (CMC) and the Community Game Guards (CGGs) and 62% have no idea whether there is a need to elect new CMC and appoint new CGGs or not. The Traditional Authority, NDT, CMC, MET, Community and other stakeholders were mentioned as played a role in the Conservancy formation process. Those (38%) who occasionally attend meetings indicate that people are generally discussing various issues among others, illegal hunting and the gathering of plants, protection of game and other natural resources, compensation and to convince community members to accept the Conservancy concept and become members.

It is difficult to determine the role and level of involvement of the community in the whole conservancy establishment and management process. The research findings however, shows that half of the interviewees are conservancy members, but only less than 40% of them attend the meetings periodically, and more than 60% do not know what was happening with regards to the Conservancy activities. So, in general one can conclude that the people are ignorant, therefore they are not fully involved in the Conservancy affairs, and this is attributed to both the community members and the Conservancy Management Committee for the least involvement of the communities. This type of affair can heavily affect the progress of the Conservancy.

7.2 The changes in the community's asset base

The livelihoods of poor people depend on the assets they possess, and the strategies they adopt to cope with any influence affect their lives (Goldman, 2000; Coward, Jr *et al*, 1999). The key livelihood strategies in rural areas can be divided into natural resources based, non-natural resources based and migration (Goldman *et al*, 2000a). Diversification of livelihoods strategies increases livelihood choices which will reduce vulnerability.

One of the study objectives was to assess the status of the community' asset base prior to establishing the Conservancy compared to the current situation. Many communities experienced uneven distribution of control and ownership of

assets due to cultural traditions, historic events as well as public policies. This in a way contributes to a lack of assets the communities need to take opportunities or to safeguard themselves from risks and uncertainties that threaten their economic and social wellbeing (Coward Jr *et al*, 1999:3). Communities develop high expectations of their livelihoods being improved whenever development or projects come to their area.

In most cases, the very first improvement conservancies bring about is on environment where natural resources – wildlife population increase. The view is supported by 50% of respondents who indicate that from the conservation point of view things have at least improved, because poaching activities have been reduced, and the protection of game and other natural resources have also improved due to the commitment of the CGGs on monitoring and patrolling. About 38% of households' heads indicate that livestock which is one of the main sources of income has decreased in number due to natural phenomena such as drought and diseases, and from problem animals such as jackals which increased in number as they are now protected.

7.2.1 Natural Assets

Coward Jr *et al*, (1999:6) cite that a large number of poor people in the world are negatively affected because the natural assets on which they depend for their livelihoods are degraded and unproductive. Vollan (2006:5) points out that in the areas where the unemployment rate is high, the community relies heavily on the local natural resources to obtain fuelwood and grazing for their livestock as well as game. During the interview, the respondents show that natural assets availability play a major role in the community's livelihoods as most of them are unemployed. Interview participants indicate that all main natural assets – forests, water, livestock grazing, land and game are freely available and accessible to them. But 28% of the respondents state that game is not available, while 69% mention that they have no more access to game for own use. A permit is now required from the Conservancy Management Committee for hunting purposes. The key informants echo the communities' view that most of the assets are

accessible, but not improved as such except plants and game, and nevertheless access is limited due to rule and regulations regarding hunting of game and gathering of protected plants.

Water is accessible but scarce and in some zones is a problem due to broken pumps which have to wait for the Directorate of Rural Water Supply (DWRS) to come and repair or maintain it as the communities are unable to do. This could be that the DRWS did not provide appropriate skills training in that regard, despite the claim that they provide training. Vollan (2006) states that the apartheid dependency system has heavily affected community governance in the Namaqualand whereby the communities do not have the capacity of making individual or collective decision, but rather wait for help. Similarly, the !Khub !Naub Conservancy residents are not utilizing the skills they have acquired such as needle work, plumbing, construction and manufacturing to earn a living, but prefer to wait for someone to employ them. In the Karas Regional Poverty Profile, the Nama community who dominantly live in the Karas Region is classified as lazy (National Planning Commission, 2007:53). But instead of supporting these arguments, it would be rather advisable for an in-depth research to be undertaken to determine the significance of that claim and the causes of such attitudes.

