Enactment of 'Community' in Community Based Natural Resources Management in Zambezi Region, Namibia

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Thesis

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In memory:

This work is in memory of my late sisters Christine, Dorothy and my brothers Levision, Christopher, Bonaventure and Edward, always loved and missed. May their souls rest in eternal peace.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADC	Area Development Committees
ADMADE	Administrative Management Design for Game Management Areas
AGM	Annual General Meetings
AWG	Area Working Groups
CAMPFIRE	Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources
CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resources Management
CC	Conservancy Committees
CCT	Community Conservation Trust
CEDP	Community Empowerment Development Project
CGG	Community Game Guard
CHA	Controlled Hunting Areas
CIGP	Community Income Generating Projects
CLA	Community Liaison Assistant
ZLA	Zambezi Liberation Army
CLS	Cash Loan Scheme
CMC	Conservancy Management Committees
CRB	Community Resources Board
ICDP	Integrated Conservation and Development Projects
IRDNC	Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation
IST	Institutional Support Team
LAC	Legal Assistant Centre
LIRDA	Lupande Integrated Rural Development Authority
LIRDP	Luangwa Integrated Resources Development Project
NACSO	Namibian Association of Community Based and Civil Society Organisations
NNF	Namibia Nature Foundation
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for International Development
QGM	Quarterly General Meeting
TA	Traditional Authority
UDP	United Democratic Party
UNIP	United Nations Independence Party
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAG	Village Action Groups
VDC	Village Development Committee
SASUSG	Southern Africa Sustainable Use Specialist Group
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

YAC	Young African Conservationists
YAP	Young African Professionals
ZADECO	Zambia Democratic Congress
ZAWA	Zambia Wildlife Authority

Chapter 1:
Introducing Community Based Conservation

This thesis is about community based natural resource management. This form of resource management is well known globally and locally through its acronym: CBNRM. It stands for the devolution from the state to local communities of rights to manage and reap the benefits from natural resources. One of CBNRM's objectives is to empower rural communities through providing material and non-material incentives for assuming management responsibility over natural and wildlife resources. CBNRM initiatives have been triggered globally by substantial losses in biodiversity and marginalisation of rural communities. Enduring poverty in communities residing in areas bordering protected areas and non-involvement in management, decision-making and access to benefits by these communities are often seen as causing biodiversity losses to occur (Agrawal and Gibson, 2001a; Agrawal, 2001a; Agrawal, 2002; Sachs et al., 2009). For many – e.g., academics, NGO-practitioners, rural people, as well as national and regional policymakers – CBNRM has evolved to become an important model for conservation and rural development (Adams, 2004; Child and Barnes, 2010; Child, 1996; Hulme & Murphree, 1999, 2001; Murphree, 2005; Suich et al., 2008). Recognition of the widespread failure of centralised, top-down approaches, also referred to as 'fortress conservation' (Brockington et al., 2008), combined with the belief that wildlife could be sustainably conserved if its management was partly transferred to the people who live with these resources (Agrawal and Gibson, 2001b; Agrawal, 2001b; Balint and Mashinya, 2006; Burrow and Murphree, 1998; Child, 2004; Ghimire and Pimbert, 1997; Hulme and Murphree 2001; Nelson and Agrawal, 2008; Owen-Smith, 2010; Scanlon and Kull, 2009; Suich, 2010), contributed to the growth and expansion of CBNRM projects and programmes across the globe. CBNRM evolved in this way as an approach to wildlife and biodiversity conservation that seeks to empower rural communities and to address the challenge of poverty reduction. CBNRM – if well designed and implemented – is positioned as and believed to be a model that potentially simultaneously conserves biodiversity and reduces poverty (Alexander and McGregor, 2000; Arce, 2003; Child, 1988, 1996; Murphree, 1995; Lubilo and Child, 2010; Nelson, 2010; Jones, 2010).

Implementing such a conservation project implied a paradigmatic shift from seeing indigenous people predominantly as a threat to natural resources to one where they were granted rights to co-manage them. Enduring rural poverty was identified as a threat to conservation projects. The state partially devolved the use and management

rights to local communities, but still maintained control over game numbers through the setting and approving of hunting quotas. Next to institutionalising co-management, the global conservation project simultaneously promoted the valorisation of natural resources and made them accessible to distant markets. Conservation practices include, increasingly, in addition to CBNRM and nature parks and reserves, relatively new forms such as eco-tourism, game viewing, trophy hunting and game farming.

If one wants to understand and analyse the dynamics of CBNRM, one needs to take on board the complexities and interactions between the processes that together form the paradigmatic basis of such a conservation model. These will be fine-tuned and elaborated on in a lot more detail in Chapter 2.

1. CBNRM unfolded as an umbrella for global biodiversity conservation initiatives and projects that trickled down to the level of rural communities in Southern Africa. CBNRM projects are the sites *par excellence* where global and local processes meet, blend and interface. The global CBNRM project landed in Southern Africa from the early 1980s onwards (Agrawal, 1999; Arce, 2003; Brosius, 1999; Brosius et al., 1998; Child, 1988, 1996, 2004; Hackle, 1999; Murphree, 1993). The CAMPFIRE project in Zimbabwe is widely considered the pioneering approach that led to the proliferation of CBNRM in the region (Alexander and McGregor, 2000; Balint and Mashinya, 2008; Bierschenk and de Sardan, 2014; Child, 1996; Dzingirai, 2003; Nelson, 2010). Namibia institutionalised CBNRM as conservancies in 1990 at the time of Independence.
2. To merge conservation and development, CBNRM grafted new sets of communal institutions that were assumed to be capable of managing natural resources in a sustainable, economically rational and socially equitable manner (Bollig and Lesorogol, 2016c; Bollig and Menstrey Schwieger 2014; Bollig and Osterie, 2008; Bollig, 2013; Bollig and Wirtz, 2012; Boudreaux, 2008a; Schnegg and Bollig 2016). These new institutions, as we will argue in this thesis, blended with earlier forms of communal management of natural resources where the tribal leadership and authorities played a key role. This blending also provided a seedbed for new elites to emerge who often, in an alliance with the old elites, manoeuvred themselves into positions to capture some of the benefits of CBNRM.
3. The market gradually began to assume a vital role in solving the environmental and social challenges (Bollig, 2016; Boudreaux, 2010; Sullivan et al., 2016). The success of CBNRM is shaped by the degree to which natural resources become commoditised. The belief that only then can these resources be sustainably managed has been framed in the literature as neoliberal conservation (Balint and

Mashinya, 2012; Barret et al., 2013; Berry, 1989; Büscher and Dressler, 2012; Büscher, 2010; Igoe and Brockington, 2007; Silva and Motzer, 2014).

4. CBNRM gradually saw the involvement of a wide range of social actors: local people, some of whom are organised in groups, others who operate more individually; community structures; market-based actors (hunting agencies, hunters, safari activists, such as Professor Murphree and Graham Child in Zimbabwe, Garth Owen-Smith in Namibia, Dale Lewis and Brian Child in Zambia), and a global conservation network organised by members of the international elite, including several billionaires. Each of these actors operates at various sites and levels of the globe, employing a variety of means to carry out their own projects to serve their own specific interests and objectives. These actors are differentiated not only in terms of power and authority and their global appeal, reach and influence but also in terms of status, race, class and gender.

CBNRM, thus, unfolds analytically, and empirically, as a *multi-actor* and *multi-level project*. CBNRM projects evolved to be the sites where global and local processes and projects interact and intersect creating, in turn, many interesting interfaces and learning moments for all that are involved in conservation. What emerged as important was to understand a) what a conservancy actually was and b) how conservancies were introduced and enacted in villages. I gradually developed the idea that a conservancy evolves as an area where a diversity of actors socio-politically relate to each other and operate to satisfy their specific but different needs and interests in distributing the benefits of CBNRM, attempting to access jobs and wield power in the process. Inspired by the work of Giddens (1984, 1987) and Long (2001, 2004a, 2004b), I conceptualise the conservancy as an 'arena', as the social setting or site of enactment of conservation practices, social relations and processes and, simultaneously, the site where the struggle over control over conservancy resources and power takes place. This focus allows for a detailed analysis of a range of critical issues, including socio-economic inequality, gender, traditional authority, benefit sharing, elite behaviour or capture, competition, transparency and accountability.

During my previous engagements with conservancies and my doctoral field research, I encountered various groups of actors, some of which emerged as strategic groups of actors or elites that in one or the other way shaped the dynamics of the conservancy. Some are present in the conservancy (e.g., chiefs, headmen, administrators, hunters, NGOs), while others are absent and live and work in Windhoek but nevertheless consider themselves conservancy members. Other groups of actors are more invisible and some resist the conservancy model. There is also a relatively big group of actors that are present in the conservancy but are excluded from conservancy life and hardly share the benefits of being a conservancy member. I found these various groups of

actors and how they socially and politically relate to each other and shape the conservancy, to be at the centre of the Conservancy programme in Namibia (see also Bollig, 2006, 2016; Bollig and Olwage, 2016; Boudreaux, 2008a). The notion 'arena', thus, provides an entry to dissect and discuss 'community'. CBNRM as a global initiative was designed with pre-meditated ideas on how it should function and operate. I needed to come to terms with what the significance of the global nature of CBNRM is and whether and how this shapes conservancy dynamics. CBNRM, as a multi-actor and multi-level project, facilitates the intensification of connections between human and, also, non-human actors. This essentially involves multi-levels: not only the villages but also the capital city, Windhoek, and the board rooms of international conservancy (WWF, IUCN) and aid agencies (e.g., GIZ, DFID, etc.). The global dimension of CBNRM is present in the form of Namibian NGOs: the Namibian leg of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC). Their role in enactment is essential as they provide advice services such as drafting conservancy constitutions, assisting in the development of job creation programmes, training game scouts, keeping event books for both the setting of hunting quotas and anti-poaching purposes and organising accounting and management workshops to secure a proper enactment of CBNRM. However, when these CBNRM projects come into action, they are reworked and implemented differently than expected. Everyday local realities, such as the dynamics of local social organisations, culture and tradition and unequal power relations, come into play and make conservancies into what they are.

The experiences with CBNRM in Southern Africa are vast and well-documented in journal articles, chapters in books, books and policy and public reports. In this thesis I have ordered and analysed this documented experience as laid out briefly below. The thesis is also shaped by my own personal background and experience in conservation.

My personal connection to conservation

Having lived with wildlife in a rural village in Zambia and being drawn into the world of conservation by circumstances, as well as by friends and chiefs, developed my understanding of the everyday life experiences of living with nature and wildlife. I have also spent 20 years being an activist in building CBNRM structures around many sites and countries in the region.

I have been working in CBNRM programmes for the last 20 years. My experience of moving from being a rural dweller, the son of a poacher, to becoming a conservationist (field-based practitioner) and an academic, helped me to view this study through multiple lenses which enhanced my understanding and interpretation of the issues.

During this period, I have been involved in assembling and implementing different CBRNM projects with some success and challenges. In my pursuit to develop an academic understanding of CBNRM, I participated in multi-disciplinary governance and livelihood research in Southern Africa, promoted through the global partnership of World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC) and the University of Florida (Centre for African Studies) in a number of conservancies in the Zambezi region, Namibia, in 2007, 2008, 2009. Similar research was conducted in Botswana's Chobe enclave: Sankhuyu, Khwai, Mababe and Okavango Delta community conservation areas. Through the IUCN SAUSUG working group, I was contracted to carry out similar governance research in the Luangwa Valley of Zambia (unpublished reports about all these projects were produced and shared with relevant stakeholders in Zambia, Namibia and Botswana). My participation in this research project provided me with insight into and exposure to different issues emerging in the implementation of CBNRM and how the idea of CBNRM is being enacted and reworked in practice in different parts of Southern Africa. In 2009, WWF contracted me to support the IRDNC Institutional Support Team with the development of capacities for the communal conservancies in the Zambezi/Caprivi region and, especially, Wuparo Conservancy which had requested help to improve their governance following our research findings that identified some governance issues related to benefit sharing, distribution of jobs, decision-making procedures, use of hunting quotas etc. The Legal Assistance Centre (LAC), an NGO supporting development of conservancies, contracted my services in 2010 as a consultant to support development of Conservancy constitutions in the Zambezi Region (Wuparo, Balyerwa, Mashi, Sobbe and Kwandu) as part of the national agenda to improve and strengthen community institutions and increase community benefits. I worked with Andy Joice, a retired Lawyer from Canada, as a Development Volunteer to LAC to initiate a locally driven participatory conservancy constitution.

Willem Odendaal and John Hazzam (LAC), Karine Nuulimba (IRDNC) and Richard Diggle (WWF) played a very supportive role, reading and editing my work with these conservancies. This was an enriching experience: I worked with the communities and facilitated meetings and workshops where local input was worked into the constitution. Local communities have their own way of doing things. I learnt through this process that experts' knowledge may come into conflict with the local interpretation of things.

Towards the end of 2010, I was offered a DICE scholarship to pursue an MSc in Conservation and Rural Development at the University of Kent in the UK. I did my thesis research project within the Zambezi/Caprivi region, focusing on the impact of devolved governance in Natural Resources Management by analysing Wuparo Conservancy. I completed my Master's programme in September 2011 and progressed to doctoral studies from September 2013 onwards. As of 2016, I combined writing my doctoral thesis with working for the Frankfurt Zoological Society, heading the North Luangwa Ecosystem Project as Senior Technical Advisor on Community Based Conservation.

Problem statement

Based on the above elaboration of CBNRM constituting in analytical terms a multi-actor and multi-level project, I have decided to organise and focus the thesis around the questions and issues arising from the way conservancies are enacted. This involves analysing locally specific manifestations of the interaction between various conservancy actors: e.g., members of the conservancy, representatives of the traditional authority (e.g., Chiefs, headmen), market-based actors such as hunters, implementing agencies like NGOs (IRDNC, LAC, WWF, IUCN) and the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET).

This thesis sets out to problematize the process of enactment and to identify who the actors are that have come to play a key role in the enactment of conservancy and how such enactment shapes the dynamics at the level of everyday management of the conservancy. By problematizing the notion of 'community' that is at the core of the CBNRM model, I attempt to explain why certain conservancy actors manoeuvred themselves into a better position to reap more benefits from the global conservancy project than others. The specific focus on unpacking who and what constitutes community in the conservancy project allows me to depict when, why and how the problems of community shape the outcomes of the CBNRM project. I explore in detail how rural communities are constituted, how they communicate and interact amongst themselves, as well as with policy-makers, NGO-practitioners and global conservation actors, and how they shape the enactment of CBNRM and discipline

themselves to achieve the goals of CBNRM. I do not only focus on community but also on what the role is of the market and market actors in explaining the varying successes and failures of the global CBNRM project.

The focus of this exploration is the Conservancy programme that has been implemented in Namibia since Independence in 1990. The Namibian Government adopted and adapted the CBNRM programme of Conservancies, which gradually became one of the cornerstones of rural development policy and planning in the country. I selected three conservancies in the former Caprivi Strip province which has been recently renamed Zambezi: Wuparo, Sobbe and Kwandu Conservancies.

Research objectives

This thesis addresses two primary objectives:

1. To unpack the process of enactment of conservancies and local community dynamics so as to contribute to an in-depth understanding of the conservancy model;
2. To understand the organisational structure of conservancies and how they struggle to distribute benefits such as jobs, development project funds and cash transfers. This will provide insights into the power struggles at conservancy cum community level over who controls the resources, processes of elite capture and why local bush-meat harvesting keeps re-occurring in the community;

Research questions

In order to address these objectives, the following main and sub questions are formulated:

> How are conservancies enacted in three communal conservancies in the Zambezi Province in Namibia and who are the strategic actors that have come to play a key role in the enactment of conservancy?

This main question is broken down into five research sub questions:

(i) How are the conservancies being managed and organised?

(ii) What is the role of NGOs in the co-creation of conservancy communities?

(iii) How does the struggle about the distribution of benefits play out in the three conservancies and how does elite capture manifest itself in conservancies in the Zambezi province?

(iv) Why do CBNRM conservancies in the Zambezi Region fall short of conserving wildlife? Has bush-meat harvesting continued to take place and how has this affected the organisation of conservancies?

(v) What is the role of traditional authorities in CBNRM conservancies in the Zambezi region?

The thesis

The next chapter is focused on coming to grips with an analytical approach how to conceptualise CBNRM. I review for this purpose the extensive literature and documented experiences of CBNRM projects in the Southern African region and beyond. Chapter 3 depicts the historical background of the Zambezi (Caprivi) region, where the conservancies I have studied are situated. The brief analysis and background of the region provides a good entry point to understand the wider context of the study and, more importantly, why communal conservancies have a special place in this predominantly rural region, where people are generally poor and are mainly peasant farmers with regular dependence on nature to survive. This builds into Chapter 4 that introduces the local communities and villages that feature in this study. In Chapter 5, I explore the role of NGOs in the formation of the conservancies in Namibia and the Zambezi province of Namibia and how their support has contributed to the co-creation of communities and, more specifically, how they deal with contestations that manifest in the communities they work with. This flows into empirical chapters beginning with Chapter 6 where I explain how conservancies struggle to effectively manage funds allocated for micro-social projects in the communities. The financing for social or development projects is premised on the fact that it will contribute to better livelihoods, expand the financial base and create jobs. However, field experiences show a big variance from this intended objective. This chapter is closely linked to Chapter 7 that deals with benefit distribution mechanisms in conservancies, with a key focus on the struggle for jobs, elective positions and cash benefits. It brings out serious management/governance flaws that depict conservancies as contested arenas, where elites and other influential persons access most of the benefits at the expense of other community members. This state of affairs may explain why some of the local people have remained resistant to the conservancy approach. This may also explain why local bush-meat hunting/poaching has continued to take place after almost two decades of conservancy existence in Namibia. Chapter 8 is dedicated to explaining and bringing out empirical evidence that poaching/bush-meat hunting/local hunting is a routine occurrence in the conservancy. This chapter also brings out the many factors influencing local bush-meat hunting. This chapter leads me to Chapter 9 that deals with struggles over control of resources and problems of co-existence of institutional repertoires, creating power struggles between traditional and democratic institutions and ordinary residents. This chapter further propounds on governance lapses, the elite mentality and other factors that are

detrimental to better conservancy governance. The thesis ends with a concluding Chapter 10 where I reflect on the issues of enacting, discipline and interaction, as this helps to understand the problems of communities within CBNRM and conservancies in general. This further underpins the argument that conservancies assume communities to be acting as one. So they do, not, however, along the idealistic ways of the CBNRM programme designers (IDRNC, MET, Jones, Child, WWF, etc.) but along 'their' own rules and political practices: elite control in the hands of traditional rulers but contested by ordinary members. It is all about how communities are assumed to act and how communities actually act.

Chapter 2:
Unpacking Conservancies in Namibia

Introduction

This chapter clarifies the conceptual approach to unpacking Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) projects. CBNRM in Namibia is cast in the notion 'conservancy' which has been gazetted since Independence in 1990. CBNRM in all its different forms and shapes emphasises the rights of people who live with wildlife and other natural resources to use and benefit from these and manage them. Conceptually, CBNRM is legitimised and shaped by the ideas and theories of common property regimes or common pool resources, where the community has been identified as the ideal institution to delegate responsibility for the sustainable management of common resources (Agrawal, 2003, 2005; Alexander and McGregor, 2000; Boudreaux, 2005; Brosius, et al., 1998; Child and Barnes 2010; Child, 1996; Emerton, 2001; Hulme and Murphree, 1999, 2001; Jones 2010; Jones and Murphree, 2004; Murombedzi, 1999; Murphree, 1995; Ostrom, 1990, 2002, 2004; Suich, 2010). CBNRM rests, as Jones (2004) argues, on the premise that if a resource is valuable and landholders have exclusive rights to use, benefit from and manage the resource then sustainable use is likely to take place. In the process of CBNRM formation, wildlife and other natural resources have gradually been commoditised allowing new players to come on board to market resources that before were untradeable (Bollig, 2016; Brockington et al., 2008; Brockington and Duffy, 2010; Silva and Motzer, 2014).

In Chapter 1, I argued that if one wants to understand conservancies and analyse their contribution to rural development, a clear focus is needed on CBNRM as a '*multi-actor multi-level project*' and how these factors interact and mutually shape each other. These two concepts constitute the sociological foundation for a critical analysis of CBNRM more generally and conservancies in particular. This includes guiding questions such as 'what constitutes community?' in the CBNRM literature, as well as in the three conservancies that form the empirical basis of this thesis. In the same vein, this also includes questions pertaining to the '*global conservation project*' that unfolds at various levels of global society that deal with conservation and aims to impact at the local conservancy level. Who are the actors? How do they relate? What is their role in the enactment of conservancy? The market, market-based institutions and other dimensions of the neoliberal policy framework in Namibia (Dzingirai, 1996; Groom and Harris, 2005; Jones, 1999; Silva and Montzer, 2014) emerge as crucial in the enactment of conservancy, disciplining and structuring the outcomes of conservancies on development. The 'new commons', as Bollig (2016) conceptualises conservancies,

mediate relations that set in motion new processes of appropriation and exclusion (Bollig, 2016; Cleaver, 2000; Child et al., 2012; Child, 2004; Long, 2004; Hulme and Murphree, 2001). The shift from 'fortress' to 'new conservation' has transformed the set of social relationships between 'community', 'state' and 'market'.

To properly situate CBNRM historically and conceptually, this chapter begins with a concise and short review of the experiences of CBNRM projects and programmes in Southern Africa (e.g., Zimbabwe, Namibia, Botswana, and Zambia). This serves to identify the development issues and the processes at play during implementation of the CBNRM ideals. The review serves the purpose of distilling the key analytical concepts for this study from the CBNRM literature, as well as from the broader social science literature.

History of CBNRM in Southern Africa

CBNRM in Southern Africa developed as a replication of the rights that were exclusively granted to white, private landholders during the colonial period, especially in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Namibia. In the early 1960s conservationists like Garth Owen-Smith (in Namibia) and The Department of Parks and Wildlife in Zimbabwe in the mid-70s and early 80s began to argue that wildlife and its habitat would be decimated if the local communities residing on communal lands were not granted rights to use and access. This paved the way for new thinking about a Sustainable Use approach, an approach that allowed white farmers to use the wildlife resources on their land. Remarkably, they sustained the resource and improved their economies (Child, 1988, 1996; Hulme and Murphree, 2001). This same right was, however, not granted to black rural communities (Jones, 2004; Mosimane and Silva, 2015; ODA, 2011; Child et al., 2012).

In the early 1980s, Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE programme pioneered community based natural resources management. The CAMPFIRE programme, the acronym for Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources, was initiated by a team of professional civil servants in the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management who pushed through the amendment of the Parks and Wildlife Act of 1975 (Child, 1996). Through early 1980s legislation, the new Independent government granted rights over natural resources to the Rural District Councils to manage and devolved resource utilisation to the local communities (Child, 1993, 1996; Dzingirai, 1994; Murphree, 2005; Taylor, 2009). Murphree (2005) called this a 'pragmatic compromise', because the conceptual intentions were to devolve authority to local producer communities (Alexander and McGregor, 2000; Balint and Mashinya, 2008; Child, 1988, 1991 1996; Child and Peterson, 1991; Dzingirai, 1995, 1995, 1996, 2003; Hulme and Murphree, 1999; Jones, 2001; Madzuzo and Dzingirai 1995;

Murphree, 1988, 1995; Murombedzi, 1992, 1999; Thomas, 1992; Taylor, 1993, 2009; Martin, 1984, 1986; Metcalfe, 1996, 1993; Murphree, 1991; Mutandwa and Gadzirayi, 2007). The compromise granted appropriate authority to rural councils: local communities would function within institutional structures.

Safari or trophy hunting was constituted as the major source for generating income (Child, 1996). Though the principle was to direct the revenues to villages and wards, the political discourse favoured granting appropriate authority to Rural District Councils to implement and oversee the distribution of cash benefits from hunting (Hill, 1991; IUCN, 1988). CAMPFIRE generated $20 million in revenues for the local communities and district governments between 1989 and 2001(Child, 1996; Balint and Mashinya, 2008). Over 40,000 km^2 of communal land was managed for wildlife production. The CAMPFIRE programme performed well in the early stages of its implementation, before the sharing of revenues and other forms of benefit was subjected to socio-political struggles. Elites, however, began to position themselves strategically in the flow of money from District Councils to villages and managed to capture most of the benefits (Balint and Mashinja, 2008. The experiences from Mahenye ward, one of the CAMPFIRE districts, reflect the changing dynamics of the CAMPFIRE programme (Dzingirai and Breen, 2005). The Mahenye case illustrates the gradual shift from relative success to crisis and collapse which questions the merit of devolving management rights of natural resources (Balint and Mashinya, 2006; Dzingirai, 1995, 2004).

The early success attributed to the CAMPFIRE programme excited many conservationists across Southern Africa and many community based conservation projects and programmes were initiated. Following this early success story, CBNRM and CAMPFIRE received substantial financial support from international donors, such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Norwegian Aid (NORAD), Swedish International Development Assistance (SIDA), Danish International Development Assistance (DANIDA) and others (Child et al., 2003), over the 30 years that community based conservation projects has been implemented in many sites across the globe, often under different headings such as community participation and community forest conservation. These conservation projects have become over time more and more linked to global society and global players (e.g. WWF and IUCN, but also hunting associations, conservation activists, professional conservation parks managers, ecotourism agencies). Partnerships with private sector partners, notably in the hunting, tourism and hospitality business, emerged as the predominant form of cooperation.

