



# Chapter 1

## *Introduction*

*S.A. Long*

This report presents the key findings of the Wildlife Integration for Livelihood Diversification (WILD) Project<sup>1</sup>. It focuses on analysing the livelihood implications of Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) in communal area conservancies in Namibia's Kunene and Caprivi Regions. The bulk of the research for this study was carried out in four conservancies: Torra and ≠Khoadi //Hôas in southern Kunene and Mayuni and Salambala in Caprivi (Chapter 2 describes these in more detail).

The report is organised in the following manner. First, the introduction presents a short discussion of the focus of WILD, providing an overview of the key questions WILD aimed to address. This is followed by a discussion of the context of conservancy development prior to and during the project's implementation. The remainder of the introduction reviews and summarises the CBNRM achievements and challenges and introduces a series of key issues raised by the research. These are dealt with more fully in subsequent chapters. The introduction concludes with a short discussion of the achievements and limitations of the study. Chapter 2 provides an understanding of the framework adopted by WILD, a summary of the methodologies used by the project and a description of the study sites. Chapter 3 offers an overview of the historical origins of CBNRM and the evolution of policies and legislation that support the conservancy programme. Chapter 4 then examines the current context of CBNRM in terms of focal CBNRM activities, the institutional arrangements for its implementation. These two chapters supply a context for the presentation of research findings, and the analysis that follows. Chapter 5 presents material from primary and secondary research to provide an understanding of the livelihoods of people within the study areas, identifying local

livelihood priorities, resources and strategies across different social and economic groups within the study communities. A key issue here relates to the extent to which natural resources, including wildlife, are significant for livelihood security. The discussion concludes with an analysis of the current and potential links between CBNRM activities and continued support for improving livelihood security and promoting further diversification. The discussion of the livelihood implications of CBNRM is then continued in Chapter 6, which deals with the relationship between different forms of wildlife utilisation and livelihoods, exploring the benefits associated with living with wildlife. This chapter is particularly significant in that there has been very little research conducted on wildlife utilisation in the communal areas, and yet wildlife is the entry point and focus for CBNRM. Chapter 6 attempts to address this vital information gap. This chapter also explores social and organisational issues related to wildlife use and examines practices associated with how wildlife is governed at the local level. The discussion explores the role of Community Game Guards (CGGs) and issues of accountability, power and transparency. Chapter 7 explores the costs of living with wildlife and focuses on the household livelihood impacts of human-wildlife conflict. Chapter 8 focuses on the extent to which tourism is currently providing support for livelihoods and Chapter 9 considers the livelihood implications of institutional and governance arrangements at conservancy levels – exploring local social and institutional dynamics. The conclusions and recommendations derived from this research are presented in Chapter 10, which draws together the analysis and considers some of the practical ways in which to build on the positive achievements of CBNRM, thus creating greater synergy between CBNRM and further support for livelihoods.

<sup>1</sup> This report does not contain all the findings of WILD research. It focuses on key issues and challenges. Much of the raw data collected by WILD and preliminary analysis can be found in the Working Papers that have been produced and the DEA Research Discussion Papers (RDPs) that were written by project staff. The survey and sample data collected can be accessed through the MET library within the DEA and through the following website [www.dea.met.gov.na/programmes/Wild/wild.htm](http://www.dea.met.gov.na/programmes/Wild/wild.htm), or through the Multi-disciplinary Research Consultancy Centre at University of Namibia. A list of project documents is provided in Annex 5.



The annexes provide more detailed technical material associated with the project's findings. The first annex gives a bibliography of works referred to. This is followed by annexes concerning the project log frame; a detailed account of the methodology used (presenting the questionnaires and participatory techniques employed verbatim); a preliminary analysis of survey material relating to livelihoods satisfaction; a list of project outputs; and the contact details of research partners.