Although the community could not identify the minerals of potential value, it was observed that there are minerals in the area in the form of slates (flats stones) which can be used as tiles for different purposes. The Conservancy Committee and a Conservancy Coordinator with support from support agencies needs to explore that opportunity and possibly enter into a joint venture with private companies. The conservancies' committees of Torra and #Khodi //Hoas conservancies in the Kunene Region, and Salambala Conservancy in the Caprivi Region have experience in joint venture and tourism enterprises negotiation (Jones and Mosimane, 2000:92). So, it is worthwhile for the Conservancy Committee to approach their counterpart for information sharing.

All interviewed participants state that due to lack of other energy sources like electricity, they use forest products such as firewood for cooking as well as heating their homes. They also indicate that traditionally people used to pick hoodia plants for eating, but now the harvesting is regulated. Although no one is involved in harvesting and selling of hoodia, they are all aware of the plant. Only very few participate in hoodia conservation. It was mentioned that the plant is edible, normally is used to quench thirst, and have medicinal value for treating ailments in children as well as high blood pressure and diabetes in adults. Apart from hoodia and firewood, no other forest products mentioned as a source of livelihoods. Like game, 31% of the community interviewed feel that forest products will soon require harvesting permits within the zones as currently a person only needs it if she or he is going to harvesting from other zones.

No one owns land, but all have usufruct rights mainly to construct houses and a piece of land has to be allocated to individuals by the Traditional Authority, and no one was denied land amongst those interviewed.

The land in the southern part of the country is not suitable for crop production. The insufficient rainfall, weather conditions, and the people's living style are other contributing factors for the people in the south not to be involved in crop farming. So they are mainly surviving on livestock particularly goats as their second source of livelihoods.

Natural assets are available and accessible to the community, but most of them are commonly used such as water, grazing, forest and land, and only livestock are under full control of the individuals, while game is not accessible. The community suppose to take advantage of the availability and accessibility of these assets to utilize them optimally. However, due the lack of cooperation between the CMC and community the natural assets are yet to be effectively utilized.

7.2.2 Physical Assets

Coward Jr *et al* (1999:7) state that there is no specific asset that could be possibly successful without employing other assets. So, physical assets form integral part of rural community's livelihoods and are as important as other assets. The physical assets are mainly the infrastructure such as transport, shelter, water, energy and communications, and the production equipment and means which enable people to pursue their livelihoods (Carney, 1998).

Unlike other communities in other parts of the country who obtain water from the rivers, pipeline and canals, communities in southern Namibia obtain water mainly from the boreholes with a common water point. Some communities experience water shortage due to broken pumps. Only one of 16 interviewees in Blau-oost has an off-take pipe to his house from the main reservoir, but if the borehole breaks all of them would be affected. In terms of transport 14 out of 16 households use donkey carts as means of transport and/or footing to reach various destinations within the Conservancy, and hike if they are going to Keetmanshoop or distant villages and farms. Only four or 25% of those interviewed indicate that they own cars and horses, although none of the cars were functioning at a time of the research. Both the households' heads and key informants indicate that road infrastructure did not improve at all.

Electricity is another asset which is in a very short supply. Only some residents in Blau-wes the Conservancy centre have access to electricity and one person in Blau-oost is using solar energy. Like electricity, access to communication facilities is very limited. Only four households interviewed own cellphones and two have access to landline telephones.

It is hard to find erected fences for individuals, except the fences that surround houses and kraals, and 94% of houses are fenced off. But the settlements which form zones are within fenced communal farms which were previously fenced off as commercial farms. All interviewees are living in their own houses or shacks

made from corrugated zincs and old drums, except one family who lives in a brick house. It was observed that the size of the house and the type of material used may symbolise the status of individuals in the community. None of interviewees is working, and about eight households receive remittance from relatives. None of the families have production implements either.

The key informants also indicate that there was no improvement on the physical assets, except some few houses which have access to electricity and telephone in areas such as Blau-wes, Constanica, Wortel and //Khomexas. The Conservancy office has electricity and communication services though such as the telephone that can be used by the community on cost.

Ashley (2000:19) mentions that any project or enterprise may affect few people directly, but can affect the assets base of many more. However, those assets which are available within the Conservancy particularly the infrastructures are not brought about by the existence of the Conservancy, but different government institutions. That means the Conservancy does not have any effect on available infrastructure.

