

MDG-F CULTURAL TOURISM JOINT PROGRAMME PILOT SITES UPDATE

A number of pilot sites have completed the software phase (feasibility and baselines studies; management plans; conservation policies; gender and HIV/AIDS plans; financial guidelines; marketing strategies; promotional and marketing materials; creation of partnership and linkages with mainstream tour operators; training; research; designing of signage, story boards and architectural plans). The pilot sites have now entered the hardware phase of the development of physical infrastructures. Below is a summary of progress at each of the 11 pilot sites:

1. Duineveld Tannery

Construction at the Duineveld Tannery is complete, comprising of ablution facilities, reception area, office space, kitchen area, store rooms, production area, strong room and an approved waste disposal system. Additionally, tanning equipment has been secured which include tanning drums and other relevant equipment needed for a successful tannery. Water was connected and the electrification of the building completed.

Rational for additional support and extension

All the planned site works were completed. However, additional needs were identified by the local community benefitting from the project: waste disposal special vehicle, climate control at the tannery as well as additional marketing training and consultancy.

2. Kapande Cultural Village

Notable progress is evident at **Kapande Cultural Village** in Kavango Region; to this effect, 4 traditional huts were completed with local building materials. Septic tanks as well as an infiltration tank were completed at the site. Currently, (a contractor is busy with the construction of a cultural performance and local story telling arena, which is nearing completion. Previously, the project was experiencing land dispute, however, this has now been resolved with the traditional authorities allocating additional piece of land for the development of the cultural village. It has been a challenge for the project to officially register the land in its name as it was not a recognized legal entity, to this end, the Kapande Cultural Village is now registered with the Ministry of Trade and Industry as a "Section 21 company", this will ease the registration of land and transfer of project investment at the end of the MDGF Joint Programme on Sustainable Cultural Tourism in Namibia. The site already received a registration number from the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry under the Directorate of Forestry have pledged the project additional trees to be planted at the site and at the same time, the National Botanical Institute of Namibia is developing 10 information boards to be erected at the site on different trees as a reflection of typical tradition and local trees with significance to the Kavango Region. As the site is located close to Kavango River, soil erosion has been prevalent and required action from the side of the project, in response to this, 50 trucks load off soil and compacted it to repair the damage from the erosion and gullies at the site; and as per the recommendations of a

qualified Engineer in the Kavango Regional Council, a drainage system was developed at the site to divert the flow of water along the eastern perimeter of the site in order to prevent further erosion. Finally, the construction of a reception and office space from where the cultural village will be managed was successfully completed.

Rational for additional support and extension

Initial design shortfall identified the need for construction of ablution blocks and steps fortifying the Kavango River Bank. Additional time and funds is necessary for completing these aspects.

3. Opuwo Cultural Village

So far, a total of 8 traditional huts (4 for Himba and 4 for Zemba) were completed at the site. A contractor is currently busy with construction at the **Opuwo Cultural Village** main building that will also have a section for a (craft shop). The completion of the building will be followed by an official opening and handover of the cultural village to the local communities under the leadership of Kunene Regional Council. Additionally, tiles and sealing completed, and the contractor started with painting and installation of air conditioning as well as the renovation of outside ablution facilities.

Rational for additional support and extension

In order for the Cultural Village to be fully operational there is a need to stimulate/initiate a production process of traditional ornaments and other relevant cultural artifacts which will form the cultural content to be sold for income generating purposes. Portion of additional funds will also be used to complement the currently delayed infrastructural development.

4. Omungulugwebashe Interpretation Centre

With the support of the National Heritage Council of Namibia, a contractor was appointed to develop the infrastructure at **Omungulugwebashe Interpretation Centre** in Omusati Region. Construction commenced and the structure reached roof level, currently the site is awaiting a structural engineer inspection report in order to continue and complete the construction process. A comprehensive marketing strategy was developed for Omusati Cultural Trail and the National Heritage Council and partners are currently developing marketing tools and materials to be used in the broader marketing activities of the Cultural Trail.

Rational for additional funds and extension

With the project operational closure in sight, no further commitments were made. Management plan was developed as part of the MDGF interventions. Additional funds would be committed to finalize the interpretative center and to procure office equipment and furniture, necessary for the running of the centre.

5. Omusati Cultural Trail

To date, 2 (Ombalantu Heritage Centre and Uukwaludhi Traditional Homestead) out of the 5 sites within the **Omusati Cultural Trail** are operational (primarily because they received other funding before the MDGF funding came into being). Work is currently under way at Onathsiku, and the erection of a fence at the site was successfully completed, while at Okahao Baobab Heritage Centre the construction of physical infrastructure was successfully completed, and currently the National heritage Council is in the process of collecting information and materials to be displayed at the centre once it is operational

Rational for additional support and extension

Since the trail is linked to a total of five sites, it became clear during implementation that the allocated budget is not sufficient and therefore the funds under additional support is needed to cover for infrastructural development of craft shops at Okahao and Onathsiku as part of cultural tourism product development.