### Why WILD and Why Livelihoods?

WILD was a three-year applied socio-economic research project. It was owned and initiated by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) and funded under a bilateral agreement between the UK and Namibian Governments through the UK Department for International Development (DFID). The purpose of the project was to conduct research to explore the implications of changing natural resource use and management (through CBNRM) in terms of the impacts on household livelihoods and to share the findings with decision makers. It was implemented by two field research teams, one based in Kunene, the other in Caprivi, and a project team leader based in the Directorate of Environmental Affairs (DEA) in Windhoek. Implementation was carried out in direct partnership with the Ministry's Directorate of Parks and Wildlife Management (DPWM), the CBNRM subdivision (CSD), the DEA Environmental Economics Unit (EEU) and non-governmental organisation (NGO) partners. A project Steering Committee, with membership drawn from the Government, the NGO sector and research bodies provided strategic guidance to the project during its three-year duration.

The idea for the WILD Project emerged in response to changes in the situation on communal land brought about by the 1996 legislation that made legal provision for the formation of communal area conservancies (see Chapters 3 and 4). These conservancies provided the potential for communal area residents to benefit from wildlife-based enterprises, yet little was known about how communal area farmers could make best use of the opportunities available to them and how these would fit with existing livelihoods. The experiences of the freehold farmers had clearly shown that given the right conditions and level of government support wildlife-based enterprises offered some possibilities for diversifying farm enterprises and livelihood opportunities. The differences between the organisation of

freehold farm enterprises and the nature of small-scale farming on communal lands are great – not least of which being the lack of security of group land tenure, and private ownership over resources for communal area residents. Therefore, lessons provided by the freehold context would not necessarily provide an understanding of the kinds of trade offs and impacts that integrating wildlife with livestock or cropping-based livelihoods would have for communal farmers. Although livestock and cropping were central to people's production and these strategies were accepted as legitimate, and supported by the Government as 'mainstream', it was recognised that much of Namibia was not suitable for expanded livestock or cropping and that all of Namibia was also prone to drought. It was therefore deemed appropriate by MET and other stakeholders involved in supporting CBNRM to establish a research project to explore options for diversification based on wildlife-based enterprises (Humavindu *et al.* 1997: 2). The rationale for the project also emerged in response to increasing concerns for addressing rural economic development and improving livelihood opportunities within communal areas and the Government's concerns for reducing poverty (see Chapter 3).

During the preparatory phase of WILD it was broadly agreed that there was a need to understand the relationship between different land and natural resource uses and rural livelihoods. Participatory workshops in two sites in the north-west of Namibia during the preparations for WILD (in 1996) had revealed that communal farmers were interested in gaining a better understanding of not only what benefits new wildlife-based opportunities may bring, but also the costs associated with wildlife and an assessment of any livelihood trade offs involved in adopting these new land uses. WILD then was to focus on the *livelihood implications of integrating wildlife and tourism as a land-use strategy*. During the initial design phase there was a general consensus among participants that the project should focus research on the opportunities that wildlife as a land use presented in support of diversifying livelihoods.<sup>2</sup> The research was deemed to be useful not only to local community members, but also to technicians, government decision-makers, development workers and donors.

WILD research was designed to support decision-making in CBNRM so as to enhance benefits to livelihoods. The key questions that WILD aimed to address were<sup>3</sup>:

1. What are the implications for livelihoods of changing natural resource management (NRM) activities and options within conservancies?

<sup>2</sup> The research design aimed to be participatory, however, it was agreed during the design phase that the project should focus on research and sharing lessons and not on implementation and the facilitation of planning processes at the conservancy or community levels. This decision was supported and emphasised by the findings of the first WILD Project Output to Purpose Review

<sup>3</sup> Annex 3 provides details of the methodologies adopted by WILD.