7.2.3 Social Assets

Access to significant levels of social assets is essential at rural community level since other assets for example natural assets require local collective action (Coward Jr *et al*, 1999:8). All respondents interviewed have similar opinions that the relationships in their households are excellent, 75% indicate that the network with their neighbour is good, while 25% state that their neighbours are not cooperative. Volla (2006:20) is of the opinion that social assets are crucial to the local community as it enables people to solve social problems or to create new structural arrangements such as the committees to deal with community problems. But it is the opposite with the !Khub !Naub Conservancy as it was learned that the relationship between the community and Conservancy Management Committee (CMC) is very poor (11 out of 16) due to poor

communication. This can be confirmed from the beginning when the community indicated that they do not know the role of the CMC and who they are. One of the reasons given is that the CMC members are hardly visited the zones to give feedback as community members cannot afford to go to the meeting at Blau-wes due to long distance and lack of money.

The key informants admit that there is poor communication between CMC and the communities, because CMC members do not give feedback to the communities in their zones and the communities are poorly attended meetings. They also add that some community members still oppose the Conservancy idea. So it is important for the CMC to change their approach of information dissemination, and go to the community rather than expecting them to come to the meetings.

Most community members belong to different congregations, and the most dominant churches are ELCIN (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia), AME (African Methodist Episcopal Church) and Catholic. The Water Point Association is the only CBO in the area, and all community members using a certain water point are expected to register. Only one person belongs to HIV/AIDS related forum "My Future Is My Choice".

The research findings shows that the Conservancy formation brought tension rather than harmony within the community, and between the community and CMC. The community members are also not active in the Conservancy, CBO and community development activities. Many authors praise how successful Conservancy Management Committees of the conservancies are in the Kunene and Caprivi Regions in keeping good relationships and flow of information between the committee and the communities. So it would be suitable if the !Khub !Naub Conservancy committee undertakes a familiarisation tour to either Kunene or Caprivi Regions for them to learn from those conservancies' committees experiences.

7.2.4 Human Assets

All seven women interviewed are skilled in needlework, while men skills and knowledge vary from painting and plumbing, donkey carts, tombstone and horse handles manufacturing, construction, and tannery. However, none of these skills are utilized except for the horse handles, citing that they do not have the financial means to enable them to buy the necessary implements required such as sewing machines, materials, and to start self employment projects or wait for somebody to employ them. A lack of market to buy and sell their products such as horse handles and traditional dresses is another problem facing them, and the elderly interviewees point out that poor vision hinders them from practicing their skills.

The community had expected the Conservancy to bring a lot of changes into their lives. That ranges from job creation, income generation, development, re-introduction and translocation of game, and maintenance of the farms boundaries' fences. Fifty percent (50%) of interviewees state that expected job opportunities were partially met through employment of CGGs, a Conservancy Coordinator and the hoodia nursery caretakers, 31% did not have any expectations, while the rest of the expectations are hardly met. The key informants confirm that there is a slight improvement in employment creation and skills development. At least eight (8) Community Game Guards, a Conservancy Coordinator and two hoodia nursery caretakers are employed. The same staff, plus CMC and some selected community members were given training in various areas based on their needs such as financial management, taxidermy and tannery, management skills and HIV/AIDS workshops. But, there is inadequate training in other areas of development such as maintenance of the boreholes from the Directorate of Rural Water Supply, because communities do live without water once the borehole is broken.

In terms of health facilities, the households' heads interviewed and key informants indicate that the area is in need of a clinic, as the mobile clinic which is normally provided once in a while is not reliable and the service is only

extended during immunization campaigns. Hence, for any health services, the community opts to either hike or hire a car to go either mainly to Keetmanshoop which is about 50km away from the nearest zone or make use of Tses clinic about 35km far. This applies to education services as there is only a primary school in Blau-wes. So there is a need for permanent Health Centre and a Junior Secondary School to be established at Blau-Wes, while two primary schools to be constructed at selected zones.

7.2.5 Financial Assets

The state pensions top the list of the sources of income and livelihoods for the !Khob !Naub Conservancy. The elderly receive N\$470.00 on a monthly basis and shared it with their dependants. Goats are sold and provide income on a regular basis, while the community sell donkeys/horses and chicken on very rare occasions. Some community members usually receive remittance from relatives employed somewhere in the country, while three households receive social grants meant for orphan children. Therefore, only 2 of 16 households earn a combined income between N\$1001.00 to 5000.00, while the rest receive N\$1000.00 or less per month.

