



5. With conservancies assess the implications of devolving local hunting to farm, village or household levels.

Addressing livelihood vulnerability and risk: HWC

Rural people and MET report an increase in wildlife numbers resulting in increased HWC due to the conservancy and protecting wildlife. This perception affects the extent to which people will continue to support the conservancy initiative. HWC is, however, a complex problem with no single and easy solution. HWC has a variety of impacts on livelihoods and people incur a number of different costs (direct and indirect). The poorer groups suffer the most. In Caprivi estimates of the average financial loss from damage to crops, for example, amounted to approximately 20% of average annual incomes. This does not reflect the severity of impact on those who earn considerably less or for those who lose all their crop. In Caprivi, wildlife damaged maize in 63% of cases recorded by WILD. This compares with damage caused by livestock to maize reported in 37% and pests in 5% of cases. The impact on livelihoods results from losses in income from crop or livestock sales, but also loss of access to valuable food sources, labour and financial investment.

Currently the CBNRM programme and conservancies are active in the following areas: improving monitoring and reporting systems, protecting water points, and installing them for wildlife use, introducing electric fences to protect gardens, lobbying the Government to simplify procedures to deal directly with problem animal control, and the piloting of a Human Animal Conflict Compensation Scheme (HACCS). The latter is likely to have a high degree of success in terms of offsetting the costs from the perspective of households themselves, but this must be combined with other management approaches. Compensation alone is no panacea. The Government has also established a fund (the Game Product Trust Fund (GPTF)) to enable applications for finance to fund projects that address problem wildlife management.

There are a number of constraints to further improving the conservancies' ability to deal with HWC. Research revealed that existing data on HWC is not being systematically collated and analysed. There is little integration between the various stakeholders involved (MET, other government departments, NGOs or communities). There is no MET policy on HWC that clarifies the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders. Conservancies are increasingly seen as the responsible institution, yet have no authority to deal directly with HWC. The participation of conservancy members and householders is central to effective management. Agreeing the location of dams, fences and accepting some responsibility for the maintenance of such installations are important aspects of local participation.

Identifying which species cause most problems and developing targeted strategies to deal specifically with these is also important and requires the input of conservancy residents. Addressing these creates not only a sense of ownership, but also pride and confidence when the management proves effective. In addition, offsetting costs (both direct and indirect) in tangible ways is paramount – HACCS is currently only being used to address livestock losses, but studies are being conducted to assess its application to crop loss compensation. The GPTF aims to enable conservancies to access funds from the sales of wildlife products (principally ivory). At present few applications have been funded and none in the Caprivi Region.

Recommendations:

1. Develop an integrated multi-stakeholder and multi-dimensional strategy to deal with HWC. This should be specific to each region or district and should involve representatives from the conservancies and traditional authorities and representatives from the broader conservancy membership. Technical staff from MET and conservancy NRM staff, together with technical staff from other line ministries (MAWRD, with veterinary services and DRWS), should also be involved. A forum similar to the CBNRM working group that exists in Caprivi would be ideal. The functions of the group should include establishing an inventory, and description and assessment of current deterrent and mitigation practices. From this a suite of measures could be designed appropriate to each conservancy.
2. MET must draft an HWC policy document to clarify the roles and responsibilities of government staff. The policy should include devolving responsibility for problem animal control to regions. In the short term, speed up process for declaring problem animals for control.

Specific recommendations to address livelihood issues (recommendations relating to specific mitigation measures are dealt with in detail in Chapter7):

1. Continue to support conservancies to consider targeting the least secure groups who suffer HWC.
2. Support conservancies to develop their own problem animal strategies, where relevant, to deal with species other than large carnivores and elephants.
3. Support the pilot compensation scheme (HACCS), and encourage adapting it for use in contexts of crop loss for Caprivi as soon as possible.
4. Monitor the effectiveness of HACCS and adapt as necessary.
5. Address the current hurdles to effectively releasing money from the GPTF, and specifically support funding proposals for fencing and water point installations. Support giving priority to proposals from Caprivi with immediate effect.