Historically, in Botswana CBNRM has been externally funded through USAID. A national framework was created for defining communities and policies for

distributing wildlife revenues through 15-year lease agreements. A competitive process of awarding hunting tenders helped generate income in the communities in Controlled Hunting Areas (CHA). The CBNRM programme in Botswana, however, had a rather weak institutional organisational model which did not provide a strong political base and support (Child and Barnes, 2010; Rosemeijer, 2009). The practice and performance of CBNRM was mainly a function of the state departments of wildlife and tourism services. The programme did not create political structures like NACSO and CAMPFIRE Associations to organize civic and political representation in participating rural communities. This meant the programme was mainly government driven (Child and Barnes, 2010).

In Zambia, CBNRM programmes came into being in the mid-1980s, when the Lupande workshop at Nyamaluma identified poverty among the local people and their exclusion from management and benefit as the major contributor to heavy bush-meat hunting and the poaching of elephants and rhino (Gibson, 1999; Lubilo and Child, 2010; Wilson 2005). Two parallel programmes were implemented between 1983 and 1986. The Administrative Management Design for Game Management Areas (ADMADE) was a national programme that covered most of the game management areas in Zambia (Gibson, 1999; Lubilo and Child, 2010; Lubilo, 2007). The other CBNRM project was Luangwa Integrated Resources Development Project (LIRDP) that was essentially established to protect the wildlife resources in South Luangwa National Park and support the sustainable use approach in the local communities residing in the Lupande Game Management Areas (Child and Dalal-Clayton, 2003, 2004; Gibson, 1999; Lubilo and Child, 2010). The ADMADE programme was designed as a national project. Revenues generated from hunting and tourism operations were channelled into National Wildlife Revolving Fund and managed by the Department of Parks and Wildlife Service. The funds were then re-routed back to the producer GMAs as follows: 60% was returned to the department and 40% was re-channelled back into the GMAs as follows: 40% GMA administration (scouts' salaries, transport, rations etc.), 35% retained by the Wildlife Sub-Authority for community development programmes, 20% for the administration of wildlife Sub-committees and 5% retained by the local chiefs where the revenues were generated (Gibson, 1999; Lubilo and Child, 2010; Wilson, 2005). The LIRDP project was designed primarily to secure the South Luangwa National Park by supporting and retaining revenues from hunting and park fees for the neighbouring communities (Lupande GMA). The project started with the devolution of 40% to the local community structures. The project, however, was still not addressing the urgent issue of improving rural livelihoods and changing attitudes towards conservation. This paved the way for a new, robust CBNRM programme to ensure a devolution and retention of 100% of the revenues for the local communities (Lubilo and Child, 2010).

In Namibia, efforts to devolve rights to private landholders through the 1975 Conservation Ordinance were quickly amended soon after Independence to also include rights of benefits to communities residing in communal areas (Jones, 2001; Jones and Murphree, 2004; Jones and Weaver, 2009). To legalise this process, a New Nature Conservation Amendment Act 5 of 1996 legalised the formation of communal conservancies in Namibia. It has been 20 years now since the formal recognition of this CBNRM programme (Child and Barnes, 2010; Suich, 2010). The Namibian Conservancy programme is being widely studied (Bollig, 2016; Bollig and Menestrey Schwieger, 2014; Child, 1995; Jones and Weaver, 2009; Jones, 2010; NACSO 2006, 2007, 2010). In recent years the Namibia Association of Community based and Civil Society Organisations (NACSO) has played a key political role in pursuing the expansion of the programme. This support includes mobilisation of financial resources and technical expertise to further build capacity and improve the scope and management of the communal areas (see NACSO reports 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, on the annual conservancy status). The programme provides substantial rights and privileges to participating communities to retain revenues and negotiate business partners in tourism lodges, hunting and other commercial ventures implemented in the conservancy areas. CBNRM projects and programmes and multi-sector projects have become wide-spread across the globe and are seen as a mechanism for rural empowerment, conservation and economic development.

Analytical Cornerstones for CBNRM Projects

The critical literature on CBNRM is extensive. Reviewing the critical reflections on the dynamics generated by CBNRM, the following themes emerge feeding, in turn, the formulation of a conceptual framework for the analysis of experiences with CBNRM. A series of additional key articles and readings about community and actor projects have been consulted to develop an interpretative framework (Agrawal, 1999; Bierschenk, 1998; Dressler et al., 2012; Lapeyre, 2011, 2015; Long, 2001; Nelson and Agrawal, 2008; Ogbaharya, 2006; Olivier de Sardan, 2006; Platteau and Gaspart, 2003; Platteau, 2004; Taylor, 2009; Tuner, 2004, etc.). Four partly overlapping but central themes and areas of concern emerge from the literature that together may contribute to explaining why CBNRM is in crisis.

1. CBNRM projects fall short of redistributing the benefits to resource users who have been identified as the prime actors. The mechanisms to redistribute benefits do not work as designed. At the level of CBNRM projects there is substantial evidence of mismanagement and corruption generating, in turn, feelings of discontent, disengagement and community critique of project managers and management. Field data show that elites and other forms of exclusion are prevalent in CBNRM

projects. Power struggles and competition for accessing rights to benefits are daily occurrences in the projects. There is growing debate and much work is focussed on how local community structures are frequently unaccountable, inequitable and non-participatory (Agrawal, 2003; Alexander and McGregor, 2000; Balint and Mashinya, 2008; Brocius, et al.1998; Child and Barnes, 2010; De Vette et al., 2012; De Vette, 2009; Dzingirai, 2003; Fabricius and Koch, 2004; Gibson, 1999; Leach et al., 1999; Murombedzi, 1999; Muyengwa et al., 2010; Nelson and Agrawal, 2008; Ostrom, 2005; Schiffer, 2004; Suich, 2009; Wilson 2005).

2. Local elites frequently manage to dominate CBNRM politics. Elites that include new elites like local businessmen and politicians and old elites such as tribal leaders (e.g., chiefs and headmen) succeed in gaining control over decision-making processes at project level. CBNRM protagonists had dreams of democracy and empowerment of the poor but Patron-Client relationships continue to operate. CBNRM was designed in a political vacuum and projects, once implemented, were hijacked by locally powerful actors (Balint and Mashinya, 2006; Muyengwa et al. 2014; Muyengwa et al., 2014; Turner, 2004;).
3. CBNRM is a programme, a conservationist discourse that has been parachuted to the global South. Ideas and concepts developed elsewhere in the world have been imposed on contexts, such as those in the global South, that are structurally different in terms of power, culture and politics. CBNRM set out to regulate and discipline resource users to establish an environment mentality and create environmental subjects (Agrawal, 2005; Agrawal and Gibson, 1999). The making of subjects in the form of community is an essential ingredient of CBNRM. Communities are supposed to act as expected, as an ideal community, but they do not always. This thesis and other documented experiences of community based conservation provide proof of this process. CBNRM programmes have overlooked the fact that village level social relations are not based on harmony and cooperation but on conflict and competition which, in turn, can lead to negative environmental and equity outcomes (Agrawal and Gibson, 1999; Bryant and Jarosz, 2004; Gray and Moseley, 2005; Zimmerer, 2000). To underpin this argument, this thesis sets out to problematize the devolution of decision-making in conservancies in Namibia: tribal authorities and the tribal leadership still retain power to make and break contracts with hunting and tourism operators (Jones, 1999; Mosimane and Silva, 2015).
4. CBNRM by design has evolved to become the vehicle for the commoditisation of nature and, according to radical observers, to allow capital (e.g., the private sector) and the global market to access and gain control over natural resources (Bollig 2006, 2016; Buscher and Whande, 2012; Buscher, 2010; Child, 1996; Hulme and Murphree 2001; Murphree, 1995; Silva and Motzer. 2014). Market and private

sector involvement, that commoditisation and marketization imply, not only complicates the distribution of value but also leads to a situation where low wages for local people are the norm rather than the exception. Commoditising nature at the same time reconfigures the project and programme to one in which structural inequalities continue to exist. Power asymmetries are not or are hardly addressed in these international partnerships in CBNRM projects (Child and Barnes, 2010; Child, 1996; ; Lapeyre, 2011; 1997).

A synthesis of these four themes brings out two critical questions: (1) What constitutes a project or programme? (2) What constitutes or is a community? Elaborating on these two themes brings together most of the critical concerns that are dealt with in the literature. These themes raise the concepts that shape the performance of CBNRM programmes: power, authority, control, enactment and discipline.

CBNRM as a global project

Conceptualising CBNRM as a global project builds on the work by Bierschenk and De Sardan (1988), Bierschenk (1988) and Long (2001). It entails a conceptualisation of CBNRM as a product of a conservation project that gradually but increasingly spans the globe, one that brings together and connects local and supra-local actors, groups and their discourses, ideologies and practices about conservation. CBNRM projects have been designed and implemented as part of the global conservation discourse to involve rural communities in communal wildlife areas and devolve to them rights and access to use wildlife and other natural resources in an attempt to conserve global bio-diversity. Historically, CBNRM offers a break with past global conservation efforts that had been entrenched in a discourse of protection. Management of wildlife resources during pre-colonial times was mainly imposed by local traditional structures: its use was minimal and human population densities were much lower compared to today (Child et al., 2012). The expansion of the frontier and the settler economy that is associated with the industrial revolution and the European exploration and settlement of Africa brought new actors (e.g., sports hunters) but also new technologies and markets (e.g., guns, wagons and even railway infrastructure). These developments dramatically transformed the wildlife economy: hunters were able to harvest vast numbers of wildlife at a low cost to sell to regional and global markets. During this time, institutional mechanisms to control and regulate off-take rates were weak, often resulting in a vast reduction of numbers and species (Carruthers, 2005, 2008). A conservationist discourse gradually shaped the idea of protecting wildlife.

The London Conventions held in 1900 and 1933 triggered three key policy changes: they a) encouraged the creation of state-protected areas leading, in turn, to the formation of national parks (using national parks as reservoirs – not allowing

consumptive use of wildlife resources); b) restricted commercial use of wildlife resources; and c) centralised the ownership of wildlife resources in the state (Child et al., 2012; Heijnsbergen, 1997). These measures created opportunities for a range of associated activities such as tourism but also generated new problems as local communities were to different degrees alienated from the proceeds of nature by denying them access to the wildlife resources they formerly 'owned'. This was enough to trigger a rift between local communities, the state and wildlife itself. Bush-meat hunting and other animal issues became problematic (Carruthers, 1989; Brockington et al., 2008). In some countries (e.g., Zambia, Botswana), the state introduced a permit system for the local people to hunt (Astle, 1999). The London conventions were widely accepted as the right way to manage wildlife resources but with increased sport and bush-meat hunting and threats to wildlife populations, conservationists in the early 1960s started to rethink strict preservation policies and talk of a 'sustainable use' approach started to emerge. IUCN (1963) convened a conference in Arusha, Tanzania, that resolved to rethink the approach and opted to go for a sustainable use approach if wildlife population was to be saved. The amendment of the Wildlife Act of 1975 in Zimbabwe and similar changes in South Africa and Namibia, allowed private landholders privileged access to commercially use the wildlife on their lands. Trophy hunting and photographic and other forms of eco-tourism became major sources of revenue (Bollig, 2016; Child, 2016; Lapyere, 2013, 2015). With time, wildlife populations started to increase on private farms because the landowners looked after them because of their ability to obtain revenues (see Child, 2016). The amendment of the Wildlife Act in 1982, allowing communal area communities to benefit from their wildlife resources, meant the birth of the CAMPFIRE programme in Zimbabwe. The changes to the Act introduced a range of new actors to the conservation project: members of rural communities, Rural District Councils, the private sector and government itself.

The devolution of rights, stronger community participation, accountability and more direct flows of financial benefits to those that live with wildlife makes CBNRM an example of the 'new conservation' strategy that claims to simultaneously improve rural people's welfare and sustain resource management (Lubilo and Child, 2010; Dalal-Clayton and Child, 2004). The 'new conservation strategy' has made some progress albeit with problems. There is a body of literature that argues that CBNRM has positively impacted rural livelihoods as well as conservation (Child and Dalal-Clayton, 2003; Hulme and Murphree, 1999, 2001; Nelson, 2008; Wainwright and Wehrmeyer, 1998).

The 'new conservation' approach turned the wildlife resource into a valuable commodity that, if used sustainably, could bring benefits and revenues to communal

residents. Markets play and continue to play a significant role in this process: creating consumers, forging market relations and maintaining connections across the globe between conservancies and consumers are essential for making the 'new conservation' work, under the strict condition that biodiversity is protected and maintained (Bollig, 2016). This plays out differently at the level of CBNRM projects. The devolution of rights from the state to rural communities and the disciplining of communities as environmental subjects became the best way to achieve the twin objectives of conservation and the development of rural communities. Markets and communities became the cornerstones for the success (or failure) of community based natural resources management.

The 'new conservation' approach has been enacted in interaction between actors operating at various levels. International conservation agencies like WWF and IUCN, foreign donors like USAID, SIDA and DANIDA, local Non-Governmental Organisations such as NASCO (Namibia Association of Community Based Organisations and Civil Society) and IRDNC (Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation) (IRDNC, 2011) facilitated the formation of a large number of CBNRM projects. The CAMPFIRE association ensured a strong political commitment to lobby for and protect the principles of the CBNRM programme in the participating districts. NACSO and IRDNC with the support of WWF played a key role in localising the global discourse by building an enabling environment for conservancies in Namibia. The role played by political and economic elite groups should not be ignored (Draper et al., 2004; Spierenburg and Wels, 2010; Thompson and Homewood, 2002).

The conceptual implications of perceiving CBNRM as a global project operating in various places and involving a series of actors that are differentiated in terms of power and status are many. The public-private partnerships that span the globe and connect places form an essential ingredient for the commoditised use of wildlife and other natural resources. Only these connections secure that the benefits from the management of these natural resources exceed the costs and can be reproduced over time (Bollig, 2016; Bond, 2001; Lapeyre, 2015; Murphree, 1991, 2004; Steiner and Rihoy 1995).

1. The project requires the continued participation, acceptance and collaboration of rural communities. This only works if structures and institutional arrangements are in place that ensure that the benefits are distributed among members of the community and that the wellbeing of community members is enhanced (Child 1996; Lapeyre, 2011; Ostrom, 1990). The making of community or, to couch it in Agrawal's (2005) terms, the 'making of environmental subjects', and designing rules and regulations was accomplished by a concerted effort of the state, NGOs and donor agencies. Communities had to be taught to enact CBNRM. CBNRM,

thus, set in motion the establishment of local community governance structures and institutions (Bollig, 2016; Child et al., 2012; Jones, 2010; Mosimane and Silva, 2015; Silva and Mosimane, 2013). Traditional and tribal structures of authority and power, co-management systems, elected committees, devices that measure off-take of game for trophy hunting, trophy hunting codes and so on evolved and/or were newly formed and institutionalised to become the vehicles for enacting CBNRM. The conditions to make this happen were also enabled by changes at the level of the law and constitution (Bollig, 2016).

2. CBNRM as a global project contributed to the (re)shaping and transformation of existing power relations amongst various social groups in conservation communities and between these and intermediary organisations such as IRDNC, hunting associations, the Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MET) and so on. In Namibia, the state in the form of MET regulates trophy hunting through setting hunting quotas for the communal conservancies. The community has to employ community game guards to control and monitor bush-meat harvesting through data collection using event books. The drawing up of a Conservancy Constitution serves to maintain democracy and accountability among the community structures.
3. The global project is not executed in a linear way. Outcomes of CBNRM projects across the globe vary substantially and are rather to be perceived as place-based, as the locally specific outcomes of interactions between ecological, socio-cultural and political-economic processes. The literature underpins the idea that the global project has been reworked by local actors and, to a degree, also by actors operating at the level beyond the local. CBNRM, however, has not always been implemented as originally designed (Balint and Mashinya, 2006; De Vette et al., 2012; Hamilton-Smith, 2000; Turner, 2004). The literature on CAMPFIRE and various chapters of this thesis point at elite capturing, traditional leaders shaping local decision-making processes, national level politics and continued bush-meat hunting as examples of processes signalling that CBNRM projects are subject to reworking and manipulation and outcomes are locally specific (Alexander and McGregor 2000; Balint and Mashinya 2008; Dzingirai, 1994, 2003).

In conclusion, CBNRM is a global project involving multiple actors interacting in many different ways which do not operate on a level playing field. Some command more power and manage to exert more authority than others. These multiple actors also operate and function at various levels, from the global to the local. CBNRM connects these different social actors in many ways in order to achieve the objectives of the global conservation project: reducing rural poverty and maintaining bio-diversity. This global project assumes that the rural communities work towards achieving these aims.

Problematizing 'community'.

The notion 'community' in participatory or CBNRM approaches to development is often conceptualised as some kind of natural, desirable and ideal social entity imbued with all kinds of ideal values. This is and has become for many an unsatisfactory representation for a number of reasons (Cleaver, 1999; Guyer, 1981; Latour, 2005; Leach et al., 1999).

Conceptually, the formation of conservancies and their implementation bring together different kinds of social actors, operating at different scales, with different experiences, discourses, power etc. These conservation projects are (or have become) a new configuration of various actor projects from which the need emerges to question the nature of the configuration. Communities are dynamic and their compositions continuously change. Within the community group, size and heterogeneity are widely expected to affect prospects for trust and the degree of divergence in interests and, thus, to influence prospects for collective action (Platteau, 2000; Ostrom, 1992, 1999; Poteete and Ostrom, 2004). Lack of agreement on conceptual and organisational issues, such as who is included or can benefit and in what way, increases the difficulty of resolving emergent conflicts over the distribution of resources. Conservancies interconnect social actors where members know (or are supposed to know) what they are doing, even if they do not articulate it to the satisfaction of the observers (e.g., they often do not follow written rules and procedures but do as they see fit to meet their needs). The existence of specific social ties reveals the hidden presence of some social forces (Latour, 2005; Barret, 2014). This may explain why 'enactment' and 'discipline' when designing and implementing CBNRM projects are problematic. The conservancy community is not just the local residents but spans local, national and international spheres – the global project. The conservancies – even CAMPFIRE – thrived on international markets where trophy hunting and tourism were supposed to provide the necessary revenues to keep the programme going. Hence, the interactions at these various levels differ significantly and it requires the use of social theory to unpack the politics of community based natural resources management and the conflicts and contestations that accompany it.

One assumption of any CBNRM project is that a community acts like a community. Communities are supposed to enact community. There is also a strong assumption that there is one identifiable community in any location and that it coincides with a specific set of natural, social and administrative boundaries (Cleaver, 1999; Leach et al., 1999). The very definition of community in development projects involves defining not only those 'who are included in' but also those 'who are excluded from' rights, activities and, benefits (Cleaver, 1999). The assumed self-evidence of 'community' persists in our participatory approaches despite considerable evidence of the

overlapping, shifting and subjective nature of 'communities' and the permeability of boundaries (Peters, 1987; IASCP, 1998). Conservancies in Namibia are established on defined geographical boundaries, with defined membership and rules governing who is eligible to access benefits and who is excluded. In community institutions, the power dimensions are socially constructed with shifting tendencies and power is manifested through public collective action (Cleaver, 2001). There is an assumption in Ostrom's work that better institutions can be carefully crafted by resource users and policymakers (Cleaver, 2001). Ostrom sees the crafting of institutions as a continuous, evolutionary process of developing the optimal institution for the job at hand: cultural and social structures become the raw material to build upon and improve institutional resources management that is safeguarded from other social pressures (Ostrom, 1992: 23).

The key lesson we can learn from the literature is that community unfolds as an arena of struggle between key social actors. Inspired by the reading of Giddens (1984, 1987), I conceptualise 'arena' as the social setting or site of enactment of social activities and processes. Long (2000:190; 2001:59) defines arenas as social locations or situations where issues, resources, values and representations contest with each other. These are either spaces in which contestations associated with different practices and values of different domains take place or they are spaces within a single domain where attempts are made to resolve discrepancies in value interpretation and incompatibility between actors' interests.

Understanding enactment is critical to unpacking how the conservancies have been assembled in the Namibian context and how they fit in the broader CBNRM literature. A focus on enactment allows for an analysis of how actors enact cooperation but also for a study of resistances, contestations and negotiations enacted by social actors in their struggle to access resources and to get a fair share of the benefits derived from such access (Ribot and Peluso, 2003). Enactment is a process of setting up rules and structures that govern society, such as the enacting of laws. According to Weick (1988), enactment is described as representing the notion that when people act they bring structures and events into existence and set them in action. The process of enactment involves two steps. Firstly, preconceptions are used to set aside portions of the field of experience for further attention, that is, perception is focused on pre-determined stimuli. Secondly, people act within the context of these portions of experience, guided by preconceptions in such a way as to re-enforce these preconceptions. Weick (1988) further elaborates that the result of the process of enactment is the enacted environment and the enacted environment comprises 'real' objects. However, the significance, meaning and context of these objects will vary. These objects become insignificant unless they are acted upon and incorporated into events, situations and

explanations. This process closely relates to how communities and/or conservancies have enacted themselves, as they act and incorporate themselves through events and activities or actions. The enactment of communities and conservancies provides a direct link between individuals' cognitive processes and the environment. Enactment is about how people act in organisations. Individuals and organisations are constantly in the process of self-formation (Deetz, 1982). Communities are constituted in such a way that they have rules that they enact in order to guide how they conduct themselves and how they relate to each other. Conservancies, I argue in this thesis, find themselves in this process of self-formation.

The social science literature demonstrates and simultaneously problematizes community as dynamic, complex and which keeps adjusting itself in different forms because of multiple factors, such as the heterogeneity of the communities. Strategic groups or individuals are either divided or brought together through cultural, religious, family, kinship, political and geographical boundaries, but these divides do not imply that community will act as a united team. There are also individual interests that arise above the common (Barret, 2012; Law and Urry, 2005). This struggle is manifest in the interaction of various strategic groups, including local communities (individually or collectively) and external actors, such as government officials, staff from supporting NGOs and donors, who have their own interpretation of things which tends to be contradictory to the community's practice and constant motion.

These strategic groups are supposed to work together by following written rules, such as village or conservancy constitutions that require them to hold meetings, with regular elections, etc. CBNRM projects set out procedures for accountability, information sharing and the way the membership is supposed to hold the leadership accountable. The rules are set to dictate how these strategic groups should relate to and/or interact with each other in the course of their being part of the community's sustainable use of wildlife resources (Mosimane and Silva, 2012; Child, 1988, 1996, 2004; Hulme and Murphree, 2001). Together they constitute a process of enactment but also of disciplining, as the government laws and policies which the local communities are expected to adhere to are usually advocated by the NGOs/Donors. In practice, however, the various strategic groups express their feelings differently: they recreate themselves in practice to suit their needs. The interaction of the various strategic groups through the enactment and ordering of discipline requires interrogation, hence, this thesis attempts to bring forward this debate and be a contribution to a new body of knowledge. The chiefs and indunas are recognised to play an integral part in community based conservation projects and their power is enshrined in the rules. Traditional leadership was involved in the management of wildlife resources during pre-colonial times, as the chiefs or Kings had a mandate over

the use of wildlife resources. The current institutional framework for conservancies is that local traditional leaders work closely with the government, NGOs and the local conservancy committees in ensuring good governance, better resource management and equitable benefit distribution. However, traditional leaders are not expected to compete for control with those in elected committees. The results from the field show that power struggles often exist not only between the elected leaders and the traditional structures but also between various strategic groups, e.g., farmers versus hunters. Individuals struggle for leadership of the conservancies as once elected they are assured of accessing the benefits. This leads to regular change of office bearers, a phenomenon that support agencies have failed to contain.

Considerable theoretical work has explored the relationship between group heterogeneity and the performance of common property institutions. Baland and Platteau (2000) focus on the major sources of heterogeneity resulting from racial, ethnic or cultural divisions, and on the differences in the nature of economic interests among individuals. Vedeld (2000) specifies the various forms of heterogeneity: i) heterogeneity in endowments; (ii) political heterogeneity; (iii) wealth and entitlements; (iv) cultural heterogeneity; and (v) economic interests. Although resource users sometimes like to institutionalise a co-operative management of shared resources (Quiggin, 1993), competition among socially differentiated resource users often gives rise to conflicts (Poteete and Ostrom, 2004). These assumptions are validated by the empirical data that I present and discuss in the later chapters of this thesis. Conservancy actors are struggling for space, control and access to the economic power of the conservancy. As the human population booms and with the improvement in social infrastructures, such as good roads, mobile phone communication and access to markets, competition for resources increases, like the demand for wildlife resources in the conservancies. The conservancy provides for many the only hope for income generation and as such the conservancy becomes a battle field or the arena where everyone would like to seize the opportunity to manoeuvre him/herself into a position from which power can be asserted to gain access to economic and monetary gains (Campbell et al., 2001; Gibson and Becker, 2000; Balint and Mashinya, 2006, 2008). It is, in this context, important to realise that the conservancy community should not only be considered as constituted by those currently residing in the areas, but also include those that have migrated elsewhere to make a living.