In the north-west of the country now Kunene Region, the conservancies such as Torra and #Khoadi //Hoas all registered in 1998, earn enough income mainly from tourism and tourist enterprises such as lodges and campsites, selling of game particularly through trophy hunting from which the committees give dividends to the community (NACSO, 2006:54; Jones and Mosimane, 2000:98). Unfortunately no income is generated from tourism or selling of game or game venison in the !Khob !Naub Conservancy. Both households' heads and key informants state that after five years of its existence, the Conservancy does not generate adequate income as yet, hence no financial benefit have been received by individual so far, even to contribute to any development. Even the CGGs and a Conservancy Coordinator receive their wages from ICEMA the support agency that provides funds to CMC to cover the Conservancy operational costs. But they

state that as poverty level is high in the region, once they start generating income from envisaged projects, it will be used to contribute to the needs of the needy people in terms school fees and uniforms, Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC), and funerals.

Namibia attracts a large number of tourists per year because of its rich wildlife, sparsely populated spectacular scenery and wide open space (Lapeyre, R. 2006:5; Jones, 2003b:54). Due to the aridity of the southern part of Namibia, wildlife and wildlife based tourism can be used as appropriate forms of land use (Jones, 2003b:54). From personal observations, the !Khob !Naub Conservancy has potential scenery, attractive wild desert landscapes, wilderness areas, the plateau and quiver trees and many other potential areas which could be explored for tourism purposes. However, no benefits are derived from tourism in the Conservancy as there are no facilities developed for that reason. All respondents indicate that a lot of tourists are just driving through the Conservancy on their own as there are no arrangements in place that can make them attracted as such and stop over. Therefore, key informants emphasise that tourism development plans are underway to develop tourism facilities such as the cultural village, campsite and probably a lodge and tour guide facility to connect the Conservancy to other tourist destinations in the region. There is high potential for the Conservancy to contribute to local economic development if appropriate tourism facilities are established and the Conservancy is properly marketed.

7.3 The changes in the community's finance streams and improvement on livelihoods

As inflation is high and goods and commodities become more expensive, all 16 households' interviewees state that their financial base is very weak as income usually received is not adequate to meet the basic needs such as food, education, health, water. Four of the respondents or 25% indicate that although the income is not sufficient, they appreciate what the government is doing for them in providing pensions and social grants. During the interview, 88% of the interviewees state that the Conservancy establishment five years ago did not

bring any change or improvement to their livelihoods or household wealth, and it does not have any effect on individuals who intend to undertake any economic activity. They reveal however, that the status of natural resources including those of wild animals has improved due to the effort of Community Game Guards. For example, the numbers of jackals have increased, but they are now causing extensive livestock losses. The slight improvement the Conservancy has brought about to community is in the form of meat (2-3kg) which is distributed occasionally and they continue to collect firewood and hoodia for personal use. But all of the respondents point out that there are still some residents who have negative attitudes towards conservancy initiative arguing that the Conservancy was established on empty promises. Therefore, no one is satisfied with what the Conservancy has brought to them as far as tangible benefits are concerned.

The communities regard the government as the main institution that assists them in possibly increasing their household assets and income through pensions and social grants administered by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, and the Community Goats Project (CGP) through the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF) with financial support from the Germany Technical Cooperation (GTZ). But some respondents (4 of 16) in some zones are accusing MAWF as the institution which at the same time prevents community from increasing their household assets and income. They argue that the ministry staffs responsible for the CGP are deliberately excluding them from the project by selecting certain individuals as beneficiaries.

Due to the weak financial base, 63% of community members interviewed have no investment plan. The remained 37% of respondents intend to invest in their children's education, Community Goats Project, insurance policies, housing in town or buying sewing machines. Nine of sixteen households' heads point out that they want to start with the Community Goats Project and other self-help projects, but finance as the operating capital is the main limiting factor, which the Conservancy cannot offer. Rural communities are normally encouraged by

development that brings tangible benefits in a shortest time possible. At the moment the Conservancy project seems irrelevant to the communities because they are not benefit from it in monetary terms.