The above summaries suggest that there are a number of positive and potentially positive ways in which CBNRM is currently providing support to livelihoods. In each case there are a number of constraints to further improving the effectiveness of these support activities. To improve synergy between CBNRM and livelihoods, in addition to addressing the above constraints, the following further options are suggested by WILD. These deal with the provision of support for existing livelihood activities and strategies and address the issue of differentiation within communities.

Addressing support to existing livelihoods and targeting the poor

Not all households utilise resources to the same degree and some are more dependant on specific resources than others. In both Caprivi and Kunene those with the largest number of livestock fall within the category of those who are wealthiest or most secure. Other indicators of difference include the extent of cropping (Caprivi), income levels, and reliance on natural resources. Other factors that affect an individual household's wealth status are the nature and extent of their social networks, including access to a variety of institutions and their geographical location within conservancies. To this extent various CBNRM support strategies and conservancy activities will have different impacts on the rich and the poor.

Research revealed that most conservancy residents could easily identify what criteria make a person poor (lack of stock, income, education etc.). In addition, there was widespread recognition that some people are more vulnerable than others and that if at all possible measures should be taken to support these people. Targeting the 'poor and needy' is already an aspect of some conservancies benefit distribution plans. Therefore, at the conservancy level it is clear that addressing poverty is a concern. It is not new to residents of conservancies, nor is it externally driven. Supporting these concerns is important.

There is a need to consider providing support for livelihood security in the short term, as well as exploring options over the longer term for livelihood diversification through integrating wildlife use. For the poor or less secure groups, finding enough food and income is a priority. For the wealthier groups, their concerns relate more to opportunities for improvement and for investment, for example in buying more cattle or goats and extending their areas of cultivation. Any significant changes for either groups may have implications for conservancies in terms of their conservation objectives.

A number of options are available to the conservancies to provide direct support to existing livelihoods. Two of these are presented here to assist CBNRM stakeholders and practitioners better understand the kind of suite of small-

scale interventions that would directly support existing livelihood strategies for different groups of rich or poor. The identification of appropriate livelihood support strategies must, however, be done by the conservancies themselves through participatory means, and they must receive the requisite support to do this.

In Caprivi a key strategy for most involves crop production. Those that produce the least are those that do not have access to draught power. This group are also highly vulnerable to the loss of crops to wildlife. Successful crop production provides at least enough food for part of the year and allows for the possibility that other activities may provide cash for purposes other than food purchases. One option to improve their crop production, and therefore improve their livelihood security, would be to provide support for accessing draught power. The conservancies could use a limited amount of funds to hire cattle and ploughs for cultivation purposes. To ensure there was a degree of equity in this, the animals could be hired from the wealthiest or those who have large cattle holdings. This would provide support for both the poorer groups and the wealthier and serve to provide additional cash in the local economy. There are a number of problems that would be encountered in taking an approach of this nature, not least of which would be the selection of those eligible, but these could be addressed by the conservancies.

In the Kunene Region conservancies of this study, the dominant strategies and livelihood priorities relate to the production and ownership of livestock, principally cattle and goats. People tend gardens, and while these do supply additional food they are not very significant in terms of incomes. There are relatively few opportunities for formal employment and there are fewer natural resources available to people. One opportunity to enhance livelihoods in Kunene Region is for conservancies to support improved livestock production and market access, particularly for goats. This would improve the amount of cash available to people, reduce the transaction costs of market access itself and lead to improved livelihood security. Research data presented in this report illustrates that expenditures on the health of livestock are important. Providing support in the production of stock (through improved access to health care) would also free up some of the capital expenditure that seasonally goes on dealing with animal health. Any future strategies that aim to provide support for livestock production will have a differential impact on the different groups, however. Support for livestock needs to be tempered by the realisation that there is differentiation between livestock owners, with some having relatively large herds and farming commercially, and others holding small numbers of stock for subsistence. It would be necessary for conservancies to decide how they would address equity issues if taking the route of supporting livestock production.