As I unpack the 'notion' of community, what comes to light are issues of power inequality, elite formation and capture. Power, or the ability to use human agency, is central as actors attempt to employ their agency and power to reorder the networks in order to control the resources and discipline the agency of other actors in the

network. Power, according to Latour (2005) and Long (2001), needs to be seen as embedded in networks of relationships. Power, thus, is rooted in social relationships. Individuals form groups in an attempt to gain power through mobilizing 'collective' resources (Long, 2000), such as group norms and values or ' traditions'. In the set-up of a conservancy there are different layers of power. There are traditional or Tribal Authorities that extend to chiefs, village headmen and indunas whose decisions often go unchallenged. There is another layer of elected conservancy committees whose power is imposed through democratic elections or appointment by the chief. There are also conservancy staff members, who operate like civil servants and are paid salaries. All these groups, in turn, compete for a stake in the revenues from the conservancy and try to influence decisions, which later results in elite capture. These leaders and other influential members tend to expose their elite mentality and control many decisions in the conservancy. Elite capturing, e.g., the capturing of control over collective resources, is thus important to consider. Beard and Phakphian (2009) define elites as individuals who exert disproportionate influence over a collective action process. Elite capture is a situation where specific actors manipulate the decision-making arena and agenda and obtain most of the benefits (Wong, 2010). In examining elite domination, Plateau (2004: 223) suggests four factors: disparate access to economic resources, asymmetrical social positions, varying levels of knowledge of political protocols, and different levels of educational attainment in some cases. Their power is perpetuated through landholdings, family networks, employment status, wealth, political and religious affiliation, personal history and personality (Dasgupta and Beard, 2007: 234).

Research Perspective

This research perspective of this thesis may be labelled as a political ecology approach to study the enactment of CBNRM. In line with such perspective conservancies are conceptualised as arenas of struggle were actors that operate at various levels compete for control over conservancy resources. CBNRM as global project, brings together a range of actors that operate across the globe; they get connected through CBNRM and community. The community who are directly involved on the day to day management of the natural resources, they experience and are subjected to a complex set interrelationships of power, gender, ethnicity, who despite their differentiation are supposed to operate as a community. This is part of the enactment that is structured by process of disciplining being exercised in and through the roles of NGOs play and to a degree also by the State. Community and external experts use various modes of disciplining with holding of general meetings, use of event books and trainings as the technologies of rule to enact conservancies.

A political ecology framework explicitly situates the problem or question of CBNRM in the midst of the interrelationships between social actors that operate at various scales and levels (e.g. local and across the globe) who are connected through relations of power when it comes to enacting the conservancy and distributing the financial and non-financial benefits of natural resource management. Political ecology (after all) is the study of relationships between political, economic and social factors with environmental issues and changes (ref. Blaikie, 1985; Zimmerer and Bassett, 2003; Robins, 2004; Bollig, 2016).

Similar to Van der Duim et al. (2015: 9 ff) and Bollig (2016) I prefer an approach to political ecology that allows asking questions about power and social interactions and not one that presumes the control of capital and powerful groups (i.e. lodge owners, hunter organisations) over the appropriation of nature. I thus distanced myself from a structuralist political ecology approach as it does not allow me asking questions about resistance (such as the poaching chapter 8) or about attempts of local powerful actors including chiefs and indunas to manipulate resource use (chapter 9). In this project I attempt to subscribe to an open minded political ecology framework as it offers me opportunity to question *how* and *in* what ways CBNRM get enacted in Namibia and what - if any - counter-tendencies unfold. Backed up by a literature review of experiences across Southern Africa: questions are raised about:

1. The role of the NGO's (chapter 5) in 'enforcing' community spirit by disciplining them into Conservancy procedures such as GM's, meetings, trainings, game scouting's and counting, and so on;
2. The mechanisms of benefit distributing through projects and jobs amongst and amongst and between members and leaders of the community (Chapters 5 and 6). These chapters serve to underline that there is evidence of elite capture and mismanagement of funds
3. Poaching is investigated as an example of, and a manifestation of, resistance or contestation of the way conservancies are being managed run; this to underline that conservancy formation does not proceed uncontested. (chapter 8).
4. The role of traditional leaders in relation to democratic conservancy institutions, and also adherence to rules (chapter 9).

Methodes and Modes of Data collection

This study is a social inquiry that set out to provide a detailed description of how conservancies as communities have been enacted in Namibia. I used the following methods: Literature reviews (documents, papers, journals etc.), semi-structured interviews (and also informal interviews), participant observations and my personal

biography which enriched my use of data collecting techniques. These methods complemented each other and assisted in the validation of the generated information. The studied conservancies were used as case studies. The use of mixed methods in this study was necessary to assist in the triangulation of the results (Blaikie, 2010; Margoluis and Salafsky, 1998). This thesis uses the case studies approach (Yin, 2014) to investigate the enactment process of communal conservancies. The purpose of using a case study methodology is to explore the social relations amongst and between individuals, groups and the set of institutions and rules that have evolved around them, either from within communities as well as through external governance agencies such as the state, NGO's etc. These relations are complex, elusive, ephemeral and unpredictable (Law and Urry, 2005). This allowed a detailed studies on the three conservancies to probe and understand their organisation and enactment processes. In order to deepen the level of awareness and understanding, it was necessary to apply an ethnographic approach in this project. Theories and methods are protocols for modes of questioning or interacting which also produce realities as they interact with other kinds of interactions (Blaikie, 2006; Law and Urry, 2005). Social science methods are diverse. These methods help us to make sense of the realities we describe and are also about what can be made of the relations of investigation. Social investigators know well that different methods produce different and often inconsistent results (Law and Urry, 2005). It is advisable to accept that methods are mere tools used to understand our world (be they social, political, cultural) and also to appreciate that different tools are used for different jobs. Hence, it is up to the person who is trying to understand the world to choose or combine different methods and tools to enhance understanding of the subject matter being investigated. Heisenberg argues that, just like any other methods, e.g., natural science methods, social science methods have problems in understanding linear relationships and flows as the world appears as a complicated tissue of events, in which connections of different kinds alternate or overlap or combine and thereby determine the texture of the whole. 2005).

This study of the three conservancies of Wuparo, Sobbe and Kwandu provides empirical evidence on how conservancies have struggled over the last two decades as they have operated within a complex environment. The three conservancies were selected because prior to my PhD project I worked in and with these communities as a consultant to two leading Non-Governmental Organisations – Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC) and the Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) – to help in building better conservancy governance through revision of conservancy constitutions and capacity building. Wuparo had embarked on a devolution process to empower local members to participate in the project and access

benefits. Sobbe and Kwandu conservancies were both sharing boundaries within the Mudumu North and were also reviewing their management systems.

What is a case study?

Yin (1993) conceptualises that a case study is a detailed investigation of a single individual or group. The defining feature of a case study is its holistic approach. It aims to capture all of the details of a particular individual or group which are relevant to the purpose of the study within a real-life context. Case studies can be used for descriptive, explanatory, or exploratory purposes (Yin, 1993). For any of these purposes, there are two distinct case study designs: Single-case study design and multiple-case study design. Single case studies are just an examination of one individual, group or community. In choosing a case, researchers may purposely select atypical, or outlier, cases. An outlier case tends to yield more information than average cases. Multiple case studies on the other hand use replication, which is the deliberate process of choosing cases that are likely to show similar results. This helps to examine how generalizable the findings may be.(Patton's, 2002; Yin, 1993; Yin, 2014). The case study approach in the project assisted me to dig deeper and contribute knowledge to understanding of the dynamics involved in enactment of conservancies, disciplining and also the role of various actors involved. The cases are further enriched as they bring out original field data on the making and breaking of the studied conservancies. This specific project brings new dimension and knowledge to the debate on the critical outcomes of the conservancy.

Semi-structured interviews and informal interviews

The use of semi-structured interviews as a method of inquiry is informed by its relevance to any scientific research, be it social or natural. This tool is a series of interviews based on a prepared interview guide or check-list of topics to discuss. This guide acts only as a check-list to make sure that the key points are covered in the discussion and to check the sequential order. It allows further digestion and follow-up questions (see Newing et al. 2011 for more discussion and clarity on the use of semi-structured interviews). The key guided questions of these interviews were designed to understand how communities are enacted, how decisions are made, how benefits are distributed, why local bush-meat hunting is still a recurring experience and the struggles over control of resources between the traditional authorities and the committees. Other questions addressed the emergence of elite capture, corruption, misuse of funds or mistrust. The main focus was to generate information that would enhance my understanding of how conservancies operate as a complex entity or arena.

Primary data was collected through interviews with key community members and leaders in the three conservancies. Semi-structured interviews with key informants

(snowball sampling) was used to interview a total of (n=75) individuals in the studied conservancies. Of these interviewed (n=30) were women and (n=45) were men. The following were interviewed Conservancy Area Representatives (n=30, Conservancy Managers (n=3)Community Game Guards (n=15), supporting agencies field staff (n=5) IRDNC senior managers (n=5) . Resource Monitors (these were mainly women) (=9) Campsite staff from Wuparo Conservancy (n=3) and indunas/village headmen (n=6)... This research targeted those in leadership and employment. A few women were interviewed because there are few women in the leadership committees (Conservancy records, 2013). However, the difference has no impact on the outcome of the study. I reached out to more than 600 people by participating in many conservancy meetings and gatherings that took place during my field research where I interacted with members of the conservancies. I gained more insight in the processes involved with the enactment of CBNRM through these interactions.

Direct participant observation

Participant observation as a way of studying the behaviour of individuals, communities etc., is as important as other qualitative methods used in social science studies. For researchers such as anthropologists, interested in describing the daily life and culture of a social group in a comprehensive manner, participant observation may be required for a year or more. It entails living with people in their communities, taking part in some of the activities (e.g., fishing, funerals, hunting, traditional festivals, social parties, religious processions etc.). This would help the researcher generally learn and follow the way of life of communities (R.K. Puri, 2011; Malinowski, 1922). All strategic groups of people in conservation can be objects of participant observation as it provides a first-hand account of what people do and say in certain situations. I spent extended periods of time over three years in these conservancies, living and interacting with the communities.

My dual role and the consequences for data collection

Prior to my doctoral studies, I worked as a research assistant in the region between 2007 and 2008 and as a Consultant between 2009 and 2010. As a Master's student, I did my research in 2011 in Wuparo, which is one of the areas being studied in this PhD project. In addition, I spent another 3 years of extended field research for this project between 2012 and 2015. In the early part of my research people still viewed me as being their mentor, facilitator and trainer; however, with time and my repeated returns to the area, people were able to differentiate between my earlier role and my new responsibility as a student, and opened up to sharing the real issues concerning the conservancies. In this regard, therefore, my data is not biased or influenced by my double role. The dual role, in fact, helped me to better define and further deepen my

understanding of issues. For instance, as a consultant to the conservancies, my focus was to design a programme that would work and I did not take into account many social dynamics, which became clear during this research. I started realising the difficulties facing CBNRM in Namibia. This period of field research and work, enabled me to acquire a great deal of insight into how the communities enact themselves. Malinowski understood that people, even among themselves, often do not say what they mean, mean what they say or do what they say. There are many reasons for this and some have to do with the very nature of culture itself (Newing et al., 2011). I took precautionary measures to ensure that my previous work engagement did not provide biased responses or in-depth analytical understanding of the field data collected nor did I influence the responses themselves. My data is original and a true reflection of what I gathered from the field interviews (formal and informal), participant observations and from a review of various documents and reports of the conservancies concerned. Indeed, there were some instances where I found myself critiquing my own work, as I was now wearing a different hat and needed to scientifically analyse the data and make a new contribution to the knowledge on how the communal conservancy had continued to play out and be enacted. The benefit of my dual role was that I had prior knowledge of the study site. I knew people and their cultural, social practices and had fewer field challenges to reach out and access documents and data. It can be problematic to have full access to conservancy data if you just come as a researcher. This was not the case with me as I was able to access as much data from the conservancy documents as I could, such as: financial data, poaching data (Event Books), minutes of meetings, cash distribution records, membership registers, hunting quotas, concession agreements, Conservancy Constitutions, Staff and emolument policies, project financing and other relevant information linked to my research. I was also able to access financial audit data from supporting external agencies (IRDNC). I was also privileged to participate in community activities, meetings, patrols, social gatherings, funerals etc., and to be present at conservancy organised forums. All these were of great value to my research, which was a great benefit of having worked in the area before.

I attended a total of (n=) 9 General Meetings (approximate cumulative attendance at these meetings were over 600) in the three conservancies. At these meetings, the conservancy committees, with technical input from the supporting agencies (IRDNC, Ministry of Environment and Tourism and others), presented progress reports for the conservancies. I participated in these meetings between 2012 and 2014. I followed the discussion and picked up on several issues of how conservancies converge, engage among themselves but also display a high level of controversy in decision-making processes and benefit distribution. These general meetings were attended by an average of between 100-150 people as a minimum requirement for the quorum of

community meetings, making it a great opportunity to generate detailed insight into the issues/cases. I also attended 3 funerals (where I was able to interact with the locals) and 2 traditional ceremonies. I attended 5 conferences/seminars organised by the NACSO on the work of communal conservancies in Namibia. These seminars were held in Windhoek and others in the Zambezi Region.

I had the opportunity of attending the 4 conservancies' Bi-annual planning meetings for Zambezi region conservancies in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014, where the conservancies in the region convened to share their experiences, challenges and plans for their future. These meetings, coordinated by IRDNC, with support from MET and other supporting organisations, are a critical platform where performance issues of conservancies are discussed and possible solutions agreed upon. I also had an opportunity to attend the official launch of the Kavango Zambezi Conservation Area (KAZA), a Trans-frontier conservation network for 5 countries, namely Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Angola. The launch touched on the need to make conservation efforts meaningful to the ordinary communities residing in these areas. This meeting was of interest to my research because all the three conservancies are within the KAZA operation areas. Participation at this events enhanced the scope of the research and interpretation of field data. My participation in village activities like fishing, attending marriage ceremonies, cultural festivals all contributed to great length in this project.

Literature Review and Review of internal documents

I obtained secondary data through review of internal documents of the conservancies: management reports, conservancy minutes, game rangers' patrol data (extracts from Event Books), analysis of financial administrations for conservancies, membership registers, conservancy constitutions, staff policies and general Game Utilisation and Management Plans. Extra data was also collected from the review of Conservancy status reports produced by NACSO and other NGOs supporting the conservancies. These documents helped me to know the population status of each conservancy, sources of income, number of employees, salaries, amounts of cash dividend, number of projects, budgets, number of animals poached, amount of actual income from safari hunting and tourism lodges, etc. Further to understanding the data and theories behind them, I relied on a secondary review of literature through publications on various CBNRM projects and programmes in Southern Africa, including literature on CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe. A review of various CBNRM activities in Zambia, Botswana and other SADC countries forms part of the data for a descriptive understanding of the enactment of communities. The literature review helped me to put into context the theories and practical field experience of how conservancies are

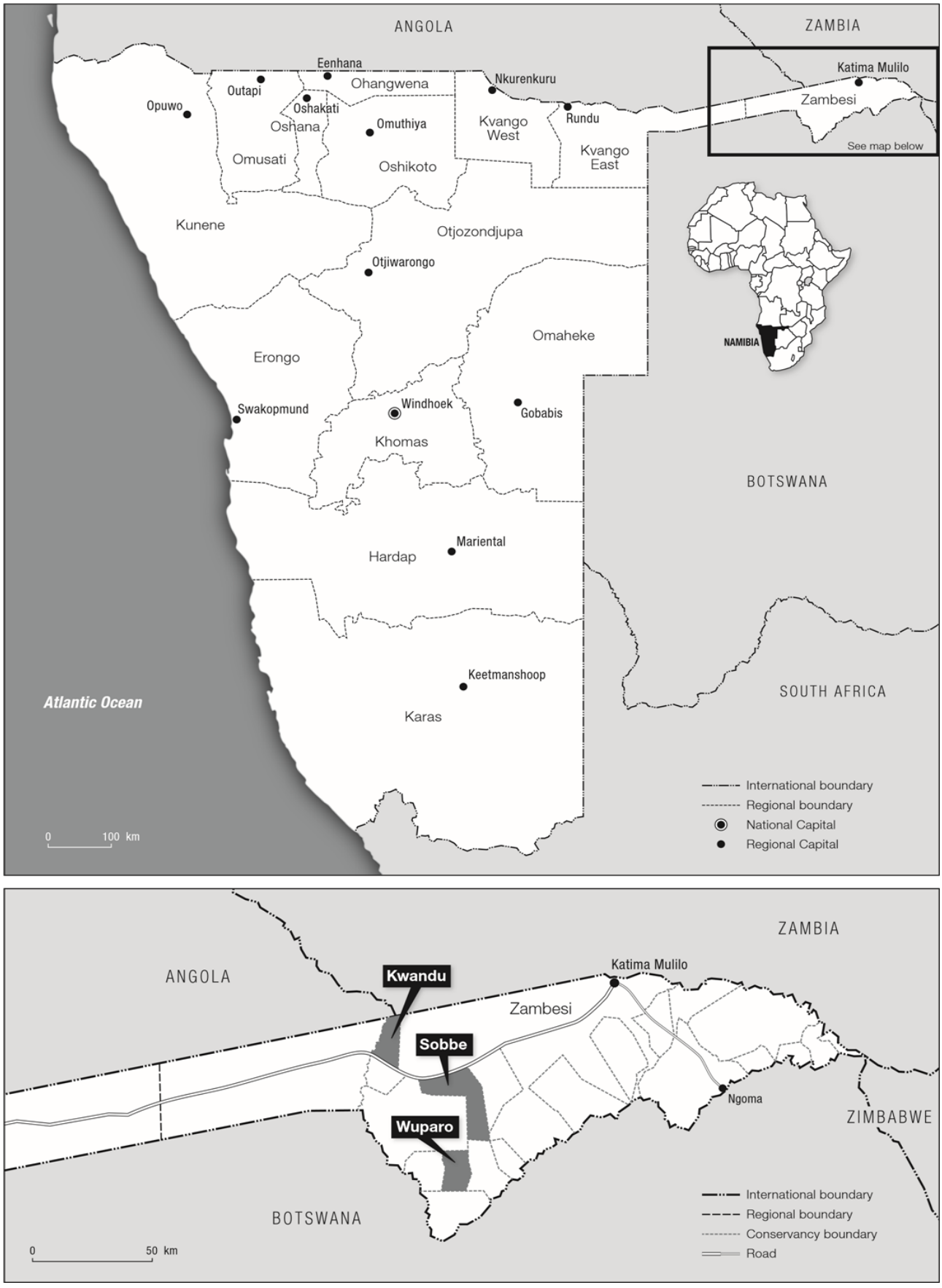

Figure 1: Map of Namibia and location of research sites

enacted and managed. This is necessary as it helped me to unpack what projects or programmes are, what constitutes communities, the making of subjects and how communities enact community

Study sites

The choice of study sites (figure 1) and thus the cases for further investigations are the result of my previous engagement with the region as Research Assistant, Consultant and MSc student. The Wuparo, Sobbe and Kwandu conservancies are situated in the Zambezi Region of Namibia. They are endowed with wildlife resources – especially big game like elephants and buffalo. They have attractive scenery making them conducive to tourism and the trophy hunting business. They share a common boundary with key national parks in the region. The Zambezi/Caprivi Strip is the north-eastern strip that borders Angola and Zambia to the north, Botswana to the south and Zimbabwe to the east (Figure 1). More relevant historical and current background data and information is provided in the chapter that follows (Chapter 3) and more information on the general account of conservancies and their people (see chapter 4).

Chapter 3:
Historical background of Zambezi Region

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the Zambezi region, its history and its people and how they are socially organised around ethnicity. The region differs significantly from the rest of the country in terms of natural environment, ethnic composition and political orientation (Wallace, 2011). The region was till recently known as the Caprivi Strip and has recently been renamed the Zambezi Region as part of the indigenisation of names of places and towns. However, for reasons of clarity and to avoid confusion, the notion Zambezi/Caprivi will be used interchangeably throughout this thesis.

Zambezi is a predominantly rural region with diverse landscapes, often attracting droughts and some flooding during certain times of the year. It is considered as the poorest region in terms of human development index (National Census Report, 2012). The Zambezi (Caprivi) Strip is a legacy of colonialism, a long finger of territory that pokes eastwards out of Northern Namibia, and runs along the borders with Angola and Botswana towards Zambia and Zimbabwe (see figure 2). It is the result of a territorial swap agreed upon by Britain and Germany in 1890. Britain acquired Zanzibar in East Africa, while Germany got the slice of land that later became known as the Caprivi Strip – giving it access to the Zambezi River, along the border of what is now Zambia. During the apartheid era, the territory was used by the South African army as a launch pad for its operations in neighbouring Angola, and against the guerrillas of the Namibian independence movement, SWAPO.

Geography, Flora and Fauna

Zambezi region is a flood plain within a tropical area, with high temperatures and rainfall between 550-750 mm annually (NACSO, 2006). This means that the terrain is mainly composed of swamps, floodplains, wetlands and woodland, which provide good grazing areas, good opportunities for agriculture and for plenty of wildlife (Purvis, 2002). Permanently flowing rivers in the Zambezi Strip are the Zambezi, the Chobe, the Okavango, the Linyati and the Kwando. These form an extensive network of drainage routes with numerous temporary or permanent tributaries. When the flood is at its highest during certain times of the year, these rivers form one system (Purvis, 2002).

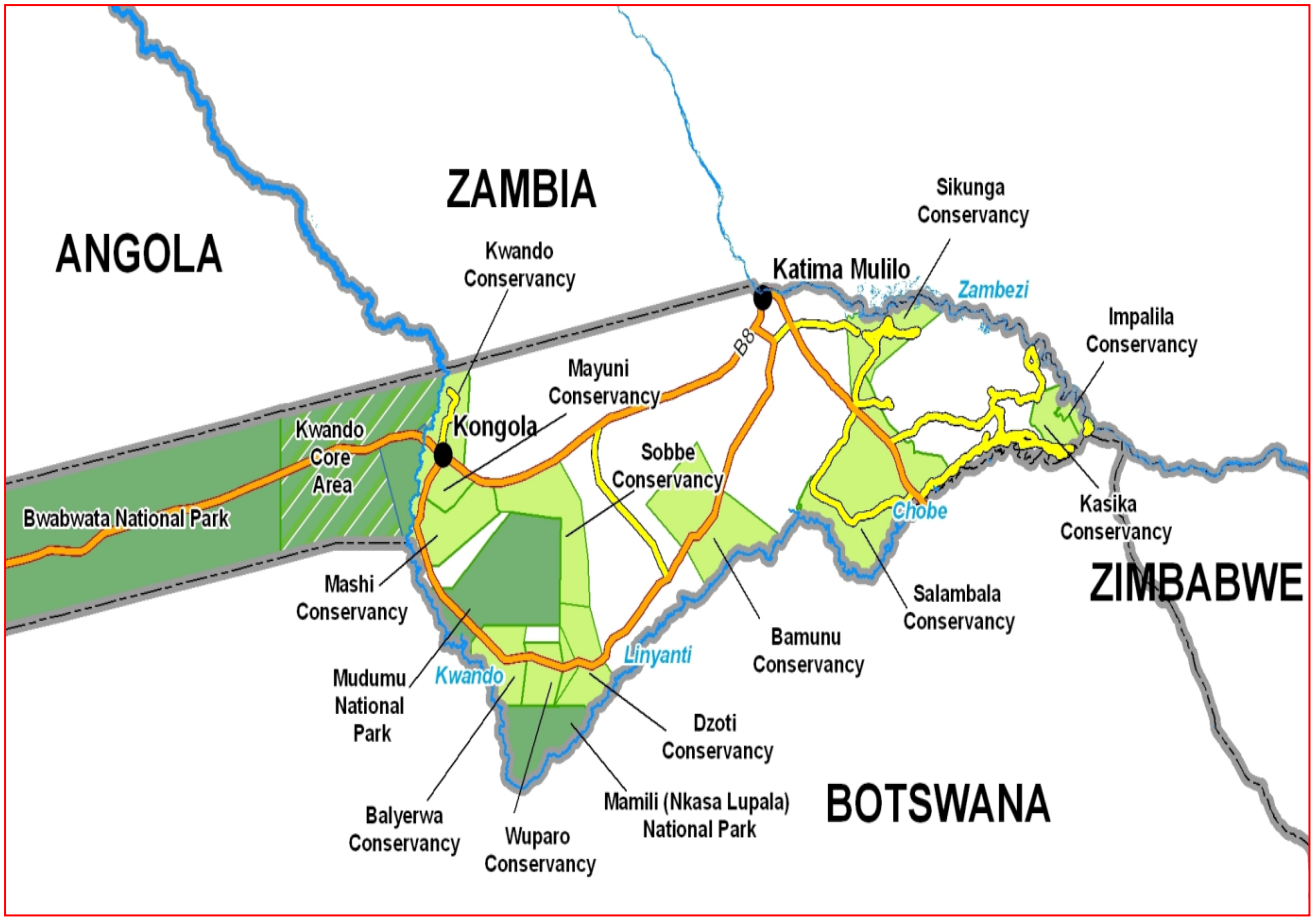

Figure 2: A map of Zambezi Region showing conservancies
Source: IRDNC (2015)

The Zambezi region is home to about 450 animal species, including elephants, lions, leopards, other large and small mammals and birds, and a series of national parks make the region a top spot for wildlife watching and eco-tourism. There are three national parks, namely, Bwabwata, Mamili and Mudumu (national parks are owned by the state and act as breeding sites and reservoirs for communal areas). Most of these parks are surrounded by communal conservancies (see Chapter 4) and serve as buffer zones for wildlife management. In national parks only non-consumptive (photographic) tourism is allowed, while in communal conservancies both consumptive (safari hunting and local licence hunting) and non-consumptive activities take place (MET).