7.4 The management of the Conservancy

Every conservancy management should be guided by the conservancy's constitution as stipulates in section 3 (3.1) of the Conservancy Constitution layout. It states that the "The Conservancy shall be managed by a Conservancy Committee as provided for in sections 1 and 28 (1) and (2) of the Nature Conservation Act (No. 4 of 1975) as amended by the Nature Conservation Amendment Act 5 of 1996 (Republic of Namibia 1996). Hence, the conservancy is run by elected committee of local people known as the Conservancy Management Committee to whom the government devolves user rights over wildlife within the conservancy boundary.

The elected committee should control, manage and administer the affairs and property of a conservancy in the interest of the members and assist them to obtain exclusive rights of management, beneficial utilization of wildlife and promotion of tourism in a conservancy. Other functions include financial accountability, distribution or pay benefits to members, convene meetings in order to update members about progress made or problem occurred. The government agencies, local and international NGOs render technical assistance in managing the conservancy.

The !Khob !Naub Conservancy follows the same regulations and developed a constitution known as the "Constitution of !Khob !Naub Conservancy". The Conservancy is managed by the Conservancy Management Committee which consists of 12 members which include Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Vice secretary, Treasurer and Vice treasurer, and six additional members as Advisors including a representative of the Traditional Authority as stipulated in the Act. The members are elected by the community at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and can serve for 2 years (!Knob !Naub Conservancy,

2003). There are nine (9) zones within the Conservancy and each zone is represented in the committee. It is expected that each zone representative gives feedback on the Conservancy progress to their respective communities, but the findings shows that the process is hardly followed. The constitution spells out all the procedures to be followed concerning the management and other matter related to the Conservancy. The Conservancy Coordinator was recently appointed whose functions are to coordinate all the Conservancy related activities.

Although the community members participate in the committee election process during the AGM, it is not always fair. Some of the interviewees especially support agencies including the Conservancy Coordinator indicate that there are divisions amongst the committee members. This is because committee members are not elected based on their capability, but due to favouritism from the community members. This could immensely affect the effectiveness and efficiency of the committee as some members may have no capacity and interest to carry out their duties.

The support agencies mention that they provide capacity building and training to the Conservancy Management Committee as elaborated in section 7.5. It seems these skills are not well absorbed, because despite the CMC members understand their functions, they are ineffective in executing their tasks. The key informants point out that communities are not always satisfied with the functions of the CMC, because they normally complain during the AGMs of the committee's poor performance and being excluded. This is a setback because the community who elect ineffective people into the committee are at the same time complaining of their poor performance. So, it is not expected for the progress to be made if such a trend continues, therefore, the Conservancy Coordinator and support agencies should take drastic measures in addressing the issue.

Jones and Mosimane (2000) cite that the conservancies in the Kunene and Caprivi Regions experienced some conflict between community members – the youth and the Traditional Authority and Conservancy Management Committees. They also reflect how the conservancies' CMCs are integrated with the Traditional Authority and other institutions. Therefore it is essential for the !Khub !Naub Conservancy Management Committee to visit either of the regions' conservancies as a learning process.

Apart from the CMC, the Community Game Guards (CGG) which made up of a senior and seven junior game guards contribute to the management of the Conservancy. They are responsible for monitoring, patrol, maintenance of fences and playing an important role in protecting the natural resources, consequently the environment has benefited as fauna and flora status has improved. At least the community are happy with the performance of the CGGs, indicate that the improved environment is significant for educational purposes of the current and future generations.

7.5 The support provided by government and other agencies

Institutional structure, policies and processes guide the support agencies and define the options that are available to enable the poor people to select livelihoods strategies (Goldman *et al*, 2000a). According to NACSO (2006), there are 10 support agencies that provide different types of assistance to the !Khub !Naub Conservancy. However the households' respondents have only identified three organizations, namely the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), Namibia Development Trust (NDT), and the Rural Poverty Reduction Programme (RPRP). The key informants recognise the support of about 20 agencies that played a role in the process of establishing the Conservancy. Their functions include financial, technical, logistical, materially and capacity building support. The key informants add that they appreciate their assistance, but they still require more support in capacity building on administration and management of the

Conservancy affairs, and financial support to cover the operational costs and implement the envisaged projects.