There are a variety of opportunities of these kinds that would provide effective ways in which the conservancies could support livelihood security. The conclusion that WILD presents here is not that the conservancies need to take up the options provided as examples above, but rather that adopting a livelihoods perspective offers the means to rethink support strategies in ways that would be more meaningful locally, building directly on what people currently do, but also taking into account issues of differentiation and equity. Furthermore, in providing support by using the gains from wildlife and tourism, creates a direct link between conservancy activities and livelihoods – in this way improving synergy between the two. Existing livelihood strategies are also important to people culturally and historically, and while it would be naïve to suggest that people in communal areas are resistant or unwilling to change, adopting strategies that are unfamiliar and have uncertain returns is considered risky. Adopting wildlife and tourism may become more acceptable, but in the short term people face very pressing livelihood security needs which cannot currently be met through the CBNRM benefit streams.

Recommendations:

1. An approach to conservancy development (planning and decision-making) that supports both improved livelihood security and diversification opportunities, by building on existing livelihoods strategies and activities, needs to be adopted and mainstreamed with the CBNRM programme. Funds need to be made available and the requisite support provided to include this component as a ‘fourth pillar’ of support to conservancies.
2. Through the above process, support conservancies to identify and assess options to use conservancy income to support better livestock and crop production and improve opportunities for natural resource use and sale (e.g. micro-credit, provision of draught power, animal health support, market access etc.) and to address the implications of doing so in terms of equity.
3. At the level of service provision and conservancy support, skilled specialist personnel need to be brought in to train Namibian staff in the use of the methodologies that address the above. The use of a Household Livelihood Security methodology and its extension through a training of trainers approach – with the aim of training conservancy-level people to conduct these assessments and identify strategies independently – should be considered as a priority among NACSO partners.
4. In the context of future opportunities for funding CBNRM (for example, the new wave of USAID-funded support to CBNRM in Namibia), MET and NACSO should evaluate proposed projects and programmes in terms of how far they are likely to

meet the above objectives. Where appropriate identify funding opportunities outside of the conservation sector that would assist with piloting projects focused on support to rural livelihoods.

Critical factors that affect livelihoods: conservancies, institutions and governance

There a number of factors that affect the ability of people within conservancies to pursue their livelihoods and to access resources. These also have implications for conservancies. They include social relations and power; relationships between the conservancy institutions and the traditional authority structures; the existence of overlapping and competing institutions for resource management and a lack of integration between them; the issue of participation and mechanisms of support; and policy and legislation.

Social relations in the conservancies are variously organised according to kin and lineage structures, and other kinds of social networks based on common allegiance to institutions, political groups, traditional authorities and common locality and so on. There is often an imbalance of power within these relationships based on differences of status and wealth. These relationships serve at once to provide a valuable safety net for people, but conversely can put a drain on people’s resources, as people make claims on each other. Power relations between people create a situation in which it becomes possible for those in positions of power (formally through links with institutions or informally by virtue of their wealth) to gain preferential access to key resources. Similarly access to land and water is mediated by the same kinds of relationships. In the context of CBNRM and the establishment of conservancy institutions, the exact role of the conservancy and its powers in regard to dealing with resource access is unclear. This can lead to a situation in which it is relatively easy for some elite groups to monopolise access to resources (particularly land, water and wildlife) and decision-making arenas. One of the reasons for this relates to the lack of clarity in terms of the roles and responsibilities of key conservancy players, for example game guards and other staff.