2. Which critical factors affect these and how?
3. Who within communities is affected and in what ways?

Addressing these questions would enable the project to meet its purpose and goal. Its purpose<sup>4</sup> was defined as ‘to provide research findings, based on good data, in order to strengthen decision-making about CBNRM at all levels’. Its goal was ‘to achieve more secure and sustainable livelihoods for rural families in the communal areas of Namibia’ (see Annex 2). A series of specific project objectives were also identified, the details of which are provided below.

## Project Objectives

Specific project objectives were:

1. To understand the implications for livelihoods of changing NRM activities and options within conservancies.
2. To document and understand critical internal factors (at community level) influencing the adoption and impact of changing NRM activities and options.
3. To document and understand critical external factors (regional and national) influencing the adoption and impact of changing NRM activities and options.
4. To assess the broader social, economic and ecological implications of changing NRM activities and options in the context of national development objectives and priorities.
5. To disseminate project data and findings effectively.
6. To enhance, through collaboration with the project teams, the capacity and skills of participating stakeholders.
7. To test and document appropriate methods for understanding existing and new livelihood opportunities.

Hence the core of WILD research focused on collecting community and household-level livelihood data to explore the following:

- People’s current livelihood strategies: What are the main types of activities, options and impacts of change? Who is experiencing what kinds of impact?
- What are the costs, benefits and trade offs for individual households (who is affected and how)?
- What are the key factors that shape livelihoods and decision-making?

By focusing on livelihoods the project aimed to address poverty issues including, but not restricted to, the following: resource access, vulnerability, minimising risk, coping with drought, and issues of community differentiation, membership, cohesion and equity.

To address these questions required research that was focused on two core components and their interface. A comprehensive livelihoods analysis was needed combined with an understanding of the NRM activities and options that were the focus of CBNRM. This would include research that focused on people’s existing strategies and activities, the resources they had access to and the range of critical factors, including local institutional and political contexts, the interventions of service providers, policy and legislation, and the prices and markets that affected livelihood outcomes. This analysis would be used to explore the various ways in which changing resource management practices (both practical and institutional arrangements) had implications for livelihoods. In essence the research and analysis aimed to explore the interface between livelihoods and integrating wildlife and tourism through the support provided by the CBNRM programme. To do this required the employment of livelihoods research, for which approaches and methods and a framework were being developed by DFID.<sup>5</sup> The use of a livelihoods framework led to the implementation of an holistic approach to the research and not simply to an economic analysis of the costs, benefits, and trade offs associated with adopting wildlife and tourism. Research at household level encompassed existing consumption and production strategies and resource access/availability (sources of incomes and food); the contribution of the new opportunities CBNRM provided; the variety of ways in which these are governed in terms of institutional and social relationships at the local and wider levels and what effect these have on different groups of people within conservancies. The various chapters of this report address these issues in a variety of ways. The following provides a succinct summary of each chapter.

- The evolution and implementation of CBNRM and associated policy, legislative and institutional arrangements (Chapters 3 and 4).
- People’s existing use of resources, their key livelihood strategies, activities and priorities (Chapter 5).
- The role of wildlife (hunnable game) for livelihoods in terms of both household use and the collective use of wildlife through community harvesting, and institutional issues associated with governing wildlife use at conservancy levels (Chapter 6).

<sup>4</sup> The purpose described here is that which was recommended a year into the project by the first Output to Purpose Review (1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> November 2001). The original purpose was “to enable communities to integrate wildlife use with other land uses in ways most likely to improve sustainable rural livelihoods by generating and sharing information and policy recommendations” (DFID 1999).

<sup>5</sup> See Annex 3. The project research framework is considered in more detail in Chapter 2.



- The implications of living with wildlife in terms of costs and CBNRM approaches to mitigating the risks (Chapter 7).
- The relationship between opportunities from tourism and livelihoods (Chapter 8).
- Institutional arrangements and power relationships and issues of participation at the conservancy and wider levels (primarily in terms of access and control over resources and implications for livelihoods (Chapters 6 and 9)).