Table2: The Organisations identified by community offered assistance to the Conservancy and for how long

Organisation	Type of assistance			When
	Transport	Finance	Culling	
Namibia Development Trust	✓			During Meetings
Ministry of Environment and Tourism	✓		✓	When needed
Rural Poverty Reduction Programme		✓		Once off for campsite construction

About 81% of respondents do not know whether assistance was offered and by whom during the Conservancy formation, neither do they state whether it needs to be supported or not. The households' heads have different opinions on the effectiveness of the CMC, CGG and Support Agencies. Thirty seven percent (37%) of people interviewed recognised the work of the Community Game Guards, while 43% shows that the CMC and the Support Agencies are not effective in their duties. They indicate that the CMC members do not go to the zones to give feedback on the progress made and disseminate information regards to the Conservancy so that those who are not members could be encouraged to register.

7.6 The future of the Conservancy

After about five years of support from different organisations, it is expected that the Conservancy should generate its own income and members be well capacitated. The Conservancy was established in 2003, but the Conservancy Management Committee responsible for the operation and management of the Conservancy still depend on external assistance and are in great need of financial, technical, logistical support. The CMC concerns that they need to diversify their activities in order to generate sufficient income and avoid dependency syndrome once most support come to an end particularly funding.

The Committee envisages a number of projects that could be a source of income for the Conservancy. They indicate that the priority areas are to: make sure that more awareness is created among community members in order for them to see the importance of the Conservancy; ensure that more community members are trained in various fields such as management, leadership, administration and entrepreneurial skills that enable them to establish self-help projects and enhance already acquired skills; develop a cultural village that will offer traditional food and dance to the tourists; develop a campsite and tour guide to guide tourists to the most important sites of attractions; acquire more game to conserve and sell; shoot and sell of the game, sales of skins; trophy hunting; Community Forests; Taxidermy Project; expand the hoodia nursery and marketing its products; open fixed investment account with recognised banking institutions; acquire training in grants proposal writing and revive all potential failed projects. This will improve the community's assets base and income streams.

From their experiences of working with conservancies, the support agencies identify a number of problems that can jeopardize the future of !Khob !Naub Conservancy. The Conservancy's functioning and operations or its existence depends heavily on support agencies. For example CMC and the community rely heavily on transport from support agencies especially during the meetings and workshops. So, if transport is not available, the meetings in most cases would not convene because of the quorum that could not be formed. The support agencies interviewed mention that the coordination of the Conservancy activities and cooperation within the CMC are at stake due to factions among the CMC members which is also extended to the community members. There is also poor governance and inconsistency in financial reporting and accountability. The lack of capacity in the Conservancy management and administration, and the lack of resources such as finance and transport resulted in CMC and CGG performing poorly, therefore they do not meet their target. For instance, awareness campaign and information dissemination programmes are very weak. These might contributed to poor communication and relationships between the CMC

and the communities. The NDT representative indicates that the lack of capacity is attributed to the departure of trained community or CMC members once they got employment opportunity outside the Conservancy.

Another shortcoming is that, it would take time before tangible benefits that could encourage the community to develop positive attitudes towards the project could be obtained. Jones and Mosimane (2000) caution that conservancies and the CBNRM programme could only win communities' support if the perceived benefits are significant enough. Without adequate resources and full support of the community, it will take some time before the Conservancy starts to function on its own. Therefore, there is a need for the support agencies to develop a strategy that would assist and strengthen the capacity of the CMC.

Oskop Conservancy, the smallest of the four conservancies in the south has adopted a comprehensive mechanism to efficiently manage the conservancy activities. They merged Water Point Committee and Conservancy Management Committee and carry out water and conservancy issues concurrently. The Conservancy also forms a support group comprises of the service providers and CMC members to coordinate development initiatives within the Conservancy, plan and exchange information (Jones 2003:67). The !Khob !Naub Conservancy should learn from this example.

8 Experiences of support agencies

There are a number of support agencies involved in the !Khob !Naub Conservancy affairs based on their objectives. All support agencies are supporting CBNRM programme in different ways with similar objective of ensuring that natural resources are managed and utilised in a sustainable manner for the benefits of rural communities including that of future generations.

NGOs provide a number of services within Namibia's CBNRM programme. In most instances, NGOs are the recipients of funding and involved in facilitating

CBNRM programme, hence they can easily push communities into certain directions to suit their objectives (Jones and Mosimane, 2000:82). Some of the support agencies especially the NGOs are supporting the Conservancy by providing funds through grants, and rendering technical assistance with regards to conservancy formation and management processes.

It was noted from the NGOs responses that not all of them are directly involved in supporting the !Khob !Naub Conservancy. For instance, WWF/LIFE Plus Project provides assistance to National Development Trust (NDT) a local NGO assigned as Contracted Service Provider (CSP) to the Conservancy, and to MET a CBNRM programme facilitator through grants and capacity building. The grant is normally provided to cover running costs of the Conservancy and support the facilitation of institutional capacity development, however it has come to an end. Whereas NDT and ICEMA (Integrated Community-Based Ecosystem Management Project) are organizations directly interacting with CMC and the communities to implement/provide the above mentioned support.

The ICEMA Project has a grant agreement contract with the !Khob !Naub Conservancy since 2007 to cover operational costs of the Conservancy, and at the same time render logistical support by facilitating meetings, promoting good governance, assisting in financial management, enterprises business planning and facilitating the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of community-based integrated ecosystem management. So far the Integrated Ecosystem Management Plan (IEMP) is developed. ICEMA support would end at the end of the contract, unless is renewed. It would be another setback to the Conservancy if the contract is not renewed.

NDT supports the Conservancy by facilitating contract agreements with different private companies such as the Night Culling Company and the Duineveld Skin Tannery Project. The two companies are involved in assisting the Conservancy in shooting of game for own consumption and tanning the springbok skins

obtained during the culling process respectively. The organization is also involved in coordinating and facilitating meetings and workshops on the use of the natural resources; and providing assistance to the Conservancy Management Committee in executing the day to day activities of the Conservancy. NDT also assists in organising and conducting various activities such as the Conservancy's Annual General Meetings (AGMs), financial reporting and benefit distribution plans, constitution development and carrying out awareness campaigns on integrated management of natural resources. In terms of institutional capacity building, NDT offers training to the CMC in various areas such as management, governance and leadership skills; business planning and proposal writing proficiency; and game monitoring. It will continue supporting the Conservancy depending on the availability of funds.

The government institutions (the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry – Directorate of Rural Water Supply and Directorate of Forestry are assisting the Conservancy by providing continuous technical and logistical support. But when analysing each institution closely, it was found that even though the main objectives of these institutions are to ensure that natural resources are managed in a sustainable manner they are operating in isolation. Apart from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), the Directorate of Rural Water Supply (DRWS) and the Directorate of Forestry (DoF) are not necessarily assisting the Conservancy based on CBNRM programme principles under MET, but according to their ministerial mandate. According to the research findings, in 2002, NDT has established a CBNRM core group consists of line support agencies in the region similar to the one of Oskop Conservancy. The aim of the core group is to meet on a regular basis and jointly plan for activities such as workshops, review and discuss pertinent issues relevant to the CBNRM programme. However, the approach is not highly effective because the line ministries do not allocate budget for such activity. But this is contrary to what is taking place at the Oskop Conservancy, because similar institutions are operating in that conservancy with any finance.

For instance, the Directorate of Forestry concentrates more on forestry issues such as promoting forest management in rural area; promoting tree planting through tree planting projects to supplement existing tree resources and introducing bee keeping projects. The Directorate of Rural Water Supply field staff responds that the directorate provides water supply services and related training, manages and maintains water infrastructure to the entire community and then provides transport to CMC and the community members when required. Then, MET staffs indicate that their mandate is to assist the Conservancy in their daily activities including game monitoring, determining and allocating quota, regulating and controlling wildlife through the issuance of hunting permits, transport, training, and facilitating CBNRM programme.

The support agencies indicate that the government has put in place an exceptionally conducive environment for conservancies' establishment and gives communities conditional rights to manage and benefits from the resources at their disposal. However, they emphasise that as the programme evolves, there is a need for policies to be reviewed and improved. Currently, communities in the conservancies are given limited rights over wildlife and to engage in tourism development. However, the respondents suggest that the conservancies should be given more rights and ownership over all natural resources including land, and for the conservancies to have the right to give sub-lease on land for lodge development. The respondents also feel that there is a need for more streamlined and efficient support to the conservancies, and the government should avail funds to struggling conservancies. But this will not resolve the problem of the Conservancy's dependency on external support, unless the Conservancy opts for business enterprises.