Traditional authorities and conservancies: The conservancies’ links to traditional authorities vary between the two study regions. In Caprivi, the strong support provided by the traditional authorities has created a legitimate foundation for conservancy development. In Kunene, the conservancy links with the traditional authorities have been less strong, and this has in some cases lead to a lack of clarity in terms of roles and responsibilities for key resource management decisions, particularly regarding water and land. In southern Kunene the traditional authorities are also in a relatively weak position and the emergence of the conservancies has been seen by some as a direct threat to their, already, limited authority. A good example relates to the issue of group tenure, raised in the context of both Caprivi



and Kunene. Although the conservancies have responsibility for land, they have no authority to enforce exclusion, particularly in conservancies where the traditional authority structures are relatively weak. While this represents a threat to the conservancies in terms of the depletion of their own resources and any lost revenues, it could also be potentially problematic for the livelihoods of people who live in the boundary areas and who may rely on access to grazing outside of conservancies. The issue of group tenure is particularly important in the absence of strong traditional authorities.

Although to become legally recognised by the Government conservancies need to adhere to certain conditions (i.e. developing constitutions, electing representation etc.), beyond this the variety of ways in which different conservancies are structured in institutional terms illustrates that there is no single 'blue print' for conservancies. Each conservancy establishes links with other local institutions in ways that are essentially meaningful in local social and political contexts. This is a strength.

Institutional complexity: There are a range of different institutions with different roles and responsibilities for NRM in the conservancies. In some cases there is an overlap in terms of responsibility and there is currently a lack of coordination and synergy between institutions and organisations. The issue of integration and sectoral collaboration presents a number of practical challenges. The distances from urban and regional centres, and opportunities therefore of better sectoral coordination between the conservancies and government departments, is a particular problem in Kunene. In Caprivi, distance is less of an issue, but the resources needed to attend meetings and for better communication are lacking. Appropriate fora are also needed through which collaboration can take effect.

The Government's decentralisation processes offer an opportunity to coordinate the various different resource management committees and institutions. The effectiveness of decentralisation in achieving better intersectoral collaboration and linking regional planning to conservancy development is, however, hampered by the current slow pace of implementing the policy of decentralisation and a lack of clarity concerning the exact role and function of the Village Development Committees. The Communal Lands Act may also offer the means to create better coordination in terms of land-use planning and integration, through the establishment of the Communal Lands Boards. The boards are being formally constituted, but there is a lack of clarity as to exactly how the conservancies will be represented and what powers they may have. The same lack of clarity exists in terms of the role of the traditional authorities on these boards.

Participation and the provision of support: In terms of household livelihoods, most resource use and management decisions take place at the household and inter-household levels. In contrast resource management by committees at conservancy level operates at a much broader scale. The result is that in some cases there are essentially two different forms of resource management that co-exist within conservancies – household and conservancy. This has the effect of distancing the primary resource users from resource management decisions that the conservancy may make. There is a need for the inclusion of resource management practice at the household level within the decision-making and planning processes of the conservancies. There is as yet no systematic approach being adopted or promoted, and participation remains *ad hoc*. In the Caprivi case, links through village headmen to the hierarchy of traditional authority structures continue to provide an effective means of communication. Elsewhere there appear to be poor channels of communication between conservancies and their communities.

There are opportunities to improve participation and communication through existing cooperative and functioning groups (including the churches, farmers' unions and water point committees, kin and lineage groups). The existence of these groups offers some opportunity to build on existing decision-making and problem-solving fora. While conservancies are bodies that meet particular legal requirements and are therefore organised accordingly, at a lower level it is important that structures to improve communication and participation are not developed in addition to or in parallel with existing fora. The issue of participation and communication is not only important in order to address improved decision-making and planning: the issue is at the heart of legitimising conservancies as institutions.

The role of support organisations in improving participation is also critical. External support organisations share responsibility for a lack of participation and poor communication within conservancies, since the focus of much of their support has been in building internal institutional capacity, NRM and enterprise development, and not on improving systems of governance (including accountability and participation). Part of the reason for this relates to the conservation and wildlife management origins of CBNRM, but the analysis in this report also highlights the extent to which the balance of power within NACSO itself remains predominantly in the hands of those with non-social science competences. There are a number of organisations and individuals who recognise the value and contribution that community and social development expertise can make, but they represent the smaller and weaker organisations within NACSO. The presence of strong advocates with the appropriate professional skills and a clear mandate to develop a programme of systematic participatory