6. Katima Cultural Trail

At **Katima Cultural Trail**, although the JP experienced challenges related to financial management (which is now resolved with the support of the Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture), notable progress was made. The fencing of the tombstone of the first magistrate for Kadima Mulilo was completed with a pathway leading to the site that was previously covered by bush and shrubs.

The restoration work at the historical baobab tree and fencing is complete, which was followed by the first face of cleaning at the former leprosy centre and work has also started with the fencing of the former leprosy centre. The project experienced challenges with regards to the availability of the initial plot for the development of the centre.

Way forward

Since activities at Katima Cultural Trail are moving at a very slow pace and there are endless disputes over the availability of a plot for the development of an information centre, the JP Team recommended that the remaining funds initially planned for this pilot site be reallocated to other pilot sites that have financial shortfall or elements (e.g. infrastructure) that requires additional work.

7. Tsumkwe Cultural Village

The clearing of land at **Tsumkwe Cultural Village** was completed by local community members under the food-for-work programme of the Otjozondjupa Regional Council. Following

this, a contractor was appointed for the development of the cultural village infrastructure. To date, the area is completely fenced off and construction started late 2012. The drilling of a new bore hole is ongoing, while the ablution block wall is completed. Additionally, the reception area's frame was already put up.

Rational for additional funds and extension

In line with the provision of clean running water, it emerged that the only viable option to provide water is by digging a new borehole and lay the necessary installations. Additionally, the feeder road leading to the site is in bad condition and for easy access by tourist and other visitors, the road need to be upgraded.

8. King Nehale Cultural Centre

The Namibian Police supported the demining of possible explosives within the land that was allocated for the development of **King Nehale Cultural Centre**. This process was necessary because the area is located within a former war zone of Namibia Liberation Struggle. After this process, the fencing of the area is now completed and a contractor was appointed to commence with the construction of an information centre and craft shop at the site. However, due to delays in finalizing contractual arrangements, the actual construction is delayed and requires additional time for successful completion.

Rational for additional support and extension

With the project operational closure in sight, no further commitments were made. The additional support will enable the implementing partners to fulfill the planned interventions indicated as currently delayed.

9. Ozombu Zovindimba Heritage Site

With the technical assistance of a locally recruited consultant of UN-Habitat, the JP managed to finalize both the technical and financial evaluation of bids submitted for the development **Ozombu Zovindimba Heritage Site** in Omaheke Region. To this end, construction started and has reached an advanced stage. The borehole for the provision of clean drinking water was successfully drilled, water was found at 110 meters, and the pump was also installed.

Rational for additional support and extension

Financial shortfall experienced during implementation forced the implementation partners and the local communities to reduce the scope on some of the original planned components. The additional resources proposed will complement the ablution blocks as well as the Priest (Ondangere) house, a structure that is important for traditional rituals that frequently take place at this historical site.

10. Geopark

After a lengthy period, the JP finally contracted the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN), currently implementing the activities of the **Geopark** component of the Joint Programme. DRFN is responsible for:

- Compilation of a Management Plan for the Geopark;
- Design of Corporate Identity and Texts for Information Boards and Production of Promotional Material (incl. Heritage Map);
- Architectural design for an information centre and provision of infrastructure for selling of minerals by small scale miners;
- Convening of needs assessment workshop;
- Design of training materials for future tour guides and HIV/AIDS campaign.

The mapping exercise is complete focusing primarily on showing land use and attractions, while the Framework Management Plan has also reached an advanced stage.

Rational for additional funds and extension

In line the MTE recommendation 2; *"rationalisation of outputs/indicators to a manageable size; implementing what is feasible and attainable"*. Geopark interventions were reduced to a manageable one output with 4 attainable and feasible activities that can be implemented independent of the passing of bill that will allow for the proclamation of Gondwanaland Geopark

11. Khorixas Cultural Centre

Kunene Regional Council Tender Board and the Principal Agent for **Khorixas Cultural Centre** selected and appointed a suitable contractor who is tasked with the development of the Centre. The area for the development of the centre was cleared, foundation dug and construction started at the site. However, the delays in the commencement of the construction processes mean that additional time is necessary for successful completion.

Rational for additional funds and extension

With the project operational closure in sight, no further commitments were made. Additional amount will be used to complete the infrastructural parts currently indicated as delayed, thus allowing the successful completion of the centre

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