Bwabwata National Park is 6,100 km^2 and extends for about 180 km from the Kavango River in the West to the Kwando River in the East. Deciduous woodlands are dominated by trees such as wild Seringa, copal wood and Zambezi teak. While the park is sanctuary to 35 large and numerous small game species, visitors are not likely to see many of these animals, as vehicles are restricted to the road between Kavango and Eastern Zambezi. Animals likely to be seen are elephant, roan antelope and kudu;

buffalo occur towards the West. As many as 339 bird species have been recorded in western Zambezi. The wild and little visited Nkasa Lupala (Mamili) National Park is Namibia's equivalent to the Okavango Delta, a watery wonderland of wildlife rich islands, river channels and wetlands. The focal points of the 320 km^2 national park are Nkasa and Lupala, two large islands in the Kwando/Linyati River. During the dry season the islands can be reached by road but after the rains 80% of the area becomes flooded, cutting them off from the mainland.

Mudumu National Park is a vast 1000 km^2 and is densely savannah and Mopane woodland with the Kwando River at its western border. The park is home to small populations of Sitatunga and Red Lechwe, while spotted neck otters, hippos and crocodiles inhabit the waterways. There is also plenty of other game, such as elephants, buffalo, roan, sable, impala, zebra, as well as some 430 species of birds. The abundance and richness of the fauna and flora makes the region a prime tourist destination site in Namibia. It provides good opportunities for photographic tourism and also sport hunting in the adjacent communal areas. Trophy hunting mainly targets international clients who pay huge sums of money to come and hunt local game for trophy purposes. The successful management of wildlife resources in these parks has a direct bearing on successful hunting in the conservancies. The parks serve as breeding grounds for wildlife and since they are unfenced, they feed into the communal areas where safari hunting takes place, making their existence relevant to local community needs.

Socio-political dynamics of Zambezi Region

The Zambezi region in Namibia is the north-eastern strip that borders Angola and Zambia to the North, Botswana to the South and Zimbabwe to the East. The Zambezi region is 450km long and a very flat terrain. Zambezi Strip was until the 19th century known as Itenga and was under the rule of the Lozi kings, whose kingdoms stretched across large parts of the vast flood plains, including western Zambia. During that time, this strip was administered by the British protectorate of Bechuanaland (present day Botswana: Harring and Odendaal, 2012). In 1890, the German Empire laid claim to the British administered land of Zanzibar, to which Britain objected. This dispute was resolved during the 1890 Berlin conference. On 1 July 1890, the British acquired Zanzibar and Germany acquired the territory which became known as the Zambezi Strip, named after a German Chancellor Leo von Zambezi who negotiated the land on an exchange basis with the British.

The grand German plan to incorporate Zambezi Strip into German South West Africa was masterminded to give Germany easier access to Tanganyika (Tanzania), which was then a German Colony, and to the Indian Ocean. The dream did not materialise

as Britain took control over Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). When Germany was defeated in the First World War (WW1), the Zambezi Strip fell again under British rule and was governed as part of Bechuanaland but it received little attention and became known as a lawless frontier. History teaches us that between 1918 and 1976, the country was placed under South African control to administer it for the international community. South Africa considered Namibia as part of South Africa and expanded the apartheid policy of racial segregation. An influx of South African settlers forced their way into this country, displacing local people, who later fought in the bitter liberation struggle for many years until 1990.

Political and Armed Uprising

The Zambezi region remains a politically sensitive area. An armed uprising in the early hours of 2nd August 1999 by a secessionist group calling itself the Caprivi Liberation Army (CLA), launched an attack on government forces and buildings in the regional capital Katima Mulilo, including seizure of the Namibia Broadcasting Services buildings, calling for the political independence of the Zambezi Strip. The CLA is reported to have attacked the regional police, immigration offices and other spots of national heritage, to try and assert their control (anonymus interview). The uprising was led by self-exiled leader Mishake Muyongo. A quick forceful response by the government forces quelled the rebellion. Many of the rebels were arrested, others fled into neighbouring Botswana and other countries. Many of these have died in exile at Dukwa Refugee Camp (Botswana) and in Namibian prisons, while others are still being incarcerated in prisons. The trial of the Zambezi/Caprivi treason has not yet been concluded in the High Court of Namibia. The UDP has continued to rally behind the Zambezians to remain resolved, in the hope that one day they will be liberated. A Zambezi Concerned Group (a network for Justice and Peace) have in the recent past being demanding the unconditional release of those still in the prisons (UDP website). Frustrations and anguish can be noticed from those relatives and children whose parents are either in prisons, exiled or have died:

> *"Though we don't want to speak out because we fear to be arrested , we are not happy that our relatives died, or were exiled and are still in prison after we fought the Boers to get independence, our leaders want to see development of this region"* lamented a relative of one of the victims who died in exile in Botswana.

Zambezians are known to be politically assertive and are determined to fight for themselves. However, there are also internal divisions within the Zambezians, mostly between the Masubia's from east of Zambezi and Mafwe's from west of Zambezi. Most of the Masubia's are politically dominated by the SWAPO party while many Mafwe's are linked to the United Democratic Party – the party of their exiled leader,

Mr Muyongo (Mafwe himself). Not everyone is involved in these tensions or hatred but you can easily pick up some of these differences through commentaries from both sides about each other.

There is growing suspicion and gossip that the SWAPO party favours the people from the Masubia ethnic group rather than the Mafwe people, where the United Democratic Party (UDP) is popular. The armed uprising under the umbrella of the Caprivi Liberation Front left only a few people dead. Many disappeared and hundreds more are still incarcerated. For 13 years now the treason trial has not been concluded and this fact is a source of frustration for those direct family members who would like justice to be delivered. Once in a while some local people in Zambezi regroup to demand the release of their people whom they refer to as 'freedom fighters', who have sacrificed their lives for the total independence of Zambezi. Those advocating for the separation of Zambezi claim that there is under-development and lack of political support and that the dream of the freedom fighters from Zambezi during the years of the liberation struggle has not been fulfilled. Though stories of dissatisfaction are not usually discussed in public for fear of arrest, some ardent critics still claim that Zambezi will one day be liberated from the political oppression of the SWAPO party which, they claim, is side-lining development in the region. Those opposed to Zambezi independence feel it is unnecessary and that it would be a political mistake for Zambezi to break away. They do not want to see any war in the area again, following many years of conflict, bloodshed and loss of lives during the liberation war for the independence of Namibia:

'*We need unity in our region, we don't want any more wars, after what we went through during the struggle for independence, and the 1999 uprising in Zambezi has left many families suffering as their husbands were either killed, arrested or went into exile. This should not be allowed to happen again in Zambezi'*, narrated an elderly man from Zambezi.

Ethnic Conflicts

Conflicts in Zambezi are not only political but a mixture of traditional hierarchies, power and jurisdiction and these existed long before Namibia attained independence. Ethnic conflict arose between the Mafwe and Mayeyi people leading to bloodshed and loss of lives in the early 1990s. The Mayeyi wanted to have their own Traditional Authority detached from Chief Mamili of the Mafwe-speaking ethnic group. In the process, rivalries broke out between the two ethnic groups.

> *'People were killed. I know a Mr John and the other person who was killed near Linyanti. I also escaped, I was actively involved because we did not want to be ruled by a Mafwe chief'*, explained Mr Lushatile, a traditional fighter in the conflict and retired police officer.

In 1993, the government intervened in the conflict and, after wider consultation, the government recognised the Mayeyi traditional authority and detached it from chief Mamili. Boniface Sifu was crowned as chief of the Mayeyi people and since then they celebrate their annual traditional festival at Sangwali village, where they depict their local culture and fishing skills. These traditional and political uncertainties are a cause for concern, as they may have a negative impact on social, political and economic development in the region (Harring and Odendaal, 2012). Other reported conflict involves the Masubia's and Mafwe's. My personal discussions with various members from both sides suggest that there is a hidden rivalry between the two groups. The rivalry mainly borders on who claims to be senior to the other.

Governance and Administration

The region is administratively divided into 6 constituencies, namely, Kabe, Katima Mulilo rural, Katima Mulilo urban, Sibinda, Linyati and Kongola. The Regional governor, who is a presidential appointee, is the head of the region. Each constituency has an elected councillor and constituency officer, to bring government functions closer to the people. All the 6 constituencies have SWAPO party councillors. SWAPO has continued to be a dominant party in Zambezi following the burning of the UDP in 1999 after a political uprising. Recently, Rally for Democracy Party (RDP), a break-away party from SWAPO, has increased its electoral votes in the region and is most likely to continue faring well in future elections. Some political analysts link the fortunes of RDP, to the fact that many in the region are disillusioned with the SWAPO government because of the continued imprisonment of Zambezi activists (pers. com). Both the Mayor and Deputy of Katima Mulilo town council are elected councillors of the ruling SWAPO party. Local narratives still favour SWAPO and it is most likely that it will continue doing well.

Zambezi has a contested traditional governance system in place which is different from the rest of Namibia. The 'khuta' means a traditional court and is used as a governance court for settling local disputes and minor crimes. Serious criminal cases are referred to the national police and magistrates' courts to handle. Traditional Authorities are responsible for land administration and through the Traditional Authorities Act the local chiefs are recognised by the government as important organs of the state and govern local affairs. Decisions by the local Traditional Authorities are rarely challenged. This makes them very powerful centres of power and often lands them in conflict with the modern 'tenets of democracy' requiring consultation, participation and accountability in decisions being made.

Each of the three main traditional authorities in Zambezi has a council of advisors superintended over by the Ngambela (Prime Minister), and other elders (indunas). Below the Council of Elders, there is a sub-khuta, that presides over affairs in the

villages. Traditional information will normally flow from the local people through the sub-khuta, to the main traditional authority and vice versa. The sub-khuta are involved in handling local resource use matters such as settlements, farming and where to put projects like schools, water points, and any development project requiring land. Understanding of these two centres of power is critical to understanding how the conservancies are structured and should be understood in the local context. In Chapter 2 I briefly bring to light how these work and Chapters 4 and 9 provide more practical details of relationships and decision-making processes. I discuss the way decisions are made in the communal conservancies: it is an acceptable norm that meetings convened by the conservancy should be at the local village *khuta* because the presence of the indunas legitimises the decisions. All village meetings, whether organised by the conservancy committees or other development players, have to be sanctioned and approved by the local sub-khuta. My personal experience of working in the area is that prior to any meetings permission must first be obtained from the local induna in order to obtain legitimacy. Even conservancy committees use the indunas as the final centre of decision-making. So the indunas play a very important role in a community programme's administration.

People, Culture and Tradition

Zambezi region has a unique history. Long before the scramble for and partition of Africa, the main ethnic group that lived in the present Zambezi, southern Angola, the upper part of Botswana and south western Zambia belonged to the larger Lozi ethnic group (Sangwali Museum). The Lozi people speak *Silozi*, which is still dominantly spoken even today. After the Berlin Conference, the Lozi people were split up into different colonies. This development made people split even from their direct families. Up to the present day, the Lozi people have their families either in South Angola, West Zambia or Botswana. According to the 2004 Namibia national census report, about 17,000 people in the Zambezi region speak silozi, while the others make up sub-ethnic groups and have their own dialect of silozi (Harring and Odendaal, 2012). Though silozi is the main lingua franca, the Zambezians are grouped into other ethnic groupings.

In present day Zambezi there are three main tribal administrative structures in the region: that of the Mayeyi (based in Sangwali), the Mafwe (based in Chinchimane, and made up of a number of smaller sub-groups) and the Masubia (based in Bukalo). Though there are many languages, such as Subia, Totela, Mafwe, Mbukushu and Yeyi, the predominant language that is also taught in schools is Silozi. The Mayeyi and Mbukushu people live in the southern tip of the Zambezi and are few in number. They live in separate villages where the Mayeyi speak Siyeyi and the Mbukushu speak

Mbuku. The Mafwe people in south-eastern Angola, down along the Kwando River to the Mudumu National Park, speak Sifwe.

The Masubia make up the largest part of the sub-ethnic groups and are found in eastern Zambezi and up in Zambia. Their dialect is called Sisubia. A small group of San (or Bushmen) are found in the Zambezi region. Most of these are settled within the Bwabwata National Park but some have also been resettled in the slums of Katima Mulilo town and some villages. Other tribes through labour migrations and marriages are now found in Zambezi, especially in the urban areas. Though there is current modernisation, Zambezians still adhere to the local norms and practices. However, strong cultural values are still being re-constructed, as young people and migrants do not necessarily oppose them but are exposed to a mixture of modern society and the traditional system. Traditional ceremonies are held annually and are celebrated by the Mayeyi at Sangwali in August, the Masubia at Bukalo in August and the Mafwe every September at Chinchimane. These are used as unifying assemblies of these ethnic groups and attract government leaders, tourists and local people. It has now become a common practice that conservancies contribute financial support and utilise their 'own use' wildlife quota to hunt animals during these ceremonies.

Population and livelihood

The population density of 5.7 people/km² is very low and adds up to a total of only 90,000 people of which the majority is centred in the town of Katima Mulilo, the region's capital and administrative centre (Purvis, 2002; National Census Report, 2011). The average household consists of five people. The Zambezi is the poorest area in Namibia: it has the lowest Human Development Index, and the highest HIV/AIDS infection rate (Purvis, 2002).

The total population is estimated at 90,100 (National Census Report, 2011). The population is distributed as follows: Kabe (14,500), Katima Mulilo Rural (16,300), Katima Mulilo urban (28,200), Kongola (5,600), Linyati (15,300) and Sibinda (10,200) according to the 2011 Namibian National Census results. The total population for the region is 90,100 (46,300 female and 43,800 males).

The main sources of livelihood for the people of Zambezi are subsistence farming and rearing cattle, goats and chickens. The major crops grown are maize, millet, sorghum, groundnuts and mahangu (pers. observ). Usually, when they have good yields, especially maize, they sell to Kamunu millers in Katima Mulilo town. Most local farmers use hoes for ploughing and some use cattle and donkeys for ploughing. Farming, catching fish and collecting water lilies and forest fruits provide for the daily living of the majority of local people. Farming success is hampered by crop damage from the wildlife (especially elephants), predation of cattle, goats and chickens, and

floods which contribute to poor yields and hardship being experienced by the local people in the region. Displacement of people as a result of floods affects local people's livelihoods in Zambezi. The region is also vulnerable to anthrax diseases (Foot and Mouth Disease) caused by the presence of many buffalo in the area, and this makes Zambezi beef restricted within its boundaries.

The government is the major employer, employing civil servants from government departments and line ministries such as education, agriculture extension, police, immigration, water, forestry, wildlife, gender, youth and government establishments. Non-governmental organisations, though not many in number, also employ people. A scarcity of employment opportunities is a national problem and affects the entire country (National Census Report, 2012)

Economy, tourism and infrastructure

The Zambezi region is predominantly rural and is endowed with abundant natural resources that significantly contribute to the economy of the region. Tourism is the major economic activity after agriculture. The presence of the three National Parks, providing pristine nature, is an attraction to international tourists who visit the area. Tourism development has attracted the construction of lodges, hotels, restaurants and bush camps providing internationally acclaimed tourism hot spots. These lodges have also created employment opportunities for many young Zambezians. Many of them work as tour guides, waiters, cleaners and chefs in the lodges. At Kongola, a tourism growth node is emerging at Kongola Junction where a modern curio shop for selling crafts from a number of conservancies has been constructed. These business activities provide income to the local craft makers and also contribute to employment opportunities. Safari hunting is a big industry in the region as many conservancies generate their income from concessions and animal fees from international hunters. The safari industry also creates jobs from permanent to semi-permanent to seasonal jobs. Communal conservancies have also added great value to tourism development. Currently, 13 communal conservancies have been gazetted and 5 more are emerging conservancies (NACSO, 2012).

Agriculture is another major contributor to the Zambezi economy. The region receives high rainfall compared to the rest of the country and has fertile soil cover to support good farming systems. However, the region is affected by natural disasters, such as droughts and floods, which affects their yields. Crop damage, especially by elephants and hippos, reduces normal yields for most farmers, especially those adjacent to national parks (National Census Report, 2012). Other forms of economic activities include self-businesses and working for road construction companies. Other development taking place, especially in Katima Mulilo, includes banks, shopping malls and modern markets. Chinese traders have flooded the town and have retail

shops, garages and construction businesses. A conglomerate of chain stores like PEP, Pick 'n Pay and Shoprite have established businesses. The town is developing into a trans-boundary economic hub for the region (Zeller, W, 2009) as it connects Zambia, Angola, Botswana and Zimbabwe. Its location has also attracted an influx of cross border migrants, traders and business people. The government has embarked on road construction in the region. The Linyati-Chinchimane to Kongola road is being constructed. The Mafuta-Ngoma road is also being worked on. Several new government offices are being constructed. The town is becoming an economic hub as it is a gateway to Central, Southern and East Africa. These road constructions provide employment opportunities to young people, especially women. The region has a branch of the University of Namibia (UNAM) and offers education courses. A Zambezi vocational training college is also found in Katima and provides vocational skills training to many Zambezians. Efforts are underway to establish a full-time nature based university in Zambezi region.

Non-governmental organisations

Zambezi has a number of non-governmental organisations working with either communities or government departments in areas of health, education, tourism and agriculture. However, for the purpose of this study, I will highlight only NGOs working with communal conservancies in nature conservation and tourism. The Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC) is a leading local Namibian based organisation that has for over 30 years worked closely with local leadership and has been the driving force behind conservancy formation in the region. IRDNC also works closely with WWF-Namibia, which coordinates its funding bases, and Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF), which mainly works with communal people on sustainable conservation farming and the mitigation of human/wildlife conflict. The Legal Assistance Centre collaborates with IRDNC in building the capacity of the local community based organisations in conflict resolution and constitution development processes. Others include Okavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA) that promotes transfrontier conservation areas between Angola, Namibia, Zambia, Botswana and Zimbabwe. The Community Empowerment Development Project (CEDP), RED CROSS (which offers humanitarian assistance to vulnerable communities), Community Centred Conservation and Development Project (CCCDP) and many other community based organisations operate and work with communities and government in poverty reduction, conservation and sustainable livelihoods.

Conclusions

Zambezi region remains an important area of interest to further explore, examine and investigate to understand its rich, dynamic history. The human development index still remains low compared to the rest of the country. The National Census and the Poverty Assessment Report of 2012 indicate that HIV/AIDS remains high in the region and is of major concern to the government. This high prevalence rate is linked to high poverty levels. Agriculture and tourism are major economic drivers that contribute to over 80% of local people's livelihoods (Harrison and Odendaal, 2012). Despite the uncertainty surrounding the political environment, Zambezi remains peaceful at the moment and the government has embarked on a number of projects to uplift the region.

The emergence of conservancies raises hope that the region's wildlife resources will be managed sustainably to contribute to both conservation objectives and to better the lives of the many Zambezians. Cases studies from Wuparo, Sobbe and Kwandu will inform us on the impact that conservancies are contributing, albeit with many challenges that have to be addressed. The development of conservancies has also attracted immigration of people from within Namibia and from neighbouring communities in border countries. Conservancies continue to contribute to effective conservation and rural livelihoods and to improve the relationship between nature and people. They are the economic drivers of the region. The fact that the headquarters of KAZA are in Katima Mulilo, the political-administrative centre of the region, puts the area into the global spotlight. The analysis of the conservancies in this thesis will further assist us to understand the dynamics of community conservation in the region.

Chapter 4:
Introducing the conservancies and local communities

Introduction

This chapter introduces the three conservancies and the local communities of Wuparo, Sobbe and Kwandu situated within the Mudumu conservation complex of the Zambezi region. The three conservancies serve as case studies to answer the main research question '(how are conservancies enacted') and to illuminate principles of social organisation from the enactment process. I first need to explain how my involvment with these consercancies in my dual capacity of consultant, student and researcher (see chapter 2) came about. To do this properly, I first need to explain the legal and formal processes involved with the formation and gazetting of conservancies in Namibia.The second part depicts communities who live in these conservancies, the people and their culture.What is a conservancy?

Conservancy is defined as a legally protected area belonging to a group of bonafide land occupiers (i.e. local communities) who have pooled their resources to practise co-operative management through common property rights based on a sustainable utilisation strategy (Friedman, 2011; Jones, 2010; NACSO, 2006; Wallace 2014; Weaver et al., 2012). A conservancy in the communal areas requires a majority of people in an area to agree to its establishment and boundaries. A constitution must be drawn up, annual meetings must be held with a proper quorum and the conservancy can then be gazetted by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET).

The main purpose of establishing conservancies is to promote the conservation of natural resources and wildlife, where conservation means the management of human utilisation of organisms or ecosystems to ensure that such utilisation is of a sustainable nature. The latter is ensured by making sure that the benefits of such utilsiation is shared amongst all the members of the conservancy (Hulme and Murphree, 2001; NACSO, 2005). Conservancies are thus being equiped with mechanisms for the protection, maintenance, rehabilitation, restoration and enhancement of the populations of ecosystems and benefits distribution (Jones and Murphree, 20011; Jones and Weaver, 2009; Sullivan, 2002). Sustainable utilisation is a term increasingly being used by many conservationists and is widely used in African countries to mean all forms of utilisation, be they consumptive or non-consumptive (Child and Petersen, 1991; Ribot, 1999). This approach would entail the use of wildlife without affecting the game populations detrimentally, such as through live game sales, trophy hunting and hunting for own use. Non-consumptive utililisation concentrates on other aspects of conservation such as photographic uses, walking safaris, protection (anti-bush-meat

hunting) and rehabilitation of ecosystems (Child and Barnes, 2009; Jones, 2010; Weaver et al., 2010).

Next to conservation and protection of natral resoruces, conservancies are also promoted as a model to empower local rural communities to collectively exploit the use of the wildlife and natural resources to better their lives. For this purpose, game guards from the community are employed by the conservancy to patrol the area, deter poachers and assist the MET to monitor wildlife numbers during annual game counts and during patrols. The MET sets a quota for hunting so that wildlife populations are stable or can grow (Jones and Murphree, 2001; Campbell, 2006; Roe et al., 2009). Conservancies also have rights over tourism operations, so if an investor wants to open a lodge in a conservancy, he or she has to make a deal with the community. For the conservancy, the benefits will include a share in the income from the lodge, as well as valuable job opportunities.

To reach these aims, the conservancy programme has been institutionalised to be governed as a devolved community structure (or as 'new' commons) with set out rules for implementation (Bollig, 2016). Conservancies are in essence legalised community institutions with the rights to manage wildlife within the geographical boundaries for economic and ecological gains (Bollig, 2016; Child and Barnes, 2010; Roe et al., 2009; Suich, 2010). However, as I will elaborate in detail in this thesis is not without problems. In Chapter 9 of this thesis I problematise the new management because of the interfaces it creates with tirbal authroity and other forms of traditional governance of natural resources in communal areas. In other chapters, notably 6 and 7, I will provide evidence that the opportunity for local participation and access to benefits also gives raise to contestations over it (re)distribution. In this chapter, will pay attention to how the conservancy is enacted and organised within the broader Namibian context.

Registration procedures for a conservancy

For conservancies to be laglly recoginised, certain procedures have to be followed by any group that inhabits the area to apply to the Minister responsible for the declaration of the conservancy. These procedures are provided for in the Nature Conservation Amendment Act of 1996. The Minister of MET is empowered to declare a conservancy in the Government Gazette (Jones, 2010;). The applying community must have been widely consulted and consensus agreement reached and minutes signed by the members present, including a written consent from the area Chief (Bollig, 2016; Jones, 2010):

- The community must have agreed on the constitution to guide decision-making processes and promote sustainable management and utilisation of wildlife in the conservancy;

- The community must elect a representative committee to represent and preside over the governance process of the conservancy;
- The community must show qualified ability to manage the funds and to this end are expected to appoint a competent treasurer to manage the community conservancy books of accounts;
- The conservancy committee must have a method for equitable and fair distribution of income from the use of wildlife and tourism;
- The conservancy must have a defined membership and defined boundaries agreed to by the neighbouring communities and the planned area must not be subject to any lease nor be a proclaimed game reserve.

Once these processes are completed and the conservancy declared in the government Gazette, in accordance with the legislation, the community automatically acquires the rights to use wildlife and to conduct commercial tourism related activities (Jones and Weaver, 2009; Jones, 2010). Each conservancy develops for this purposes a Game Management and Utilisation Plan (GMUP) and a Benefit Distribution Plan (BDP).

The conservancy constitution enacts rules to follow for the management of conservancy affairs. These rules become the basis for the daily operation of a conservancyare written up as part of the constitution of the conservancy (Jones, 2010; NACSO, 2009, 2010). The following key issues are contained in the conservancy constitutions:

- Operating principles showing commitment to CBNRM which includes a serious commitment to sustainable management and utilisation of wildlife resources and conform to good practices of CBNRM, including equitable benefit distribution
- A procedure for membership eligibility and an application process for membership in the conservancy;
- The rights and obligations of the members;
- A procedure for selecting and the powers of the conservancy committee members;
- Provisions for developing management plans;
- Rules on financial management and benefit distribution; and
- Mechanisms for resolution of disputes.

The three conservancies and my involvement

My engagement with these three conservancies stem from the initial problems their formation revealed. One should realise that conservancies are new institutional arrangements with regard to the management of resources. IRDNC as a leading local agency worked closely with the Ministry of Environment and Tourism to design an institutional framework within which the communities and the conservancy were going to operate. MET and IRDNC together with WWF and LAC that also assisted with the institutionalisation of the conservancies, therefore, kept a close eye on the

formation processes to check whether they were meeting the objectives of their creation. Internal and external monitoring systems were put in place. Institutional audits and the 'Event book' designed by WWF (Stuart-Hill et al. 2006 for a stylised and idealised version) were internal mechanisms where those in leadership could check performance. Community Dashboard was an external tool, mainly done by universities to assess the governance and performance of CBNRM. This internal and external monitoring revealed the weakness of the system: it exposed many discrepancies and disparities in many areas, including unequal benefit distribution, elite behaviour, continuation of bush-meat hunting, selective employment of people, poor report back and general failure to adhere to many CBNRM governance principles of fairness. After several years of the conservancy's existence, it was realised that there was mounting pressure among the local subjects about the failure of the conservancy to deliver on its promises. This mis-match they found needed to be studied and examined so that a remedial course of action could be put in place.

This led to joint action research between the University of Florida (Centre for African Studies) WWF Namibia and IRDNC to commence inter-disciplinary governance research in 2007, 2008 and 2009. The results of this research, in which I was a key player in collecting data and analysis thereof, found that the local institution was weakened because of the obsolete rules, which were not properly understood by the local people. Apart from the failure and weakness of the constitution, the analysis revealed lack of information flow, poor budgeting mechanisms and lack of succession plans within the establishment and showed growing discontent among the local people. Recommendations were made by the research team to improve the conservancy's efficiency and effectiveness. Reviewing the constitution was paramount because it was going to guide the process of good governance. In all three cases, the resonsible Conservancy Committees agreed to collaborate and seek ways to improve management and make procedurers transparant. The way and what is discussed per conservancy.

Wuparo Conservancy

The Conservancy is located 140kms West of Katima Mulilo (See Figure 1 and 3). The conservancy total area is 148km^2 and it receives an annual rainfall of between 500-600mm (Lubilo, 2011a). It shares boundaries with Dzoti conservancy to the East, Balyerwa conservancy to the West, Mudumu and Mamili National Parks to the North and South respectively (NACSO, 2009). The area was originally dominated by floodplains but a mosaic of woodlands and grasslands has emerged over time, the area's abundant biodiversity and concentration of large and small mammals creating an enabling environment for prime hunting and tourism potential. Prime huntable

game includes elephants, lions, leopards, buffalo, kudu and other antelopes which contribute significant income to the conservancy. The conservancy is sparsely populated with an average of 2,100 people by 2012 (Wuparo conservancy membership register ,2012

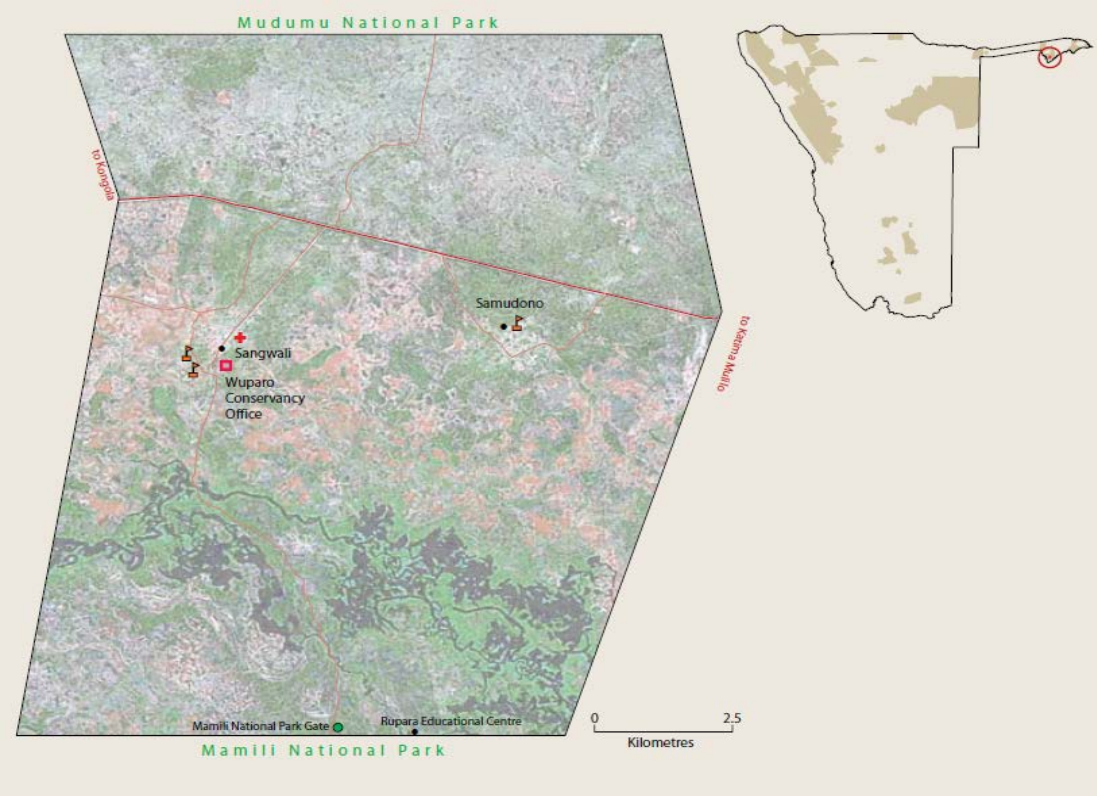

Figure 3: Map of Wuparo Conservancy
source NACSO (2006)

Livelihoods and history

Wuparo is a local Siyeyi name meaning 'life' and is inhabited by the Mayeyi people who are believed to be originally from Congo or the North-West of Zambia. Their language contains a series of clicks indicating an association with the Khoi-khoi but it is commonly classified as close to Otjiherero (Herero) and, less frequently, as close to Sisubiya and Thimbukushu, all Niger-Congo languages (Induna Sangwali, pers com). Culturally, the Mayeyi share many customs with the Mbukushu (Sangwali, museum writings). The Mayeyi, after migrating south to the area of Chobe River and Linyanti River, ended up being pushed further South and West by the Mbukushu and Masubia, who were on the move West and South respectively, in about 1750, to avoid the wrath of the expansionist Lozi people. As the Mayeyi moved South West, along the West side of the Okavango, they encountered and clashed with the Herero. Possibly to minimise this conflict the Mayeyi largely settled along the rivers in the delta. David Livingstone called them *'river people'*. He described them as the *'Quakers of Africa'*,

because of their peace-loving nature. True to David Livingstone's description of the Mayeyi as river people, they are lovers of fishing. This is celebrated during their traditional festivals where the elders display the fishing tools that the old people used to catch fish and display many relics to show their skill in fishing and how they contributed to their culture and survival. These local people are socially connected through ancestral family lineage which has multiplied into generations, religious groupings and other kinship networks or relations. The people are relatively poor and live in mud and grass thatched houses, which are enclosed with reeds, poles and grasses. Homesteads generally consist between 1-5 or more people. There are many female headed households in this community.

The people survive mainly on fishing and farming. They grow maize, millet, groundnuts, cassava and other crops. They supplement their food requirements by extracting other veld products, including hunting (bush-meat hunting), catching birds and the collecting water lilies, wild fruits and vegetables. During the farming season from October to April, daily homestead activity is mainly farming. Many people use hand hoes to plough their fields. Those with cattle and donkeys use them for ploughing and also sub-rent them to those with money to hire for ploughing their fields. Domestic livestock (cattle, chickens, and goats) also add to wealth and serve as a source of revenue for many households/homesteads. Over 90% of the local people are subsistence farmers and less than 1-2% of the people have formal jobs. There are a few jobs available from the tourism industry (lodges and hunting) and a few people are self-employed, such as craft makers and those running small taverns and grocery shops.

Many families' delicacies are fish, water lilies, wild greens (okra), beans etc., as beef is rarely seen in the village: though some people have cattle they are seldom killed as they are linked to family wealth. Those with cattle usually only kill if there is a funeral in the family (often an elderly person's funeral) or for marriage celebrations and traditional rituals and ceremonies. The abundance of water ponds and fish stocks makes it easier for many people to harvest fish for home consumption and extra for sale. Catching fish has fewer restrictions and young people flock to the streams and ponds in the early hours of the morning and late evening. Those who harvest enough are able to sell them and supplement their income, which they then use to support their homesteads (they mostly buy sugar, cooking oil, matches, candles, and other basic needs), while others use the money raised to quench their thirst with local beer, some lager and whisky. Both women and men are good fish harvesters, usually using nets and paddling canoes to get into the centre of the stream, where they make a good catch.

The lack of employment opportunities in this community is polarising people who could be productive in other spheres of life. There are those women and men, young and old, who resort to drinking locally brewed tombo and mbote beer from 5 am in the morning (Personal observ). When you interact with them, they explain that they have nothing to do. There are no alternatives to improve their life in the village. A few employed people work for the conservancy, tented lodges and major government departments, such as agriculture extension, tourism and environment, the Police constituency office and some piece-work for the road construction company. Most households' goods are mainly available in town, so the economies of these communities are very low.

> *'What can we do here in this village? There is nothing, us young people we finished our matric but there are no jobs. My parents are old and can't afford to pay for higher tertiary education. Maybe you can help me'* (these were the sentiments of a youth, who had just finished his matric).
>
> *'My son what can we do as women? There is nothing for us. This conservancy is for young people who are able to read and write English. They want educated people. But you see my own child is educated but they can't employ him, they are saying there are jobs at the office. What about those who have been working there? We need to change them so that others are employed'* (An elderly woman).
>
> '*The same people get employed at the hunting camp; they are all from Samudono because the chairperson comes from there. Us here in Masasa we are not employed, we think because our chairperson is a woman. They don't listen to her. We need jobs also. Maybe you can help us. Go and tell them at the office: the manager and his committee are not fair'* (school leaver).
>
> *'We want to employ everyone one in the village but there are no jobs for the people to do. Like at the hunting camp, they need only a few people, those that have been working at the camp in the previous years, so we can't employ new ones, the hunters will not agree. It's a problem. People want jobs, it's true, but what can we do'* (Area Representative).
>
> *'Again, our indunas are employing their own children or relatives, so it's a problem. Who can stop that from happening? When the hunter comes, he first goes to the induna instead of the committee, so the induna makes sure the people he wants are employed. These hunters are not good sometimes; they corrupt our traditional leaders for them to get favours'* (Anonymous leader from the conservancy office).

Through further observation of many households and families, poverty and suffering could be identified: many people reside in ramshackle houses made with poles, smeared with mud and grass-thatched. Few people have better houses; those that do,

have radio cassettes and better looking homesteads. In the whole village, there are fewer than 7 brick houses with iron roofs, apart from one modest house owned by the former Ambassador to Japan, and other better houses owned by the Director of Labour and a few retired civil servants. Those with bricked houses are those with children or relatives serving in good jobs in the cities and sending regular remittances. Social grants by the government to the aged, war veterans and orphans and remittances contribute to the livelihoods of some households. In the village there are no major shops to provide for what people may require and most of these funds are spent in Katima Mulilo where modern wholesale and retail shops are found. In recent years, Chinese traders selling cheaper but less durable products have established businesses in town and capture most of the income from these rural people. The categories of people range from those leading an ordinary village life (completely poor with no income at all), those non-employed (but engaging in farming and fishing activities), those in salaried employment either full-time, seasonal or part-time and a few people involved in local businesses selling groceries, local brew, locally made handcraft and other businesses including the selling of grass, poles and devil's claw.

Conservancy formation

The establishment of Wuparo Conservancy certainly created new opportunities for local livelihoods. The conservancy was established in 1996 and formally gazetted in 1999. The formation of the conservancy was like in many other consercvancies largely driven by external experts from both the state and NGOs such as IRDNC that worked with the local chief, Boniface Sifu, to negotiate with his community for the establishment of a communal conservancy. The word was spread that people would greatly benefit from the conservancy.

The process of starting a conservancy in Wuparo followed a series of meetings by the supporting IRDNC and MET to convince the local people about the benefits associated with the conservancy programme. I also noted in my interactions with people in Wuparo that the process of negotiating for the conservancy formation was resisted by many, especially the elders. This discontent is still rife even in the present day. Elderly people wanted to continue with their normal way of life, staying in the bush, hunting, fishing, collecting mushrooms and other wild fruits and vegetables. , The formation of a conservancy posed a threat to their livelihood. They also viewed it with suspicion, thinking that the government was planning to extend the Mamili National Park and that people would be displaced again. The Mayeyi people used to live in the park and were evicted in 1969. They did not want to see a repeat of this (Induna Sangwali, pers com). Historically, Mayeyi people are hunters and fishermen. Their eviction meant loss of access to game meat, good fishing and other sources of livelihood.

'It was difficult to believe these people because we were removed from our area where the park is today.They promised that our children will be employed and that problem elephants would be controlled. Most of the elders and headmen refused, but there was a group of young people, especially those who were employed as game guards, who were in support of the conservancy idea. The chief called several meetings but in the end it was agreed that we would start the conservancy provided people were going to be allowed with their life, fishing and also cattle to continue grazing" (local headman from Nsheshe village).

It was the young people who were employed as game guards through the Anti-Bush-meat Hunting Units established by Garth Owen Smith in the early 1980s, who mainly campaigned and advocated for the conservancy, insisting it would create more jobs, bring tourists and that the area would develop in general, not mainly that bush-meat hunting would be controlled. The formation of the conservancy was like politics: people had to campaign, lobby and convince the indunas to accept the programme. Promises of jobs, better roads, lodges and provision of game meat and other goods were made by the agents of the state, NGOs and, more importantly, those game guards who used their links and social network to prevail over the traditional authorities. By 1996 a contested consensus was reached and the process for registration started. As a requirement of the law they had to formulate the conservancy constitution, a list of members, a dividend distribution plan and game management and utilisation plans, and appoint a competent treasurer to manage the funds. Once this was completed, the conservancy was gazetted on 5 December 1999.

Governance

Wuparo was initially divided into 3 villages: Sangwali (headquarters, where Chief Sifu lives), Samudono and, the smallest village, Samalabi. It is understood by the local people that while many of the people from the two big villages, including relatives of the chief, objected to the conservancy formation, the people of Samalabi agreed to the idea almost instantly when it was floated for discussion. I came to learn about this during one of the meetings at the conservancy office where the people from this village complained of being excluded despite being pioneers of the programme. Another group that has now usurped power and control of the conservancy argued that even those who fought for the Independence of Namibia, are not the only ones running the country, saying those who brought the conservancy would not be the only ones to run the show. There was a bitter exchange of words during this meeting. It was, however, agreed that people from Samalabi village be employed in response to their concerns. Samalabi people are few and hold a minority vote, hence, they are not able to wield power or influence decisions. It took 3 years before the conservancy was fully organised and became operational.

The conservancy currently has a membership base and by the end of 2011, there were a total of 1,386 registered members (Wuparo Membership Register, 2011). These are the primary constituents for overall decision-making processes in the conservancy. Wuparo is divided into 8 Area Working Groups (AWG), and sometimes these are referred to as Zones in the community (see Figure 4). Each of these working groups has a committee of 8 members, who are responsible for overseeing the organisation and implementation of activities in the village. Below the AWG, there is a Conservancy Management Committee (CMC) that comprises 9 members drawn from each of the 8 AWGs, a representative of the Tribal Authority (TA) and a conservancy Manager (an ex-official) with no voting rights. These committees are supposed to be elected annually but it is observed that this is not the case: elected leaders prefer 3 years, which is a general practice in many conservancies. However, this is in conflict with the laid down rules in the conservancy constitution of 2010 (Lubilo, 2011b). The failure by those in leadership to follow the constitution regarding annual elections sometimes has created tensions, mistrust and disputes within the rank and file of the community. Meetings are used as platforms for decision-making and resolution of disputes. Annual general meetings (AGMs) are held once annually for the sole purpose of receiving annual progress reports, proposed work plans and budgets for the following year and any such decisions requiring the AGM's approval. Quarterly community meetings are for information sharing and feedback, while committee meetings are meant for executing community directives.

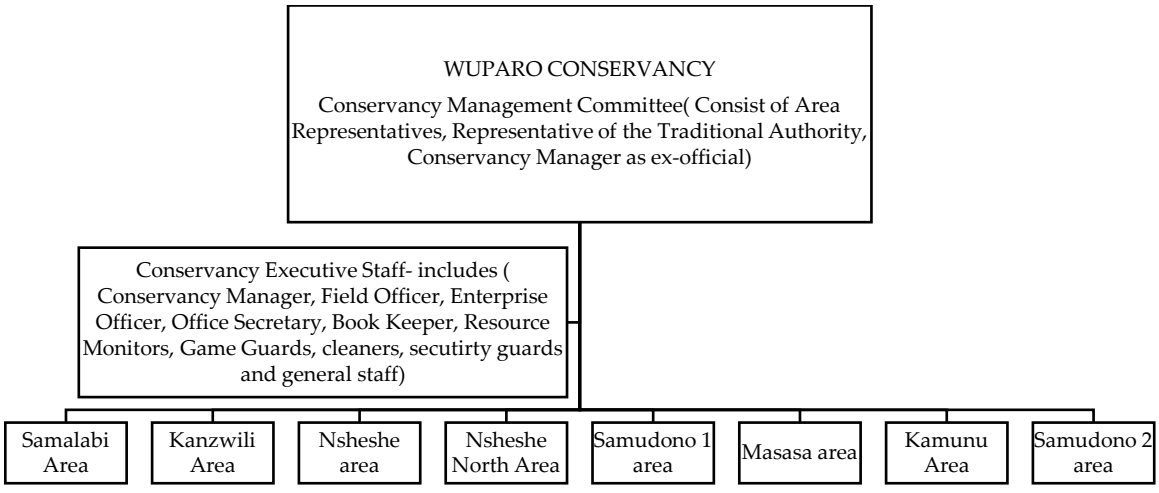

Figure 4: Wuparo organisation structure
Source conservancy office

Conservancy transformation process

The leadership of Wuparo community, together with their traditional counterparts, agreed with the findings of the joint action research research in 2007-2009 that was done to identify the probems and propse solutions. The leadership requested assistance to transform their community project to be more devolved and community based so that many people would be empowered and access to benefits would be improved. In order to implement the findings and the directives of the community, Mr Coster Mayumbelo (Chairperson) and Mr Cebens Munanzi (Manager) approached WWF to help the conservancy by hiring a consultant who could help them improve the management of the conservancy. I was contracted in 2009 by WWF through IRDNC to assist with capacity building and development, constitution review and initiating a transformation programme for the conservancy. This process involved conducting meetings with all the various groups: user groups, farmers, traditional authorities, the conservancy committee, women and youth, in order to build consensus on the kind of conservancy they wanted. This process took over a year to be completed. Prior to this process, the conservancy was organised into three villages (Sangwali, Samudono and Samalabi). Each of these had three elected members who then sat together as the conservancy committee. There was no proper mechanism for feedback, except once a year during the AGM. This meant that people found it difficult to follow what was happening. After this transformation, the conservancy structure changed from 9 to 64 leaders. 8 zones were created and each zone had 8 elected members. What also changed is that each Zone was allocated funds. Over 60% of income was channelled to these AWG bank accounts and then each area agreed how to spend these funds (Conservancy minutes, 2010). These were some of the radical changes that were initiated in the transformation process. With this proving a success and with IRDNC/WWF funding ending for the consultancy, LAC took over the responsibility of paying the consultant and supporting this programme. While this process looked simple and straightforward, it was time consuming to build consensus as some of the people, especially those in employment, opposed changes in the constitution, fearing it would put them out of employment. However, with a lot of patience, I facilitated the process, until we produced a new draft constitution which was finalised in April 2010 and was formally adopted on 24th June 2010. This ceremony was made public and attracted media publicity with the Namibia Broadcasting Services capturing it live on Namibia television It became a pilot example of a transformed conservancy. While this process could have been used to reduce certain inequalities, such as unfair distribution of proceeds, improve participation and enhance sharing of information, new forms of conflict emerged. People wanted change of leadership, more benefits and pragmatic leadership to steer the conservancy in the right direction (see follow-up chapters).

Sobbe Conservancy

Sobbe's name is derived from a Sifwe expression 'that which you own cannot be taken away from you'. This phrase is a catchy expression by those who were in the forefront of the formation of the conservancy. The community is inhabited by the Mafwe speaking people, who fall under the chieftaincy of Chief Mamili. The majority of these people belong to the big extended Masida family. A few other people are Mafwe, under the chieftaincy of Chief Mayuni, but are linked to Sobbe because of the conservancy boundaries. Often this has led to problems amongst this community when making decisions about the conservancy.

Livelihoods in Sobbe

The people live in small family units: sometimes about 2 to 5 people per household. Many people live in mud houses thatched with grass. There are many female and young adult headed households. Crops mainly grown are maize, millet, groundnuts and pumpkins. Many people in the area have cattle and they use them for farming. Others use donkeys. Other domestic livestock like chickens, goats and dogs are found in some homesteads. Many households and individuals depend on harvesting of natural or forest products for their supplementary upkeep. Wild fruits, roots, devil's claw, wild game, honey and other products are routinely useful to many families. Harvesting of devil's claw has become a money-spinner for many individuals, as there is growing demand for this medicinal herb. Many families are relatively poor. Many people of all ages complain about the hard life they experience every day and how they struggle to meet daily needs. Women and men are seen in the forest many times a day. They cut firewood for sale along the road. They also sell poles. People, especially from towns and lodges, buy firewood, poles and reeds. Others, especially women, are involved in making baskets and other craft which they sell to the travelling public and tourists. Currently, the conservancy supports 10 women with craft-making skills and sells their products at Kongola community crafts.

> *'Our lives are very complicated. We have no richness here, we have no electricity, our friends who live in town are provided with many things. It's like the government are concerned about where they live in towns and they neglect us'* (an elder).

> *'We also want to lead a better life like everyone, but it's not easy. We struggle. You can see I have to dig out this devil's claw so that I can sell and make money for myself to buy what I want. There is nothing to do. The conservancy is also failing to provide what we require. Am not happy, but for now ... I will sell these and make some money'* (Harvester of Devil's claw).

Many of the elders and veterans receive monthly social grants from the government; every 25th of each month the officials from government visit the village to do cash pay-

outs. I was privileged to have witnessed a cash pay-out in the area. They paid out N$450. This fund cushions the suffering of many people, although it is not enough to cater for the many needs of the local people. Regular financial and material remittances from children and relatives help to lessen some of the livelihood challenges for some families.

The ordinary life in the village is similar to that of Wuparo and Kwandu, with no tap water, no proper toilets, no electricity and poor housing. Very few boreholes are found in the village and people, especially women and children, have to walk long distances to get water. People use firewood for cooking and as the population is growing, there is extensive damage to the forest, especially Mopani trees. The community's proximity to the Trans-Zambezi highway provides a good market for firewood and mushrooms, so as you drive by, you will notice bundles of firewood costing between N$10-20. A few people own small grocery shops selling mainly home essentials like sugar, soap, matches, candles and cooking oil. Other commodities are bought from Katima Mulilo and Kongola supermarkets. In addition to many problems facing these people, there is also a lack of health facilities. Patients have to travel at least 20kms to Sibinda rural health centre or travel to Katima Mulilo. As a result, people resort to the use of herbs for medicinal purposes, causing destruction of the forest.

Having worked in the area and conducted several studies (between 2007-2011), I noted that the people, especially the young people, are frustrated with the lack of alternatives to farming and at times resort to migrating to towns, drinking beer and engaging in hooliganism. The struggle for jobs and other benefits is discussed in Chapters 6 and 7. When I arrived in 2007 as part of the research team and needed to hire and train 10 local young people, at least 40 turned up to be trained, claiming they had nothing to do and needed to work to make their own living rather than depending on and waiting for the social cash grants of their parents. Some claimed to be orphans and others that their parents were either old or had died in exile.

During safari hunting, every household is given a portion of game meat that is distributed to them. If you arrive at this time of the year, usually between June and October, you will join in the delicious elephant meal. Other times of the year, you have to either eat food from Katima or Mopani worms and traditional vegetables collected from the forest.

Sobbe Conservancy formation

The rigorous registration process started in 2004 with technical and financial support from IRDNC. A series of community meetings with local Traditional Authorities at Masida and ordinary community members, organised by IRDNC and MET, helped the Sobbe community to register as a conservancy.. It was formally gazetted in 2006.

The formation of the conservancy was driven by IRDNC working closely with the Masida sub-khuta, who allowed the establishment of the conservancy in the hope that it would better their lives. Since inception, the management committee has changed hands due to elections and some officials being dismissed for mismanagement and theft of funds (field narratives). The conservancy staff is dominated by people mainly from the main Masida village. In recent years, there has been conflict with another group of people calling for the dissolution of the conservancy because it does not improve their well-being (discussed in the next chapters). This minority group consists of those who fall under Chief Mayuni but are residents of the conservancy because of the boundaries. Conservancies were adequately lobbied by the NGO and government to promote the concept of rural empowerment through sustainable conservation. The abundant natural and wildlife resources found in this area, as well as its shared border with Mudumu National Park, was behind the formation of the conservancy. It creates a buffer and it was hoped that getting local people organised would reduce the threat to wildlife resources in this park. The conservancy area is about 404 km^2 and receives an annual rainfall of between 500-600mm (NACSO, 2009). The conservancy borders to the East with Makanga farming block, Mayuni conservancy to the West, Mashi Conservancy to the South and Mudumu National Park and Kwandu Conservancy to the North. The area is dominated by woodlands and grasslands and supports a rich biodiversity and large concentrations of large and small mammals, creating an enabling environment for prime hunting. The area is a prime hunting site and significant income is generated from hunting. The conservancy has a small human population of 2,000 (NACSO, 2010), though IRDNC data for 2012 shows that the conservancy population has increased to more than 3,000. Safari hunting is the main source of tourism activity in the area.

Governance

Sobbe conservancy is a membership based community organisation with about 927 registered members (Sobbe Membership Register, 2010). In order to improve the governance of the community and conservancy, the conservancy has been sub-divided into 6 village zones. Each of these village zones has an elected committee determined by the members, and the leader of each zone is a member of the Conservancy Management Committee (CMC). In addition, each area has an induna, regarded as a trustee, who plays a decision-making role in many matters. Currently, the Sobbe CMC has 12 elected members, 6 representatives of the Traditional Authority (TA) and the Conservancy Manager, who acts as secretary during the meetings. These committees are supposed to be elected annually, but it is observed that this is not the case: elected leaders prefer to stay in office for 3 years, which is a general practice in many conservancies and not in line with the constitution of 2010.

Sobbe Conservancy is organised into 6 areas (Figure 5). Each area has an area committee. Each area has two representatives that sit on the conservancy management committee.

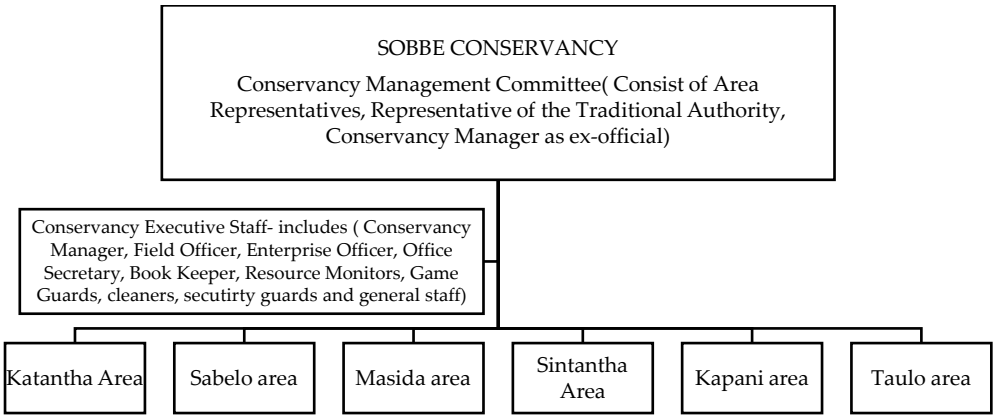

Figure 5: Sobbe Conservancy organisation structure
Source: Sobbe organogram Conservancy chart office (2013)

Conservancy transformation process

Between 2006 and 2009, not much of the proceeds of the conservancy however, reached the community members. Research conducted by the University of Florida, with WWF and IRDNC, discovered many flaws in the conservancy institutional organisation, mainly emanating from a weak institutional framework in which local people would be involved in deciding the direction of their community and conservancy. In order to assist the community of Sobbe to attain proper participation of its residents, the LAC hired me as a consultant to collaborate with the IRDNC Institutional Support Team to help review the conservancy constitution. This set in motion a more devolved system of governance beyond the conservancy committee. The focus was to build strong pillars of community participation at village level. 6 area zones were established and each was allocated financial support, so that the local members in each village could decide how to use the finances and what projects to undertake. A key feature here was the granting of free choice of use of the funds (projects, wildlife management, education, including cash dividends to individual members of the community). I was tasked hired to lead and facilitate a participatory conservancy constitution review and capacity building process. Awareness meetings were convened with the Masida sub-khuta, for their authorisation to go ahead with the review process. With a go-ahead from the traditional leadership, a series of consultative meetings were conducted in all the 6 areas of the conservancy. Following several rounds of meetings, a final constitution was agreed upon and approved by the Conservancy special general meeting convened on 20th December, 2010 (Special

General Meeting minutes, 20 Dec. 2010). Communities have their own way of facing local realities, even in the face of the review, which was largely to control abuse and encourage democracy and participation. The conservancy committee loaned themselves N$30,000 without the approval of the community, within the first 6 months of the new rules that prohibited staff loans. This came to light during the AGM in 2012 when the IRDNC support team presented a financial audit that revealed that the committee had loaned themselves money. An uproar arose, with the community demanding instant dismissal of all the staff. However, those involved in the staff loan refused to vacate office. The induna had to intervene and instituted an independent committee in the village to follow up on this matter and come up with recommendations. While the community wanted to offer punitive action to deter future leaders from doing the same, the NGO leaders contradicted themselves by insisting that they had no money to start training new staff. This left the independent committee wondering whether the NGO was there to assist communities or to side with wrong-doers. In local CBNRM projects, such are daily scenarios that make the concept of community complex and contested and expose its fluidity. Usually, problems start when it comes to making, implementing and monitoring decisions.

Kwandu Conservancy

Kwandu derives its name from the Kwando River that runs on the western boundary of the conservancy. The community is dominated by the Mafwe speaking people. A few groups of San people are also found in the area. Most of the San people migrated from the Bwabwata National Park. Kwandu is on the international boundary with Zambia and Angola, attracting Lozi migrants through cross border marriages and trade. Over 75% of the local people lead very simple ordinary lives like any other African community. The people live in small family groupings, usually mother, father and children and sometimes with grandchildren.

Livelihoods in Kwandu

The majority of families and households practise subsistence farming and fishing. They grow crops such as mahangu, sorghum, millet and maize, pumpkins and beans. Every household has a small field where they grow enough crops for home consumption and this provides over 85% of their daily livelihood (Kumalo and Ying,2015). Fishing is also a major feature and source of income and food for many families. The proximity to Kwando River makes it easy to catch fish for relish and for sale. The local residents also hunt and collect honey, water lilies and other forests products (firewood, poles, medicinal plants). Devil's claw harvesting has become an

economic activity for many people, especially women. Weaving and selling of baskets made from palm leaves contribute to income.

The majority of the residents live in houses made of poles, grass-thatched and mud smeared. There are no pit latrines, and people still use the bush as toilets. A few of the people with wealth have cattle, ranging from 2-100 heads of cattle, and some keep goats, chickens and other livestock. Many residents still use hoes to plough; only a few people use cattle for ploughing. There is no commercial farming in the area and whatever is produced is used for subsistence although some excess produce is sold. A few people, especially migrants from Zambia and Angola, run small second-hand salaula businesses selling clothes and groceries (personal comm). People in the area are poor. The elders still rely on social cash grants provided by the government. These social grants have contributed to the alleviation of the suffering and hardships of some of the many households in the area though they still complain that the grants are not enough due to rising costs.

Lack of employment opportunities remains a problem for all the communities under this study. There are very few opportunities from either government or the private sector. This lack of jobs has contributed to social suffering and encouraged indulgence in bad activities like beer drinking and rural–urban drift among the young people in search of jobs.

> *'There is nothing to do, there is no job for us in the conservancy, so what can we do, nothing. It's better to be kept busy by drinking'.* (Local brew patron).
>
> *'When my matric results are out, I am planning to go to Windhoek, maybe I can join the Namibia police because there are no jobs in our community, and even if vacancies occur at the office, they don't tell us. I know I can't be employed. There no future in this village man'.* (A youth).
>
> *'In fact, the salary is too low for me to work in the conservancy. What can I buy from 600? It's nothing. These game guards, they did not go to school, hence, they can work in the village. They know the bush and they also kill our animals. Am not interested in*

what happens because, what can I change, they won't listen to me'. (Anonymous member).

Young people are looking for permanent paid jobs that have long-term security and investment; however, the conservancies cannot cope with the huge demand. In Chapter 7, I explore the struggle for jobs in the conservancy. Wuparo Conservancy has a total of 52 workers, Sobbe 28 and Kwandu 23. These are members of staff who are directly employed in the conservancies, working as game rangers, cleaners, secretaries, managers and bookkeepers. Other categories of staff include enterprise and resource monitors (see Chapter 7). These staff receive monthly wages ranging from N$600 to about N$3,000. Those in elected positions also receive monthly allowances of between N$500 and N$1,000. This gives these people direct benefits. However, most of these funds are spent in Katima Mulilo where there are shops and Chinese traders and the funds do not necessarily develop the villages or conservancies where the funds are generated.

Subsistence farming remains an important activity for almost all families and households in the three conservancies under this study. Farming activities are done by all people: men, women and young adults. If you take a stroll in the morning or late afternoon, you will see these people working in the fields (between October and April). Over 90% of the local people in these communities practise subsistence farming and they grow sorghum, maize, millet and groundnuts. The area has good alluvial soil and people normally do not use fertiliser to farm their crops. Many people still use hoes for ploughing. Those with cattle and donkeys use them for ploughing, drawing water and pulling firewood to their homesteads. Donkeys and cattle are also sub-leased to plough for other people who can afford to pay. Only in Wuparo does a Mr Dennis use a tractor for ploughing. He is a retired principal in the Ministry of Education and bought himself a tractor which he uses for ploughing and those with money also rent it. A few of the local farmers produce extra that they are able to sell in Katima Mulilo, especially at Kamunu Millers, who buy most of the farm produce. Green vegetables are not commonly grown in the conservancy due to lack of market and the distance to transport to the main markets in towns. Fewer than 30 people across these communities are involved in green gardening. Crop yields form the main hope for many families. The yields are affected by regular crop damage by elephants and floods and droughts in some seasons. When there is good harvest, the local farmers are not affected but when floods and droughts occur, they have to depend on food hand-outs through Namibia disaster management and relief services that provide food supplements.

The making of crafts and basketry has become an enterprising business for many people, especially women, in these conservancies. At Wuparo, the community has

opened a shehe craft market along the road going to Nkasa-Lupala National Park to attract passing tourists entering the park. About 20 women work with Resource monitors to harvest palm leaves and reeds for making hand-made craft, which they sell. Both Sobbe and Kwandu have programmes to support women's craft businesses. They sell their products at Kongola craft market along the Trans-Zambezi Highway, which most tourists in the region pass. Kwandu has 15 and Sobbe 10 women who are involved in the craft business. Some individuals make curios, especially animal curios, and line them up along the main road and tourists stop to buy from these people. Though not a large scale business, it is proving helpful to the people involved.

> *'We make these baskets, then we bring them to the craft market and the cashier is here to sell to tourists. At the end of the month we come to collect our money. It is helping me a lot. In a month if I am lucky that my crafts have been bought maybe, I make N$200 or more. We need more tourists to come to our area'.* (Wuparo woman).

> *'Our job as Resource monitors is to go around in the village and collect these curios and baskets from the women and put them here in the shop. Each has got a price; we just add a small fee on each curio. Like this small basket, it's costing N$30 so if it's sold the owner will get N$25. In this book I record all the daily sales and at the end of the week or month we take the money to the owners. It is a good business and we want to encourage many people including men, but sometimes the tourists are not coming here'.* (Resource Monitor).

Fishing activities are another major source of livelihood for local people in Wuparo and Kwandu communities because they have access to many water ponds and the Kwando River. The abundant fish stocks and unrestricted access make it easier for subsistence fishing. Men, women and young people are always found fishing. They use assorted equipment (mosquito nets and strings) and paddle through the water using canoes to catch fish.

Source: Photos courtesy of Lisa Heider

The safari hunting business is the prime tourism activity that brings income to these communities. Limited photographic tourism brings a bit of income to Wuparo and Kwandu who have joint venture lodges and campsites. Sobbe has no tourist lodges or campsites and relies solely on hunting revenues. Over the past three years (2009-2011) Wuparo generated about N$3.1m, Sobbe about N$1.7m and Kwandu raised N$1.5m from sportshunting tourism (IRDNC Financial Reports). These funds have been used to pay salaries for staff, field allowances, investment in Capital and social projects, and cash dividend distribution to members. Wuparo Conservancy has a new multi-million dollar tented lodge as a joint venture partnership lodge opened in 2010. This partnership lodge was partly financed with a one million dollar grant from Millennium Challenge Account-Namibia (MCA-N) in partnership with Italian investors. This business venture contributes on an annual basis a minimum of N$60,000 and employs at least 12 local people. There is also a conservancy run campsite employing at least 4 staff, though it is running at a loss. Sobbe is solely dependent on safari hunting, with no campsite facilities. Kwandu generate extra income through timber exploitation in the Kwandu community forest and they run a campsite at Burm Hill which is also running at a loss and was recently burned down by unknown people. In addition to the actual cash income from hunting and tourism, the abundance of wildlife resources has contributed to the construction of lodges and campsites resulting in creation of employment for the local members in the conservancies. Though unemployment still remains a critical issue, the conservancy programme has been able to create limited space for new jobs and a benefit sharing mechanism. Due to limited opportunities, there are serious contestations about who gets a job and the modality of selecting who is employed and not employed remains a thorny issue. Elite formations emerge and those with connections either through kinship or family ties are usually poised to capture these jobs.

Kwandu Conservancy formation

Kwandu Conservancy was among the first communities to be granted conservancy status in Zambezi and Namibia. The rigorous process was mainly led and advanced by IRDNC and the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, who engaged with the traditional leaders in Kwandu to accept the conservancy initiative because of the multiple benefits that it was intended to provide to the community. The negotiation was strenuous and people give different accounts of the process; however, many people acknowledge that the information at the time was attractive to the local leadership who accepted to register a conservancy. This negotiation process began in 1996 and the conservancy got formally gazetted in 1999. The conservancy elected its committee and adopted a constitution prior to registration and recognition by the government. The conservancy is located about 120 kms away from Katima Mulilo. It

has a total area of 190km2 and receives an annual rainfall of between 500-600mm. It shares its boundaries with Sobbe to the East, Mayuni to the South, Bwabwata National Park to the West, and Immusho in Zambia to the North (NACSO, 2009). The area is dominated by woodlands and grasslands and supports rich biodiversity and a large concentration of large and small mammals, creating an enabling environment for prime hunting. Prime huntable game includes elephants, lions, leopards, buffalo, Kudu and other antelopes which contribute significant income to the conservancy. The conservancy has a small human population of 4,300 (NACSO, 2010), though IRDNC data for 2012 shows that the conservancy population has increased steadily. Figure 6 shows the map of Kwandu with approved landuse zones.

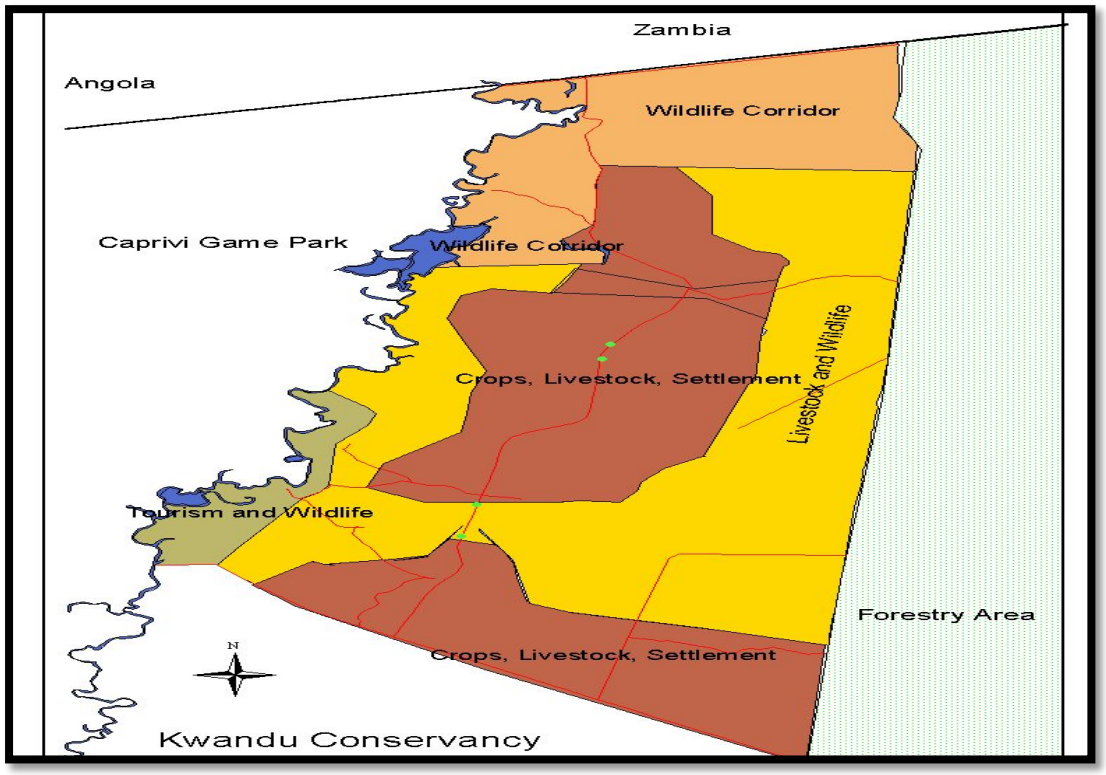

Figure 6: Map of Kwandu Conservancy
Source: Kwandu Zonation Report (2012)

Governance

The conservancy is administratively sub-divided into 6 Village Action Groups (VAGs). Two leaders from each of the VAGs are incorporated into the main Conservancy Management Committee (CMC) and are annually elected. Currently, the Kwandu CMC has 12 elected members, 6 representatives of the Traditional Authority (TA) from the sub-khuta, and the Conservancy Manager, who acts as a secretary during the meetings (see figure 7 showing governance structure). There is an executive committee that is chaired by the Conservancy chairperson and that has a

secretary, treasurer and Manager, who are responsible for the day-to-day administration of the conservancy. Kwandu Conservancy committee is also responsible for management of the community forest which falls within the conservancy boundary. Management meetings and community meetings are platforms for decision-making processes in the conservancy. The committees are elected annually. The traditional leaders have a strong influence on the management and decision-making processes. All meetings are held at sub-khuta in order for the meetings to be considered legitimate.

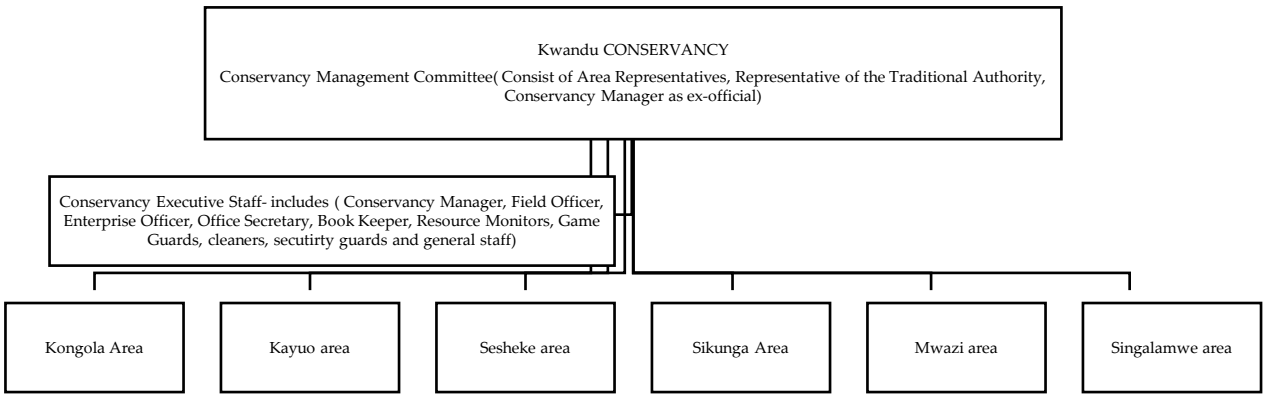

Figure 7: Kwandu Conservancy organisation structure
Source: Conservancy office

Conservancy transformation process

Kwandu Conservancythrives on safari hunting as the main activity. Kwandu Conserancy was gazetted in 1999. Between 1999 and 2007 little of the proceeds of the conservancy reached the community members. These concerns were raised by the IRDNC and government officials who noted that the local people were not getting enough benefits, and that those on committees were dominating decisions. In order to assist the community of Kwandu in attaining improved benefit flow and accessibility, the LAC collaborated with the IRDNC Institutional Support Team to help review the conservancy constitution and build the capacity of the local community to decide their desired destiny. I was asked to lead this process of helping to build the conservancy capacity, so that the conservancy would be able to meet its intended objectives. With the approval of the Traditional Authority, awareness meetings and capacity building processes took place, until the new rules that defined broader local participation and decisions in financial allocation were approved and adopted by the community on 29th April 2011 (Special General Meeting minutes, 29th April 2011). Following this process, elections were conducted to usher in a new committee to steer the conservancy in line

with the new rules. My current research shows that the conservancy is performing much better than Wuparo and Sobbe in terms of compliance with procedures. The new chairperson looks keen to follow the rules. What is also interesting is that the chairperson is also an employee of the IRDNC, combining two roles, and maybe he would like to set a good example.

Conclusions

The formation of the conservancies has not been a smooth process. During the formation process many problems emerged, such as lack of adequate income, food sources, infrastructure, education and health care. The chapter provides some evidence that the people largely continue to depend for their livelihood on agriculture and use of natural resources. The livelihood options that conservancies promised to provide remain so far small and marginal for the vast maoriy of their memebers. The chapter also showed that the incentive to form instituitionalise consercancies alrgely came from agencies that are external to the consercancy comminities. MET, IRDNC, WWF and to a degree also LAC pushed a (rural) development agenda to improve livelihoods that was not equally shared among the communities it was intended for. Moreover, the internal differentiations along lines of senority, ethnic allegiance and origin played a key role in the early formation process.

The chapters that follow provide detailed accounts of the role of NGO's in the formation process and how conservancies have organised their benefit distribution and employment issues and how conservancy leadership is contestated.

Chapter 5:
The role of external agancies in the creation of conservancies and co-creation of communities

Introduction

This chapter analyses the work of NGOs in community based natural resources management, in particular, the creation of communal conservancies in Namibia. It provides an account of how NGOs are globally connected and operate, but also how NGOs define 'community', how they co-create these communities in the process of providing technical and financial assistance and how they assist in designing CBNRM projects and programmes. The chapter thus explores the role of NGOs and state agencies in the community formation processes and thus what role they played in the enactment of community proceeded. I use the work of IRDNC and other NGOs in Namibia. I also look at the regional dimension and how international NGOs have contributed to CBNRM development by providing substantial financial assistance and manpower to sustain the CBNRM programmes in Namibia.

I begin this chapter by reviewing some of the literature on NGOs and how their role in CBNRM is evaluated. Their position is complex as they have to asnwer to communities and their ledership as well as to their funders. I then zoom in various sub-sections Namibia to document their roles and also the role of the state in conservancy formation, evaluation, monitoring and management.

NGOs and the creation of conservancies

The role of IRDNC and other NGOS must be read as proding some basic management and governance rules which in turn contributed to enacting a behaviour of conservancies as seen by IRDNC. IRDNC has been responsible for capacity development for the rural communities and their leadership. It has assisted in enhancing community participation in private/community partnerships through joint venture activities. IRDNC assited in establisging appointed committees and a qualified treasurer to manage and distribute benefits to the local communities registered. LAC helped to write the first constitutions for the conservancies to get registered. The governance structures then included setting up the conservancy committee, conservancy constitution, conservancy registers, opening bank accounts, negotiating hunting/tourism concession agreements etc. in order to manage their affairs smoothly. Further mechanisms of how to run AGMs and other meetings, how

to distribute benefits and how to develop the roles of committees were literally imposed top-down and became known as the 'IRDNC-Conservancy Model'.

In order to build a stronger CBNRM programme in Namibia an umbrella organisation Namibia Association of CBNRM and Civil Society Organisations (NACSO) was set up. Through the NACSO assembly, many more NGOs have come on board to work with conservancies. These alliances have contributed to long-term financing for the conservancy programme. This consistency has made many scholars and policy-makers cite the Conservancy programme as the leading example in Southern Africa (Jones, 2010).

The IRDNC has in Zambezi been the major Namibian NGO supporting and working with local communities to initiate processes of negotiation among the communities to establish conservancies. The success of the Community Game Guard programme and acceptance of the programme by the tribal authorities accelerated the pace of the development of conservancies in the area. IRDNC worked with the MET to lobby and re-assure the communities about the abundant benefits that would be realised by the local communities if they accepted the conservancy. IRDNC employed local people as their extension/field staff with back-up of a few external experts providing technical support to the programme. The use of local people in the implementation of the project was a good strategy as these local field staff managed to navigate through the local traditional customs and convince their own colleagues and leaders. Wuparo and Kwandu being gazetted in 1999 set the stage for the expansion of the programme. By the end of 2013 the Zambezi region had 13 registered conservancies and 5 more new ones waiting for registration by MET. Cebens Munanzi commented in an interview held on 30th June, 2013 that 'the first conservancy constitutions were in fact written by the lawyers in Windhoek and copied into all conservancies'. Mr Munanzi was at the time of the interview the second chairperson of the Wuparo Conservancy and later became the Conservancy Manager. This made conservancies operate like the same entities despite varying cultural, political and social backgrounds. IRDNC, with technical support from WWF and other organisations, helped design and develop management systems, including rules and procedures for elections, financial management, wildlife monitoring and women's development programmes. The communities slowly adapted to the new rules developed and designed for the conservancies.

In Zambezi IRDNC with major funding support from WWF-UK and other countries plays a substantial role in preparing communities for gazettement as conservancies. The fact that IRDNC is a pinoeer and lead agency for setting up conservancies, they yield much more influence and controls the character of these structures. They make conservancies dance to their tune (disciplining- through set governance rules).

The progress in Namibia's communal conservancy programme is closely linked to the commitment, resources and efforts of a network of actors and local and national non-governmental organisations, who have committed themselves to strengthening and developing systems for effective local participation in wildlife and natural resource sustainable management (Jones, cited in Nelson, 2010; NACSO, 2010). In Namibia NGOs and major world funders have contributed and continue to play a critical role in the implementation of CBNRM programmes. In 1993, USAID through Living in a Finite Environment (LIFE), Endangered Wildlife Trust, WWF and Canadian Ambassadors worked jointly together and to establish CBNRM structures in Namibia. The ultimate goal of this project was to promote sustainable natural resource management by giving local communities rights to wildlife management and tourism. NACSO rallies together a number of local NGOs in Namibia to support conservancy movement (see more on www.nacso.org.na). They lobby for funding support as well as pushing for policies that provide a conducive environment for CBNRM to strive. IRDNC is a prominent local NGO working with the studied conservancies (see further information on www.irdnc.org.na).

Apart from IRDNC, WWF, NNF and LAC also the seeks to promote sustainable development, to conserve biological diversity and natural ecosystems, and to use natural resources wisely and ethically for the benefit of all Namibians, both present and future (www.nnf.org.na). All these local NGOs depend on extrnal funding to support the conservancy movement.

Local IRDNC staff are sometimes caught up in community conflicts and tend to be biased in favour of certain groups (personal observ). An incident happened at Sobbe Conservancy where the community general meeting resolved to fire the conservancy staff for abuse, mismanagement of funds and giving of loans to each other without community approval. Instead of commending the community action to police themselves, the MET official and IRDNC officials acted as negotiators for the fired staff and got them back to work without addressing the problem. The argument by the local NGO staff was that it is expensive to start training new staff. This action did not go down well with the local community's members, who wondered why the NGO sided with the wrongdoers. This goes to show that although the NGOs are praised for helping these communities to set up conservancies, they feel they have the liberty to take independent decisions against community wishes. Essentially, local NGOs want to operate like an extension of state agencies to police the activities of the communal conservancies.

The state agencies and conservancies

In many countries and just like Namibia, the onus to manage the wildlife resources of the country is placed in the hands of the state. Governments are responsible for enacting legislation and policies to govern various aspects of the country. National government through various ministries is responsible for management of wildlife and natural resources. In Namibia the Ministry of Environment and Tourism is responsible for management of the wildlife sector and tourism. It sets out the policy framework in the wildlife estates and how they will be managed, including in National Parks, private game reserves, ranches, wetlands, communal areas etc (www.met.org.na) It is also responsible for overseeing wildlife regulation.

The state plays a useful role in the development of devolved management programmes by creating an enabling environment where local communities are encouraged to partner with investors to engage in safari hunting and tourism, which in turn provides income for the local communities (www.met.org.na; www.nacso.org.na; www.irdnc.org.na) The state also enables local and international conservation organisations to operate within the state to provide capacity building for the local people. The state has obligations to honour and deal with regional and international agreements, such as CITES, CBD, IUCN, World Parks Congress, IMF and the World Bank, in ensuring that there is environmental sustainability that contributes to improvement in local livelihoods. In doing this, the state engages multilateral companies, conservation NGOs and bilateral organisations to secure agreements and funding support and to promote CBNRM and conservancy programme .

External Agency influence and re-creation of communities

NGOs have taken it upon themselves to try and redefine these communities and have assumed that local communities lack the capacity to do things for themselves. Hence, huge investments have been made to prepare and train the local community leadership, raise awareness and reduce illegal harvesting of resources. These institutions at local level are required to manage the wildlife by recruiting local anti-poaching units, monitoring the wildlife resources, utilising the income generated from sportshunting and tourism and presiding over local affairs following democratic processes (see conservancy status reports). In order to do these, NGOs provide training to local committees in leadership, finance and natural resource management. They assist with governance of financial and project monitoring systems. However, there are many difficulties and challenges that arise from this process of local community engagement. NGOs expect communities or the local leadership to act in a manner that meets their standards, such as regular reporting, meetings, transparency, setting up of proper benefit sharing systems. IRDNC has been very instrumental in

enforcing these rules although sometimes, there has been local disobedience as evidence with the conflict at Sobbe.

The NGOs have been pressing the government to implement a Standard Operating Procedures (SOPS) (field experience) This is a set of compliance procedures which have mainly been developed by NGOs and passed on to the government to adopt as a way of punishing non-compliant conservancies. However, the government has been reluctant to take such a tough stance which may bring it into conflict with the local communities who are currently benefiting from the non-strict mode of operations(Homela- IRDNC Conservancy Financial Governance Advisor)There is lack of realisation by NGOs that rural communities are complex entities: those conservancies are an extension of the state and have been in existence for fewer than 20 years..

Analysis of NGO and state intervention

This section critically analyses the role of the supporting NGOs and state agencies in the three conservancies. Field narratives indicate that in all of the three conservancies the idea and agenda for establishing the conservancies was through lobbying by the representatives of the NGOs and government officialsthrough the traditional leadership structures. At Wuparo, the chief was approached by IRDNC officials through the Community Game Guards to negotiate with the community for the establishment of the conservancies.

> *'We were called for a meeting by our induna to discuss the new approach to conservation, to establish a community conservancy. We were promised that we would own the wildlife and other natural resources, and that we would boost the tourism and create jobs'* (Haskeni Sinasi- Founder member from Samalabi Village).

Further evidence obtained through my extended time spent in the area demonstrates that there was huge resistance from many of the people and that only a few members, especially those from Samalabi village, welcomed the need for the conservancy. With repeated discussions the community accepted reluctantly to establish the conservancy. A similar approach was used to set up the other two conservancies, Kwandu and Sobbe.

NGOs and state intervention of creating conservancies- meant introduction of new community institutions to manage wildlife in communal areas. This process enabled the state and supporting agencies start process of building capacity of communities. Training of leaders through workshops and meetings took place, community members were given restricted rights to use the wildlife resources – especially hunting – and were allowed to retain the revenues and share the meat. Some lucky people, mainly those related to the leadership and traditional structures, benefited from jobs

and other forms of cash benefits (see Chapter 6). Game management and Utilisation Plans, and Benefit Distribution Plans were also developed through NGO and state agency facilitations. These processes were meant to bring the communities to collectively agree to manage and benefit from this process. As expected, communities (especially conservancies) are not homogenous and divisions became apparent in the day to day activities of these new community institutions. Power struggles over who should be elected onto committees and who had the power to decide who gets the benefits and the jobs arose. The process created divisions to some degree within the villages and between families. Field narratives brings out thatthose whose families were integrated into mainstream beneficiation were in conflict with those not having the opportunity to reap any benefits. The traditional structures and democratic conservancy committees also clashed over has the final decision making power. In the process of this struggle illegal activities such as bushmeat hunting, resistance to conservancy emerged.

These complexities were realised from the early days of the formation of the conservancies. IRDNC succeeded in the process by working closely with the traditional structures (chiefs, indunas and headmen), who allowed them to go ahead and capacitate those who participated in the conservancy programmes. Evidence shows that years later in the life of the conservancy, communities have changed their positions, with those who did not support the conservancy at the beginning rising through the community hierarchy and ascending to the leadership of the conservancies.

Enhancing implementation of conservancies

Holding elections in conservancies is a requirement and a democratic process for upholding checks and balances, where those elected into position are brought to scrutiny for their decisions. Elections are used to usher into office new leaders of the people's choice. This process has worked both well and badly. For NGOs, regular change of leaders is an expensive undertaking because each time new leaders are elected there is the need for new training. In response, powerful individuals have used this as a reason to remain in their positions. Local leaders managing conservancies have often defied these directives and implemented programmes according to their own wishes. They call meetings when they need. For many of the conservancies, there is a constitutional requirement that meetings should be held every three months; unfortunately, meetings are not held and reports not shared with the local members of the community.The field evidence from interviews with both communities and representatives of IRDNC shows that the constituting of the conservancies was a long negotiated process not only to reach consensus but also to ensure compliance with the legislation. Some resistance from some sections of the communities in these

conservancies delayed the registration and recognition process. For Wuparo the process started in 1996 but was only gazetted in 1998 and became functional in 1999. For Kwandu the process took three years until it was gazetted in 1999 and became functional in 2000, with Sobbe starting the process in 2004 and only getting gazetted in 2006.

> *"We received more support from IRDNC to assist us establish the conservancy. They held meetings, work-shopped us on the importance of conservancies and how it would assist in reducing poverty and bush-meat hunting"* (Beaveni Munali – Chairperson of local conservancy and now assistant Director of IRDNC for the Zambezi Region).

Field narratives indicate that the demarcation of conservancy boundaries was also a prolonged issue because conservancies needed to negotiate with the neighbouring communities to ascertain the boundary to avoid conflict. Wuparo had to struggle to finalise the boundary with Balyerwa and Dzoti, although years later these communities registered their own conservancies. Despite the fact that the Mayeyi tribal grouping is bigger in terms of numbers of people, it has divided itself into three conservancies (Balyerwa, Dzoti and Wuparo). These all fall under the same traditional leader and pay royalties through the hunting concession fees. As at end of 2012 each of the three conservancies paid N$ 10,000 and at Wuparo an additional N$10,000 was also given to the three village headmen or indunas.

Demarcation conflicts at Sobbe were also experienced during the inception stage and 10 years later these conflicts are still on-going. Though the majority of the people who live in the area are under Chief Mamili, there are still two villages whose allegiances are with Chief Mayuni and these conflicts keep resurfacing. The boundary issue affects how benefits are distributed and who is excluded. Kwandu shares most of its territory with the majority of Mafwe speaking people who fall under the leadership of Chief Mamili and also some San/Bushmen communities. Negotiations had to take place between communities in Kwandu and Mayuni to agree on the boundary, especially near Bwabwata National Park.

Though IRDNC advanced the model of distribution, each conservancy took different decisions on how to use the financial resources and other benefits. The main source of revenues was trophy hunting and non-monetary uses from the natural environment. IRDNC and other support agencies designed a conservancy structure to have an Executive Committee (running daily business and paid a full salary). AConservancy Committee comprising of village Representatives (each being paid monthly allowances), advisory committee/Trustees (mainly indunas/village headmen paid monthly allowances) and employed community rangers, Resource Monitors, cleaners and security staff (these received monthly salaries). Other costs were for travel,

meetings and training. In all three conservancies these consumed over 90% of the revenues and local members did not realise major benefits from the model (see IRDNC conservancy financial reports) Though IRDNC was the driving force behind the conservancy formation and made huge promises of success and community empowerment, the model did not benefit the majority of the membership. Hence, some reform process was undertaken in the three conservancies as from 2009 (see previous chapter 4). These reforms were intended to address the aspirations of the membership and to give the conservancy more powers and incentives to participate in decision-making processes.

Managing communities is a complex process and the promoters of the programme understood this well. They had to be patient with the communities because there was an increased realisation that as the conservancies got more capacitated they started to see things differently and started questioning the rationale of some of the decisions of the IRDNC and other support partners. Negotiation, conflict management and consensus building strategies became part of the skills that IRDNC imparted on these community structures. This was to reduce the potential for conflict among the conservancy members.. Though the presence of the NGOs has the potential to further create crisis it is still necessary as external support is required. The conservancies used annual general meetings as platforms for sharing information, reporting back and resolving conflicts. The NGO and state support re-created communities in many ways, as they adopted to behave in the rules advanced by the promoters of this programme.

Setting up financial management systems

The IRDNC Institution Support team was instrumental in setting up financial management systems for the conservancies in Zambezi region. Setting up proper books of accounts and financial management controls was seen as an important step in building the conservancy structures. IRDNC provided support on a regular basis – monthly and sometimes more often as the need arose. The specific support included training conservancy treasurers and book keepers how to record, file and maintain financial records, how to manage cash analysis, how to prepare and present financial reports, how to make financial decisions, annual workplans and budgets and how to deal with financial mismanagement. This process changed how people viewed their obligations to the conservancies. Though this capacity development was a positive development, the initial support was more focussed on training conservancy leaders only and not their followers. As a result in later years some of the conservancy leaders started to understand the weakness of the system and embarked on financial mismanagement (see also Chapter 6 and 7). Local communities, though they were trained and their understanding fine-tuned, still maintained their way of how to do things. They started arguing with IRDNC support teams that they should not become

their police, yet the MET did not care much about what the conservancy did with the funds. During the period of my stay, work and research, I witnessed various meetings on mismanaged funds in all the conservancies I studied ending inconclusively.

Monitoring wildlife populations

Better management of natural resources, especially wildlife, is an important component and requirement when formalising the registration of conservancies, as they are required to submit Game Management and Utilisation Plans. These provide guidance on how to manage and utilise the game resources found in the communal areas. IRDNC in collaboration with MET and others continued to play this role in designing operations programmes for community game guards through the *Event Book* – a data capturing tool to record animal sightings and poached animals, detect any illegal hunting activities, record incidences of fire and collect snares etc. This information became part of the decision making process when granting hunting quotas. The *Event Book* has now become a management tool used by the officials of the MET, supporting NGOs and conservancy leadership to plan how to manage the natural resources.. Users' rights have not been fully devolved to the conservancy committees as the ministry still retains the power to decide on hunting quotas. Progress has, nevertheless, been made as there is some consultation with the communities through wildlife statistics being captured in the patrol data books (event book). In order to have an effective wildlife monitoring system, the conservancies also have to formulate land use plans. These plans, though helpful, also bring conflict about access, as they limit accessibility and use. These restrictions come into conflict with some interest groups in the community. Trophy hunting is also seen as exclusively for those with money. Although the communities have ownership rights conferred on them, they still depend largely on the good will of these investors which often contributes to how people make decisions. Conservancies have been made to depend more and more on externally driven businesses to raise income and revenues to support the beneficiation model. The state and NGOs insist on the fact that conservancies participate in tourism ventures through joint venture partnerships.

Community perceptions and experience with the conservancy model

There is a recognition that CBNRM programmes and conservancies in particular were driven externally by lobbying with traditional leaders. Owen Garth, the Founder of IRDNC, acknowledges that the idea was sold to the chiefs to buy into the community conservation strategy to curb bush-meat hunting/poaching. In many CBNRM projects and programmes, there has been donor and NGO presence, so the genesis of CBNRM is reflected in the behaviour and characters of the promoting organisation. Communities were persuaded to accept and view the conservancy as a better option

providing better land use that was going to give them opportunities to benefit. In Zambezi region IRDNC is associated with the conservancies which sometimes makes it difficult to distinguish between the two.

> *"When we see IRDNC people and their vehicles, we know they have come to talk about conservancy issues, or to inform us about what is going to happen in our community. They have changed our lives"* (Village headwoman).

Such comments are heard from the community members, including leaders. One old man at one of my interactions in Kwandu claimed that the IRDNC programme was making his people poorer because the IRDNC wanted to turn the whole region into a conservation area. Their cattle were being eaten by lions, elephants were destroying crops and that was why some people did not like the programme. Community members could do nothing because those who were benefiting were happy. There is a general feeling that IRDNC influences their decisions. People spoken to in the three cinservancies regards IRDNC as the mother of conservancies, hence some feel they should be trusted.

My personal experience also informs that the role being played by external people (experts, government officials etc.) sometimes is appreciated by the communities but sometimes communities get overloaded with a lot of procedures and compliance mechanisms developed by the government or NGO officers. 'We usually and more often impose our agenda on the communities and facilitate the process in such a way that we get a buy-in from the community' (narrated Mr Kamwi, Head of Institutional Support Team). For example, when the community decided to fire the entire conservancy committee at Sobbe for financial irregularities, the NGO supporting the conservancy advised the community against doing that because it would be expensive to train a new committee. This development astonished many of the community members who wanted proper accountability of conservancy resources. Conservancies are also in many instances forced to sign concession agreements even if they do not like it. In 2010, Wuparo Conservancy was forced to sign a concession agreement from Katima MET offices, even though some members protested that the signing of the documents should be done at the conservancy office after the community had been informed and assented to it. The government official ordered that those who did not want to sign the document could go and those willing to could sign. In the end, the Chairperson and the Manager signed the document. These are some examples where the activities of the conservancies mostly resemble the character of the designers and implementers. Communities' intellectual independence is often ignored.

Despite all the various administrative, technical and community engagement challenges, CBNRM is promoted from above and communities are convinced to buy into the community conservation idea. Once they buy into it the NGOs and state

agencies then a set of rules are enacted such as management structure systems, financial management systems, land use and management plan systems. In Namibia they have even gone further to develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). These have been placed on the conservancy.. While this is intended to improve efficiency and accountability and broaden the benefit sharing scope, people are looking at it as an attempt by the government and NGOs to regulate how the communities want to conduct their business.

> *"If we have been empowered, we should be left to do what we want with our resources but these officials are greedy they want to control everything"* (reaction by Hasken Sinasi – Chair of Samalabi village).

These sentiments were coming from some conservancy leaders in Sobbe conservancy. It is, however, acknowledged by the communities that NGOs and state officials have opened up their minds and developed their capacity, knowledge and skills to engage with the private sector and also manage their conservancy affairs. The three conservancies have similar structures with regards to management and operation though Wuparo is far ahead with the devolution and sharing of benefits. Kwandu and Sobbe follow in that order respectively. They both do not make much income from hunting tourism and require infrastructure development to boost tourism opportunities. Kwandu supplements its income through timber extraction from the community forestry which is jointly managed by the same administrative structure. The conservancy model is a contested complex that the experts and NGOs carefully designed, then lobbied the community for their buy in and set up rules and procedures, etc. Though the model is riddled with ambiguities some progressive developments, such as community empowerment, jobs, poverty alleviation and biodiversity conservation, have to some extent been accomplished. The dynamics of the social settings of communities and various interest groups will continue to be interactive.

Conclusions

NGOs like IRDNC set out to introduce new forms of management through committees, chairpersons, secretaries with certain mandates and decision making power (more democratic), they dictated in this way how the enactment should proceed. Interesting is that staff of IRDNC and part those with a Zambesi region background and affiliation, forged decisions that favoured their family connections and family allegiances. This should be the core of the conclusion. Do not bring new information and do not use references to literature (this is usually not done in conclusions).

However, the work of the NGOs has brought in new power dynamics, competition, elite capture and uneven distribution of the benefits. The capacity building and skills training for the leadership has created a big knowledge gap between the leadership and their followers. This gap has often resulted in misunderstanding between the conservancy membership and their leaders. The knowledge imparted to the leaders has made them cleverer than before the conservancies came into being. This cleverness has bred all sorts of vices, including dishonesty in handling community resources and elite mentality, which have affected the intended outcomes of the conservancies.

Adams and Hulme (2001) suggest that the government agencies and officials use their discretionary powers to interpret policy so that the link between policy and action can take different forms. In Namibia, there has been a considerable gap between the implementation of policy and the original intent of the policy-makers. By and large, the way in which policy has been implemented reflects an inherent distrust by officials that communities will use wildlife sustainably (Jones, cited in Nelson, 2010). Corbett and Jones (2000) note several gaps between conservancy policy's intention and implementation. While the intent was for communal area conservancies to receive the same rights over wildlife as freehold farmers, the Ministry of Environment and Tourism placed additional restrictions on communal conservancies. For example, the government officials insist that conservancies should have approved quotas and obtain permits for their own use huntable game. In addition, the conservancies are expected to submit a management plan before the hunting quotas are approved. In essence, this shows that the government officials contest the full devolution of use rights to the local communities. All these are based on failure by state officials to trust local communities.

The previous chapter described the communities in the three conservancies and provided insight into how these communities are socially, culturally and politically differentiated. The so-called communities are not homogeneous. They have always collided among themselves in the processes of renegotiation and reworking, as they struggle to access and benefit from the expert driven process. Though Local communities should be in full control of the conservancy processes most of their actions and decisions are influenced by support organisation like IRDNC The key staff of suporting agencies hail from the same region and are sometimes caught up in the struggles over control. They influence a certain direction (personal oberv.) The previous chapter, that described the local communities, their formation and organisation, helps us to understand the notion that communities and conservancies are 'a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categories through which meaning is given to physical and social realities' (Hajer, 1995: 44). This chapter has demonstrated the role and influence of both the state and external agencies such as NGOs in re-

shaping communities and conservation outcomes, which is sometimes in line but sometimes in conflict with locally desired outcomes.

The next chapter deals with how the local communities contest the conservancy model because of various issues, such as uneven distribution of benefits, elite capture, restrictions on resource use and the labour of dealing with all sorts of modern rules, such as organising elections and meetings. The chapter has brought in new knowledge on the enactment and assembling of conservancies and the process of struggles and the receation of communities.

Chapter 6:
Benefit Distribution: The struggles and challenges of managing conservancy funded micro-enterprise community projects

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the challenges that the conservancies have faced as they struggle to fairly and equitably distribute benefits across the membership of these communities. The distribution of cash and other forms of benefits (such as jobs and elected positions) are discussed in Chapters 7 and 9 of this thesis. In this chapter my key focus is to explore how the community micro-projects funded by conservancy funds (generated from the use of wildlife) are being used and implemented in the community and the difficulties encountered. Nearly all the community micro-projects for income generation in Wuparo Conservancy failed to be realised within the first year of being established. This chapter aims to shed more light on why this occurs and what measures were taken by the conservancy management structures to correct the situation.

This chapter is build around the analysis of data from 9 micro-projects thar are implemented in Wuparo Conservancy. I interviewed all committee members, conservancy officials and ordinary members involved in these projects on their perceptions..The analysis shows the fragility of these projects, leading to loss of funds. The chapter clearly brings to the fore what emerges as a key challenge for the sustainabilty of the conservancy model: the concrete constitution of community and how conservancy communities (re)distibute the beneifts derived from the management of natural resources. The chapter underpin a central argument of this thesis: conservancies as community entities evolved as arenas of struggle. The high level of elite control, coupled with poor planning and lack of institutional rules to effectively guide decision-making processes at village level, illustrates the problematic nature of communities in natural resources management. Wuparo provided supports such conclusion. This is also significant from the perspectives that Wuparo has allocated between 2009 and 2013 more than 50% of its revenues directly into the communities for micor-project and is therefore seen as an example of a better organised conservancy.

Community Income Generating Projects (CIGP)

There was growing demand that the conservancy reduce the challenges of providing incentives and over-dependency on hunting and toursim revenues by distributing funds to local villages to embark on income generating projects and to support other projects within the villages. The income generating projects, it was hoped, would raise income, reduce poverty and result in an increased benefit distribution base within the community. Since 2010, Wuparo has been allocating funds for support mostly to income generating projects which have, unfortunately, not been successful, thereby defeating the concept. Table 1 below provides a summary of 9 case studies of the micro-enterprises funded by Wuparo Conservancy.

Table 1: Community projects Wuparo

No:	Name of Project	Amount (NAD)	Year started	Status
1	Community shop at Samalabi Village	20000	2010	Collapsed
2	Vegetable Garden at Kamunu village	25000	2010	Collapsed
3	Cash Loan scheme at Samalabi Village	18000	2011	Collapsed
4	Buying and selling of cattle at Kanzwili village	35000	2010	Collapsed
5	Community fishing project at Nsheshe north village	33000	2012	Collapsed
6	Hammer mill project at Samudono 1 village	45000	2010	Collapsed
7	Bakery project at Samudono 2 village	20000	2011	Collapsed
8	Poultry project at Nsheshe central village	48000	2010	Collapsed
9	Community shop at Masasa village	18000	2012	Operational

Source: Wuparo Conservancy records, 2013

Wuparo Conservancy in 2009 embarked on reform (see chapter 4) and by late December 2009 they had started allocating funds directly to each village. Each village formed a committee, appointed signatories and opened up bank accounts. Each village would make their own independent decisions on what the people or community preferred. This could be in the form of sharing individual cash dividends, community projects (e.g., schools, water boreholes) and/or embarking on income generating projects. Nearly all the villages embarked on income generating activities with their first phase of receiving money from the conservancy.

From 2009 to 2013 Wuparo Conservancy spent over NAD300, 000 to support small-scale income generating projects in addition to other community disbursements. The the proposed work plan and budget for the following year is decided upon at the AGM. Once this is approved or, sometimes, not approved, modifications have to be made to the budget as directed by the AGM. Wuparo disburses some 50% of its income to the 8 villages for purposes of starting community projects and also for cash distribution to the members. Each village has a committee that presides over this money. They have their own bank accounts. The committees are expected to call

village meetings to discuss what projects to do. Some of the villages have done this but others have ignored it and have either kept the money in the banks or have embarked on projects without consensus with the village members.

From the start, these micro-proejcts were received with some reservations. The field experience shows that local communities cannot manage small income generating projects because of competing interests. They can build schools but not run businesses.

> *"I have not seen anywhere, where the community can run a good business venture and succeed. They fail to manage funds, and few people end up benefiting from the projects. It's difficult to run a business as a village. I am not surprised that all these projects have failed. We can't maintain a single generator in the village. I would agree that if we have to build a teacher's house, yes, we can do as a community not running a shop or garden, it can't work here and you must have seen for yourself that these IGs were a waste of money. But conservancies are under pressure from the NGOs to invest in business enterprise, hence, we put a lot of money at Wuparo. But again, no training has been given and no clear rules on how to manage these projects. Ultimately, few people have benefited and the whole concept is a failure. We are even planning to change how the conservancies are managed, so that the Village Development Committee can supervise these funds"* (D. Mukwata, VDC chairperson, Wuparo).

More than half of the 64 people I interviewed on their perceptions about these community income generating projects expressed similar views as the Village Development Committee chairperson. They, however, did not fully agree on the dissolution of the conservancy as some are demanding. What seems to be a consensus is that the conservancy should concentrate on managing hunting, lodges, campsites and anti-poaching activities but that the village's projects should be implemented by the VDC. This process is contested by those who are currently serving on different committees under the conservancy framework. The Traditional Authorities (TA) have been caught up in this dilemma too as they keep shifting their goalposts and influence. They support the VDC approach but also support the conservancy to be a lead agency.

> *"My feeling is that the conservancy should keep the money and create more jobs rather than giving out money for projects which are not succeeding. It's a waste of money, and most of those involved are very powerful, no one can tell them what to do but we as young people we need to work and the conservancy has to give us jobs"* (A youth from Nsheshe village).