Although ICEMA and NDT indicate that they facilitate and provide training to CMC on enterprises business planning and development proposals, entrepreneurship is still lacking. Maybe the recent appointed of the Conservancy

Coordinator will coordinate the business plans and source for the joint ventures in areas of tourism development, game and plants marketing and utilization, trophy hunting agreement, and mineral exploration.

The support agencies commend that despite the lack of big game for trophy hunting, and the Conservancy is not on major tourism routes, there is potential in the south for the development of the conservancies considering the stunning scenery and wilderness and other untapped natural resources such as hoodia and possibly minerals. The Conservancy Management Committee with the support of the Conservancy Coordinator and the support agencies should explore these opportunities and enter into joint venture with private sectors especially in areas of tourism and its related enterprises.

The conservancies are normally assisted for at least five years while preparing for being independent. However, according to research findings, there is a great need to strengthen the institutional capacity of the CMC on management issues and community to fully support the project, in order to avoid the Conservancy activities to come to a halt and the continuous dependency to support agencies for supporting this Conservancy.

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

According to the research findings, the Conservancy did not bring any improvement to the livelihoods of the community, so whatever changes or improvements made to different assets, were based on the developmental plans which were already earmarked for the area by different government institutions such as the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Agriculture Water Forestry - Directorate of Forestry and Directorate of Rural Water Supply. The main sources of income and security for most of the communities are elderly monthly pensions, the selling of goats and social grants.

There are different problems that could jeopardize the progress and future of the Conservancy such as a lack of financial resources, inadequate institutional and human capacity, factions among the CMC and negative attitudes of communities towards the conservancy concept. So, the support agencies should ensure that institutional capacity is built and conflict resolution mechanisms should be put in place.

There is a lot of potential in the Conservancy and the Karas Region as a whole, therefore the researcher emphasises that adequate financial resources and transport should be allocated to Conservancy so that the envisaged activities could be successfully implemented.

This research work could be seen as a stepping stone for other researches required to be conducted in the Conservancy. There is a need for an in depth study to be carried out with more households participants in order to obtain a clear picture of the impact of the Conservancy on the community's assets and its contribution to the improvement of their livelihoods. The area is vast, and the Conservancy lacks transport means and rely on the support agencies for transport services. This is hampering the CMC to reach all the zones in order to disseminate information and give feedback, and the Community Game Guards also find it difficult to carry out their duties effectively. Therefore, the CMC needs to write a proposal to the donor agencies requesting for a vehicle donation or money to purchase one as well as the horses to be used by the CGGs during patrol. This will not only improve their performance, but reduce the transport dependency to MET and other support agencies.

Although there does not seem to be a coherent strategy to really assist community members to improve their livelihoods, so awareness raising will be important, but not sufficient. Therefore, the community should be mobilised to support and be active in the Conservancy's activities. During the research it was found that the community does not have many livelihoods strategies, and are

only interested in increasing or own more livestock, while the key informants would like to diversify the Conservancy's strategies as mentioned below. Thus it is suggested that a research should be carried out to determine the impact of previous policies and government on the behaviour of the people in the region as they are very much dependent on the support agencies for help.

Some of development projects are politically motivated, whether the project is viable or not. This could be the case in terms of the !Khob !Naub Conservancy, because there are always claims from the public that the Karas Region is neglected in terms of development. The support agencies recommend that a feasibility study or survey should be conducted to see how possible to link the Conservancy to the major tourism routes and destinations, and other potential activities that could contribute to the upliftment of the community. There are plans in place whether they are coherent or not to diversify the Conservancy income generating activities such as expanding the hoodia project, establish a campsite, cultural dance group and traditional village, intensify the Community Goats Project, and trophy hunting.

There is no effective coordination of activities regards to the Conservancy, thus the government institutions that promote natural resources management in the region such as wildlife, forestry and water are working in the isolation. The current CBNRM policies are wildlife oriented, therefore the suggestion is that policies should be reviewed so that they could be more inclusive, possibly to be known as Integrated Community Based Natural Resources Management (ICBNRM). This will not only harmonize the activities, but minimize the sectoral and fragmented planning and improve the management of the resources as well as the livelihoods of the rural community. Moreover, the Conservancy should seek for the joint venture or business enterprises agreement with private sectors so that they could generate the much needed fund.

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