As documented later on in this report, the research has identified a number of critical issues that have implications, over the longer term, for both CBNRM as a strategy and the extent to which CBNRM can contribute to providing support for livelihoods. Many of the issues dealt with in this report have been raised before (see various evaluations of CBNRM, for example, Child *et al.* 2001 and Jones *et al.* 2001), but WILD brings its own distinctive perspective by focusing on the implications of findings for households within the conservancies. Although there are current efforts to address some of the issues raised by WILD (see for example Chapter 4), the new perspective WILD brings to them suggests that the current approaches need revisiting and reviewing in the context of a better understanding of livelihoods and the implications of intervention at household level.

### The Development of CBNRM in Namibia

CBNRM in Namibia aims to provide incentives for rural communities to manage wildlife sustainably as a common property resource. It rests on the assumption that if the benefits to communities outweigh the costs and communities gain sufficient proprietorship (authority and control) over wildlife, then sustainable use is likely (Steiner and Rihoy 1995). Legislation provides for communities to form a common property resource management institution called a 'conservancy' (Jones *et al.* 2003). The conservancy then gains limited rights to manage and benefit from the utilisation of its wildlife resources through consumptive and non-consumptive tourism and the direct use of wildlife – harvests and/or live sales of huntable game. All the income earned from such ventures goes directly to the conservancy collectively or to individuals in the form of wages.

CBNRM can be seen as contributing to the achievement of broad conservation and development goals in Namibia. It aims to ensure that suitable habitat for wildlife is preserved and to provide income-generation opportunities for rural communities. It is also promoting the development of accountable, community-level natural resource governance structures. To a large extent, CBNRM focuses on working with communities at a collective level (conservancy

institutions) to improve the management of renewable natural resources. The result of this is that the extent to which these efforts currently address livelihood diversification and improved opportunities for households and individuals must be seen as a 'spin off' objective or outcome of CBNRM, and not a central component of the programme (see Jones *et al.* 2003). Much of the emerging rhetoric associated with CBNRM (NACSO 2001; Jones *et al.* 2001) concentrates on the extent to which CBNRM provides a new vision and approach to rural development (see Chapters 3 and 4). A key question addressed in this report, however, is to what extent a collective approach to common property resource management can significantly address what is a critical aspect of rural development – improving the livelihoods of individuals and households within communities (see Jones *et al.* 2003 for further details).

It is useful to provide an understanding of what CBNRM entails in practice and to this end a short summary of how CBNRM is manifest in Namibia is apt. CBNRM is supported by enabling legislation, passed in 1996 by the Namibian Government. This innovative legislation amends the old discriminatory conservation laws with the aim of giving communal area dwellers the same legal rights to manage and benefit from wildlife and tourism that freehold landowners have enjoyed for two decades (Seslar Svendsen *et al.* 2000). The legislation allows rural communities to form conservancies as a vehicle for establishing NRM structures and systems for the derivation and distribution of benefits. The establishment of conservancies is viewed as a fundamental step in improving management capacity for communities in communal areas. Linking management to benefits is central to the conservancy concept and to CBNRM in Namibia as a whole. The concept of a conservancy is that it is a multiple-use zone where residents continue farming as normal, but collectively manage wildlife in order to benefit from both better NRM practice and from capturing tourism revenues. Some stakeholders see the conservancy approach primarily in terms of it being a viable means to meet conservation objectives through local community participation. Others see it more in terms of a development strategy *per se* – a strategy for diversifying the rural economy through sustainable natural resource utilisation.

The current vision for CBNRM in Namibia aims to support the better management and utilisation of a broad spectrum of natural resources from wildlife through to water, fisheries, rangelands and forestry. The national CBNRM programme has evolved considerably since its inception in the early 1980s and the 1996 legislation (see Chapters 3 and 4). A huge amount of support has been provided for the conservancies through NGOs (with donor funding) and government departments. The three areas of core CBNRM support from the Government and NGOs relate to: