



## LIVELIHOODS SUPPORT PROGRAMME (LISUP-4) E-NEWSLETTER VOLUME 1&2 2016

### Background of the project

*Support from the Ministry of Land Reform (MLR) carried on from 2015 into 2016, in the form of the continuing Livelihood Support Programme (LISUP phase 4) with a majority of San resettlement farms in Omaheke. The DRFN continued co-ordination, technical and infrastructure support to those farms under MLR funding, and the Finnish Embassy in Namibia provided co-funding for the Goats Enterprise Development (GED) project in Donkerbos-Sonneblom.*

*LISUP funding has ensured the ongoing provision of seeds and training amongst other agricultural inputs, maintenance of the solar pumps, maintenance of machinery such as the tractors, in addition to the personnel costs associated with the project. The LISUP also facilitates regular community meetings and monitoring visits between the DRFN and communities on the farms.*

*In-depth discussions between MLR and the DRFN led to the LISUP project being extended with funds provided up to 2020 for the DRFN's continued co-ordination and technical support role to these farms.*

### DONKERBOS-SONNEBLOM

#### Description of project Activities

The communities of Donkerbos-Sonneblom are the furthest and most remote community that the project is supporting. These communities are mainly engaged in the following activities: animal husbandry (goat's project), household gardening, harvesting of devils claw, crafts production with support of OMBA arts and bush clearing activities.

#### What has been achieved thus far?

The financial support received through the **Finnish Embassy** has ensured the continuation of the **Goats Enterprise Project** until the end of September 2016. Through this project 6 community members are trained & mentored on animal husbandry, goat management, animal health, tick control, hoof trimming, application of vitamins, deworming & caring for the ewes and kiddies. The goats number currently stand at 88 (14 August 2016), from the original 150 purchased in 2014.

**Financial Literacy Training** was conducted 10 June 2016. This training was attended by (number) of community members from the three farms in Donkerbos. The training material was modified from material developed for the Financial Literacy Initiative that is being implemented by the Ministry of Finance with support from the Namibia-Germany co-operation. The purpose of this training was to train community members on how they could better budget their money, how to save and the various savings options available.

**Bush harvesting activities** are also being implemented in Donkerbos with the funding from the Finnish Embassy. The project intends to clear about 16ha of land in the area where the new borehole was drilled to allow for some of the community members to settle there and eventually for the goats project to be relocated there permanently.



The **water situation** has worsened with the on-going drought that is currently being experienced in the country and the situation at Donkerbos-Sonneblom is dire. A meeting was held 9 June between the School, The Omaheke Directorate of Education, MLR, DRFN + the community members to seek possible solutions how this issue can be addressed. It was decided at this meeting that the DRFN should approach the Namibia-German Special Initiative Project to assist with the upgrade of Piet se Pos and possibly the laying of pipe-lines from the new borehole to the settlement.

#### **Crafts project?**

In the last 3 years the Donkerbos craft producers number has increased from 18 to 58. Men have realised the importance of the income derived from craft production and therefore assist the women with production. In many households both husband and wife receive craft materials and produce separately.

The group do not produce completed products as of last year and only produce ostrich eggshell strings which are then distributed to Skoonheid and Drimiopsis to produce necklaces, earrings, bracelets and beaded ostrich eggshell Christmas balls. Due to Donkerbos being situated in an extremely remote area and limited funding opportunities the purchase of ostrich eggshell strings takes place once a quarter. Four women were selected in all four villages (Donkerbos, School village, Sonneblom and Pietse pos) to manage quality control and recording of producers. Money is paid when Omba Arts Trust visits the villages to purchase.

Four men produce wire and wooden animals which are sold through Omba as art pieces but production is very slow and products not available for months.

Income from product sales can vary from 250 to 1800 per producer depending on how productive the person has been. Artists receive payments 2 times a year on top of regular ostrich eggshell production.

## **SKOONHEID**

#### **Description of project Activities**

The community of Skoonheid is better off compared to the other three in terms of leadership structures as they have a recognised traditional chief living in their midst and there are also better organised when it comes to the implementation of project activities. The community is mainly engaged in the following activities: animal husbandry, household gardening, brick making project, silo's production, Crafts production with support of OMBa.

#### **What has been achieved thus far?**

##### **Crafts**

Over the course of the last 2 years two ranges of products were developed and 2 follow up workshops with 1 quality control workshop conducted by Omba Arts Trust (OAT). The Stellar range products are currently marketed in Windhoek in the Namibian Craft Centre by OAT. Currently 60 women and 3 men benefit from the program at Skoonheid.

##### **Challenges?**

- Committee is not active
- Absence of MLR community coordinators has created a gap in terms of coordination of activities

##### **Planned way forward**

- Committee elections
- Summer crops/ Gardening activities
- Solar repairs + maintenance
- Identification of alternative income generation activities



## DRMIOPSIS

### Description of project Activities

Drimiopsis is a diverse settlement and also the largest of the 3 farms the project is supporting. Besides the agricultural activities covered under the LISUP there other activities that community members engage in such as: crafts, minor construction/repairation works, security services, teaching and piece-works.

### What has been achieved thus far?

- The fence around the schools dump-site has been completed
- Continued (but slow) revenue collection for water & sanitation services
- Ongoing projects such as crafts, community health initiative

### Crafts?

The Drimiopsis "Hand in Hand" project currently has 12 members, 4 members joined recently and received training. The group number varies throughout the year depending on movement from farms.

They produce: Christmas balls, safari necklaces /bracelets and beaded cloths

Compared to the other 2 projects Drimiopsis has better organised management, higher level of education, closer to Gobabis where they can access services such as post office etc., cell phone network and can manage their finances.

### Challenges?

- Damage of the solar panels & garden infrastructure
- Co-funding required to implement alternative income generating activities
- Growth of settlement poses risk for successful project implementation
- Poor agricultural productivity due to lack of water, poor planning & mismanagement of resources such as seeds

### Planned way forward

- Solar repairs and maintenance
- Summer crops planting/ Gardening activities
- Strengthening of existing committee structures

### Highlights thus far?

- Fact-finding mission by NEC on solar problems & recommendations in February '16.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter progress reports (April-June 2016) submitted to MLR
- 1<sup>st</sup> SC meeting held 19 May
- Exposure Trip to Nyae Nyae and N=ajaqna Conservancy in Tsumkwe was undertaken in April
- Nankuse willing to continue support to communities on health matters
- Probability of a partnership on water issues in Donkerbos with NGSP
- Communities actively seeking proposals for funding for community projects (Drimiopsis)
- Continued support on animal husbandry and mentoring for the goats project

### Cross cutting issues

#### Staff changes

Ms. Christi Mutota who has been the project coordinator based in Gobabis, resigned at the end of June 2016. She has since been replaced by Ms. Belinda Thanises as from 18 August. Belinda was formally employed by Omba Arts and is thus familiar with the activities of the LISUP project.

#### Research

There has been an interest from Masters Students to undertake research studies in the following fields:

- Traditional plants
- Designing Small Agricultural Projects
- Alternative uses for animal/plant wastes
- Development/innovation of food products