Despite all these negative perceptions, Wuparo is applauded by conservancy supporting NGOs like IRDNC for its affirmative action towards ensuring that the conservancy is made profitable for the people. However, not much has been done to support the community. For instance, the IRDNC financial team helped the village treasurers in 2010: they trained them and made regular book keeping checks and the

results were very good in terms of financial accountability, record keeping etc. (Justice Muhinda, Financial Trainer, IRDNC). This proved to be better than the main conservancy accounts. However, in 2011 the IRDNC support team stopped supporting the village treasurers and in the absence of regular checks and capacity building things started falling apart. The NGO officials claimed it was too much work: they did not have the manpower to do it and could only support the conservancy book keeper. It was quite unfortunate that the NGO did not utilise this opportunity to learn and see how, if the village were well supported, it could change the benefit distribution pattern in the conservancies. As such, some people have placed the blame on the NGO for not helping them much.

> *"We have been asking IRDNC to come and teach us how to budget, plan projects, even how to keep our books of accounts, but they don't want to help us. So why are we being blamed. We are trying on our own"* (Fescah, Chairperson Masasa village).

Case studies of village micro-enterprise projects/no intro needed

Case 1: Community Shop at Samalabi Village

In December 2010 the village committee led by FM, who had just been elected chairperson of the village after the community dismissed DM for withdrawing money without community approval, decided without the consent of village members to open a village shop. They bought a few groceries for sale in the shop. This shop was opened in the house of the chairperson. Her husband is a a member of the Namibia Defence Force. Problems were soon to follow because the business was done inside the chairperson's house, making it difficult for other committee members to verify actual stock. The Chairperson was also the salesperson, a function that should have been given to the treasurer to handle. When the first orders finished selling, the chairperson, instead of informing other committee members, decided to go and make new orders for the shop. Again, this became a problem because there was no transparency and it became difficult for other committee members to monitor what was ordered by the chairperson. On several occasions the members started murmuring and calling for a financial report, which the chairperson could not present. When the husband, who does not reside in the village all the time, came for a weekend visit and heard about this development, he came to the defence of his wife and threatened that no one should ever ask the wife about the shop and said that no one may enter his house again to conduct the village shop business. Sadly, this was the end of this project. No money was recovered. The chairperson herself knows what happened but because soldiers are feared by people in the community no one could challenge this man. In the process, the chairperson resigned from the position and the

community elected a new committee of mainly young men and women to lead the village. The new committee was advised to work for the community and not personal benefit like the previous committee. The election was supervised by the conservancy manager. This project became problematic because the committee did not consult with the community and the decision to use the house of the chairperson was also wrong and suspicious. The status of the husband was strong enough not to be challenged. In the end there was a single family that benefited from this project. Lack of clear rules, elite control and poor planning contributed to the poor implementation of this community shop at Samalabi village. The intention of the project was to generate income and plough the profits into other community needs. However, inadequate support and planning and poor prioritisation of community needs led to loss of income and only a single family ended up benefiting from a project that was earmarked for the community's good.

Case 2: Vegetable Garden at Kamunu Village

In December 2009 and March 2010 the village received funding from the conservancy for implementation of village projects. This is the smallest village with fewer than 100 adults. The committee was dominated by one family. For instance, the chairperson, treasurer and 2 other committee members were brothers and sisters. They sat without consulting the other village members and made a decision to start a gardening project. They acquired a piece of land, bought a water pump, pipes, water canes, seeds and a bicycle for use by the committee. The procedure is that before the committee can spend any allocated funds it needs to convene a community general meeting to allow the membership to make choices on how to spend the funds. A few months later this project had not taken off. When other people started querying, especially the conservancy Manager because he was from the village, disagreements, conflict and confusion emerged. To add further to this slow progress, it was discovered by IRDNC financial audits that the committee paid themselves allowances and had no money to pay for labour for people to till the land or hire a tractor to plough and start the gardening project. The conservancy Manager intervened and ordered the suspension of LM, the Chairperson of the village. Since it was a family dominated committee no serious action was taken. With pressure from the conservancy Manager, the Chairperson was suspended from the village committee activities. The suspended chairperson then decided to grab the bicycle, generator and other items as a reaction to his suspension by the Manager. Mr LM further argued that he could only be disciplined by his village members and not the conservancy Committee or Manager because the money belonged to his village members. The conservancy committee with the influence of the Manager suspended LM as the chairperson, only for him to be replaced by his younger sister. This proved difficult for any remedial recovery of

assets and even money that was paid out as allowances to the committee. Since Mr LM was still a signatory to the village account, he collaborated with other committee members and withdrew the remaining project money and shared it with his colleagues as allowances, literally collapsing the project. Ultimately this project was abandoned and no one was held accountable. When LM was fired from the committee, he waged a campaign for the removal of the conservancy manager using the Village Development Committee (political wing of the government). Sensing danger and in order to avoid further discontent, the management at the conservancy rewarded Mr LM with a position as Campsite Manager, a position which was held by his elder brother who was promoted to work at the joint venture lodge. This is despite the fact that Mr LM had a pending query on the mismanagement of the garden project and failure to account for funds and assets. The selection of the project was done without consultation with the community and the chairperson somehow wielded power over the other committee members, who were mostly his relatives and had little power to challenge him. With everyone in the committee accessing sitting allowances for not doing much work, this was incentive enough to keep quiet and support the status quo. I managed to catch up with Mr LM and when I questioned him about this unfolding story, he was quick to respond and this is what he said:

> *"This is our village, what we do with the money in our zone, has nothing to do with others from other villages, we will do the project. The money is not enough. Yes we paid ourselves allowances because everyone gets them even in the other villages, we know this. When we get the next allocation we will continue with the project. This is our project, so no one should be pushing us".*

Mr LM does not believe he has done anything wrong because everyone in the conservancy has to benefit and sharing of allowances is part of the benefits. He is a strong member of the VDC and, at the same time, a local religious leader and as such he wields a lot of control over others.

Case 3: Cash Loan Scheme at Samalabi village

In January 2011, following the sacking of FM as chairperson and the entire committee of Samalabi village, a Mr HS was elected as chairperson, his close friend Mr LL as Secretary and new committee members were appointed. They held a village meeting with the members to outline their vision for the village. Samalabi has fewer than 123 adult people in total and is built around extended family lines. At this meeting, they presented a request to the village to authorize an income generating venture in the form of a Cash Loan Scheme (CLS) so that individual members could access the loans for personal investment in business. A repayment period of 6 months was agreed upon. Following this approval by the village members, the chairperson and secretary

were the first people to obtain loans and they opened a grocery shop in the next village where there is a big population. It is believed that three other people were given smaller amounts of not more than N$1000 each, while the chairperson and the secretary loaned themselves N$5000 and N$3000 respectively. This was to be a revolving fund where when the first payback was received, other community members would also come and borrow. This looked a very noble idea in the eyes of the committee. Unfortunately six months later no one had paid back the loans and another 6 months later no one had made any payment. It became clear that this scheme was bound to fail. No one could strongly stand up to question the new leadership of educated young men. There were no books of accounts to show a list of borrowers and to add further problems to this project, the Chairperson disappeared with another N$5000 to go and seek training in tourism in another town far away from the conservancy. His long absence provoked an outcry that he had disappeared with the funds. However, villagers could not question his secretary who in the meantime had been appointed acting conservancy manager, with a lot of influence. Opposition voices were suppressed and the cash loan scheme project died and was buried with no financial report or explanation. Some voices, especially led by the first chairperson who was dismissed for withdrawing N$10,000 without community approval, grew up and another new committee was put in place with Mr DM returning to his position, claiming the youths had failed. However, his efforts to recover the money given out as loans failed as he was challenged by those who benefited as they claimed to be members of the conservancy as well. Those who got loans challenged those accusing them, claiming that as members they benefited and others could wait for their turn to get loans as well. This Cash loan project though started with good intentions lacked proper foresight of how to ensure that it was not abused by those in leadership of the village. The project collapsed and funds were not recovered. Again the elites captured most of the funds. Mr HS after a year of being absent from the village finally returned and was given a job at the joint venture tented lodge without being sanctioned for mismanagement of the cash loan project or requesting him to pay back the loan to his village. Though his friend was dropped as acting conservancy Manager, he was rewarded as a conservancy clerk. The issue has collapsed and no one seems to be in a position to seek any redress.

The cash loan scheme was a noble idea meant to empower individual members or households in the village with start-up capital for starting up micro-enterprises. However, the project was not founded on grounded principles, hence, its eventual collapse. The rules were not clear nor were considerations put into place, for instance, as to how much a person was qualified to borrow or whether the committee members could borrow without the community knowing the amount. This failure further demonstrated the conservancy institutional structure's inability to regulate itself:

funds are either wasted or captured by a few people. HS belongs to a strong group that supported the conservancy at inception, while Mr LL claims to be the son of the local induna in the village, and wields control over decision-making processes. Again, this project points to deficiencies in the governance systems in conservancies. HS and LL are literate young men and were able to convince their village followers that a cash loan would empower them individually because it would be given to them and they could invest. African rural communities have poor reputations with regard to repayment of loans and running a cash loan scheme without proper rules was bound to fail. The key point is that a few individuals were able to capture the benefits and no one could discipline them because the mechanisms for sanctioning wrong-doers are non-existent or deliberately ignored, despite state and NGO investment in training communities and writing conservancy constitutions and policies, which should be reference points for disciplining erring members of the conservancies.

Case 4: Community fishing project in Sheshe Village

Sheshe village is one of the sub-units in Wuparo Conservancy and like others was allocated N$33,000 between 2011 and 2012 to implement any village project. In 2011, the Committee convened a meeting at the village and deliberated on many options. They voted for a 'Community Fishing Project'. The aim of the project was to catch fish from the lagoons and sell them in the community, to raise income for the village and to support other developmental projects. The second objective was to create employment for some local members by employing them as fishermen. Following the approval of the project, the committee bought 2 boats, 10 fishing nets, a cooler box and other equipment to support the fishing activities. The committee employed two staff to work as fishermen. The initial plan was that the treasurer and the chairperson would be responsible for selling the fish and would maintain financial records and keep the funds generated in the bank account operated by the village in Katima Mulilo. This project showed good progress with the fishermen catching enough fish and the sales went well. The whole community in the village was happy with the project. While it is believed that the majority of the village members cherished the project, something unusual was to happen during the first 6 months when the village held a meeting. A senior government official, who also hails from the same village and works as a Deputy Director in a government ministry in Windhoek, travelled to the village for the seasonal Christmas holiday. As a respected member of the community, he was informed about the activities in the village including the community fishing project. He, however, strongly opposed this kind of project claiming it had the potential for conflict in future. Using his highly respected professional educational status, he summoned the committee and advised them against going ahead with the project because the workers were not insured and in the event of a problem like death

and injury to the workers, the community might be held responsible and would have to compensate the injured workers. Though the initial results showed that this project was to succeed because it did not need much technical expertise, the committee succumbed to the advice of the Deputy Director and decided to abandon the project. Most of those on the committee and the employed fishermen are directly and indirectly related in extended families within the village and so they had to respect his wisdom, as going against him would work against them if a problem arose in future.

What followed next was the struggle over the project's assets. It was not clear who would get what or what should happen to the assets that were bought at the expense of the community. The two fishermen grabbed the fishing nets as their benefits. The Chairperson held onto the cooler box claiming it as her benefit. The two boats were left at the river to be used by anyone in the village for personal fishing. Local narratives suggest that the two boats are still being used by the two fishermen to catch fish for personal gain as in the face of the collapsed project no one seems to be in control to question them. A few months later, the treasurer of the village wanted to get custody of the cooler box as she was the treasurer and was mandated to keep the assets of the village. The Chairperson, who is married to a Mr M, a senior Game Guard at the conservancy, was advised by her husband not to release the cooler box as that was their benefit since the project had collapsed. Mr M claimed that there was too much pressure from the treasurer to get the cooler box to the extent that his wife wanted to surrender it to her. However, Mr M threatened his wife with divorce if she did that:

> *"No one is the owner of the cooler box, so it can stay in my house, it is our benefit. I cannot allow the treasurer to get it. What is she going to be doing with it because there is no more fishing project. She also just wants to benefit, so I threatened my wife that if she gave it out, I will divorce her, and I mean it. It's our benefit also. We are members of the community so we qualify to keep it"* (Mr M).

The issue of the cooler box has remained deadlocked as the chairperson has refused to release it to the treasurer and it seems there is now little pressure from the other committee members. The chairperson is a daughter of the local induna, who is a senior member of the chieftainship and so well respected and community members would not want to be associated with fighting with the induna's child.

Further investigations with some committee members and ordinary members of the village show that what the chairperson did was not right but they also agree that they would have done the same if it were them. Other people explained that there was no clear procedure and agreement among the community on how to dispose of the assets of the project at the end of the project. One community member stressed that the

chairperson of Sheshe central Sub-Zone (see Case 8) also collected a solar panel, a generator and the battery that was supposed to be used for the poultry house and when the project collapsed and he was removed from the position he hung onto the assets and no one grabbed them back from him. The new conservancy manager narrated that it seems this is a normal habit because the chairperson of Kamunu village (see Case 2) when he was removed as chairperson for misusing funds, refused to surrender the village bicycle claiming that it was his benefit. During my field research on this project, I interviewed one female Game Guard who also asked several questions, as a sign of defiance:

> *"Who is the owner of the funds in the conservancy? Are we all not equal and supposed to benefit? If you insist on asking about the missing money or loans, those people will say to you, is it your money or property for you to be more concerned about what happens"* (Female Game Guard).

These are some of the issues that engulf the conservancy. No one was willing to divulge any information about how much money was realised from the fish sales and how it was spent.

> *"Just know that this project is closed and it is not our fault as a committee. People listened to Mr Mukweto. We will do a water project now, since we have no water in the village"* (Village Secretary).

The two fishermen were reluctant to discuss what could have happened to the sales of the fish but according to them they did their part and the chairperson was responsible for selling the fish and would not know if they had the money or not:

> *"In fact we were not paid, hence we got the nets and we are using the boat to fish but any member of the village can use the boats, not the fishing nets, these are ours, our only benefit from the project"* (one Fisherman).

Case 5: The Hammer mill Project at Samudomo 2 Village, Wuparo Conservancy

Samudomo village in Wuparo Conservancy was allocated funds of N$45000 in 2010 for various community projects. One of the projects that was approved at the village meeting was to purchase a hammer mill for mealie meal production. The purpose of the project was to reduce the distance that the local people had to cover to find a milling plant. There was consensus on this project and the committee was tasked to find where to buy. Using local trading agents in Katima Mulilo the committee was able to procure a hammer mill from a South African company. The equipment was paid for and after a few months it was delivered to Namibia and the village committee collected it and installed it at the homestead of the chairperson. How was the hammer mill project selected? As per procedure in this village, the committee proposed many projects (cultural village, gardening, and hammer mill) and during the village meeting

where all the headmen attended, procurement of the hammer mill was approved as a priority.

However, what seems not to have been clear was where to install the hammer mill for operation once it was bought. Local narratives indicate that when the mill was finally delivered, the chairperson deliberately installed it at his homestead, citing security reasons: it could not be put in an open place because a hammer-mill house had not yet been constructed. The reasons for not constructing the mill shed were not properly explained because they were budgeted for during the planning of the project. Some local perceptions are that the village chairperson is feared by many people and that this could have quashed any open resistance to his action of installing the mill at his homestead. He is powerful, feared and sometimes associated with witchcraft. He appointed his wife and the treasurer to manage the sales of the project. His wife was actually the machine operator in the absence of her husband. Though 8 people were on the village committee, the project was mainly run by the chairperson and the treasurer. The two were believed to be very close friends. Despite the governance challenges of this project, people came to grind their maize and it was a source of pride that the new conservancy approach was working. During my time working and researching in the area, I visited the hammer mill and the chairperson several times to inquire how the machine was performing and if many people were using the machine. The turnover was good because on a daily basis more than 20 people would bring their maize for grinding and the price was minimal since it was a community project. However, a few months later, the machine broke down and because it had a one year guarantee it was returned to the Agent in Katima Mulilo who later exported it back to South Africa for repairs.

Unfortunately, during the time of this field research in 2012, the hammer mill had not yet been returned over 6 months after it was exported back for repairs to the supplier, with no proper explanation from either the chairperson or the agent. In the midst of this confusion, the chairperson and the treasurer withdrew N$20,000 which they could not account for. In the process, the chairperson and the treasurer were removed by the general meeting and were ordered to refund the money, which they agreed to do but have not paid to date. During the same period the treasurer died a mysterious death when she was trapped underground in an anthill while collecting some soil for smearing her house. Her death raised a lot of issues but she was gone without having paid back the debt to the village. I attended the burial of this woman and I had a chance to catch up with Morgan, the former chairperson and to console him. He expressed shock about her death. We then went on to discuss some others issues and I asked him about the money that he was alleged to have misused and when he was going to pay it back to the village. His response was puzzling: 'You know, comrade,

my friend is gone now and she was the treasurer so how do we check the books ... you know people in the conservancy talk too much but don't worry it will be sorted out ... already some people want me back on the committee because since they removed us nothing is happening'.

I personally knew Morgan and I was free to discuss with him, maybe because I was an outsider, but the locals would not dare challenge this man openly. Wigan was the youthful vice-chairperson to Morgan but decided to resign, claiming that he was being side-lined by his chairperson because the latter worked closely with the late treasurer. It was good for me to have met this young man at the funeral. During our informal discussion he pointed out: 'You see how people die in our village, so that's why me, I have left this village committee. There is too much jealousy and some people are witches so if you talk too much, you die mysteriously without necessarily pointing a finger at a specific person involved in your death'.

The maintenance of the hammer mill machine was supposed to be financed from the funds generated from its operations and a 12-month guarantee by the supplier was provided. Unfortunately, for more than 6 months that the hammer mill operated no proper records of how many funds were generated was reported to the village members. Though a new committee was put in place, they were scared to pursue the matter further with the chairperson and the treasurer had died, burying any clue or explanation about what could have happened to the funds generated during that period. Another argument emerged that no one could claim ownership of the hammer mill, as the former chairpersons are also members of the conservancy and claim no one should trouble them.

The project was intended to reduce the walking of long distances, especially by women and children who normally would be sent to go and grind maize meal. Information from the village suggests that people fear to pursue the matter because they fear to be harassed by witchcraft. Whether this is true, it is up to those responsible to verify this. To make matters worse, the treasurer at the time died a mysterious death and no one is able to give an explanation as to where the hammer mill is and how many funds were generated. The committee has a poor record of managing community projects. It was alleged that the committee failed to run the vegetable garden and the cultural village has not been built although funds were allocated to both these projects. The hammer mill generated funds when it was operational, however, there are no records to show how much was generated. The chairperson's wife, who was responsible for charging and collecting the funds, claimed that the treasurer used to collect the money on a daily basis and that she did not know what happened to it. She could not even remember how much she remitted daily since she

was not recording it anywhere. In all these, you find that a few powerful individuals have benefitted from or are responsible for the failure of the projects.

Case 6: Bakery project at Samudomo 1 Village

In 2010 Samudomo 1 village received their funding allocation from the conservancy to implement various projects in the village. One of the projects that was selected at a community meeting was a bakery business, where the committee would be making scones and other items for sale in the village and at a nearby lower primary school which is about 250 metres from the village office. The selection of this project was influenced by the chairperson, Mr CM, because he trained in this field the previous year before he became the chairperson of the village and of the conservancy. He claimed to have the skills that would propel this business. At the general meeting the budget was approved to buy all the equipment needed for this project to take off. Initially, 2 other committee members were appointed to oversee the running of the project. The project started with some hope of success. A few months later, the accountability of the business became questionable because, instead of conducting this business from the approved office premises, the chairperson decided to shift the equipment to his homestead and also involved his wife in the business activities. Later, the proceeds of this venture could not be properly and adequately accounted for. With time the business collapsed with no income being declared to the committee or the village membership.

A follow-up by the community and the supporting NGO did not materialise because the chairperson had decided to pursue another course in tailoring in nearby Katima Mulilo. The business ended with no formal report or accountability for the equipment. No satisfactory story could be obtained from the chairperson himself or his wife and the new acting chairperson and other committee members remained mute. They were not willing to discuss the progress of the project until their chairperson returned. Why was the equipment kept at the chairperson's home instead of the office and why was the equipment not handed over to the new committee? An ambiguous response was received that they were in safe custody at the chairperson's home. What was surprising was that the village was paying a watchman at the office to protect the office and the hammer mill which was installed on the premises. It could be assumed that the baking equipment would be safe at the office. I later caught up with Mr CM and, when asked about the project, he reluctantly said that the project collapsed because there was no one who could run it and that he was busy with other projects and wanted to take leave from conservancy activities: "It's also our benefit, it's a community benefit. Is it wrong for me to benefit?" This baking project, though well intended, ended with the village not making any profit and the equipment ended up in the chairperson's home, which he would in future use for personal benefit.

In the first place, this bakery project was influenced by Mr CM because he thought it could make a profit. He had received skills training in baking but he had no money to start a personal baking business in the village. Being chairperson of the village, and with funding from the conservancy, it was an opportunity to test his learned skills and he personally committed to doing it. It is, however, not very clear why he decided to abandon this project to go and seek tailoring training. Those who worked closely with him, claim that he was frustrated because when he was appointed to act as Conservancy Manager, when he went for studies he demanded to be paid a salary and this did not go down well with the indunas and other members, who claimed that he wanted to get the job of the Manager. He then opted to resign as chairperson, though he later changed his mind with intervention from IRDNC. His mind was set to leave and what then suffered was his village project. When Mr CM returned from school and assumed his position, he asked for a salary increment but this was refused. This forced the Manager to seek the intervention of the indunas who directed that his salary be increased. This was enough frustration and he later asked for permission to go and study tailoring. His vice-chairperson at the village became acting and someone else was elected conservancy chairperson. The baking project closed without any report and it remained closed even during the final stages of my field work in 2013. This project like many others was influenced mainly by those in leadership, who used a village meeting to get approval to spend the money but the project was poorly managed and ended up benefiting a few individuals at the expense of the community.

Case 7: Cattle Quarantine Project at Kanzwili Village

In 2010 Kanzwili village committee organised a poorly attended village meeting where they selected a 'Cattle Quarantine Project' for the village. This project involved buying of cows for reselling after putting them in Quarantine. It is a lucrative business for those with cows to sell to MEATCO at Katima Mulilo. MEATCO is a beef processing plant based at Katima Mulilo; it relies on buying local cattle and keeping them in quarantine for 21 days before they are slaughtered. The committee bought 6 cows as a start-up to this business. They brought them to the village and employed two care-takers. They bought 4 more cows with the second allocation. In the same year, the chairperson left for school in South Africa, partly sponsored by the conservancy, to pursue a higher certificate in natural resources management at Southern African Wildlife College (SAWC) where he was going to stay for a full year. It is alleged that when going for his studies, his committee approved a contribution of N$2000 to assist with school expenses and travel costs.

The Secretary became the acting chairperson and was expected to manage the project. However, things quickly changed when one local farmer complained that the cattle destroyed his maize field because the cattle herders had neglected them. This reaction

prompted a response of slaughtering the animals and distributing the meat to the members as a benefit. They started with killing one. Members fought when sharing the meat. As a result the committee decided to sell off the remaining 9 cows with a plan to venture into another project. Unfortunately, this was to be the end of this project as the money was not properly accounted for: no financial records could be produced to ascertain the usage of the money. The committee used the money to pay themselves allowances over a period of time and in arrears. When some critics of this action emerged and inquired on the progress of the cattle project and whether the funds were accounted for, the committee could not give a satisfactory answer. The community action was to retire the entire committee without recovering any of the money that was not properly used. This project eventually collapsed and no one was willing to be held accountable, claiming that it was up to the new committee to venture into a new project if they so wished. Though the prospects of this project were high at its inception, poor planning and lack of procedure on how to manage the project was a hindrance to its success. Again, the committee used its elite status to bulldoze the project despite having organised a poorly attended village meeting when arriving at the idea of the cattle project.

This is another example of a poorly governed community income generating project. The committee used its influence to decide on a project without considering overhead costs and associated conflicts like that of animals straying into other people's fields. Though the affected members were from the village, they did not seem to associate themselves with the project. This is evident from the outburst that came when the owner of the field castigated the committee to take their cows away from the village. So in this project ownership became questionable. Some people in the village also complained that this was not a viable project for the community to undertake and accused the committee of just wanting to misuse community money.

Case 8: Poultry Rearing project at Sheshe village

Mr GL is a retired Police Officer and was chairperson of the village and also vice-chairperson at the conservancy office. He belongs to the larger extended royal family of the village Traditional Authority. His previous attempts to become Ngambela at the Traditional Authority administration failed because he was not favoured by some elders in the village. His village received an allocation of funds for community projects. He tried to call a village meeting so that the members could decide on and approve what projects to undertake.

Despite being at the centre of the conservancy and being the biggest village, people's attitudes towards meetings is not good. He managed to organise a poorly attended meeting where, together with the village committee, they decided to invest N$48,000 in a Chicken Layers Project. The plan was to keep layers and to be able to sell the eggs

in the village. Together with the secretary and treasurer, he built a chicken shed and a solar panel and battery and other items were purchased. He bought layers and stockfeed and paid a consultant to provide training on poultry management so that the project would be well managed. Mr GL, according to the local narratives, was committed to seeing the project succeed. He bought a first batch of 100 layers. He asked the other committee members to work with him but he received little support. Unfortunately, due to poor management and disease, the chickens slowly started dying. He then decided to buy the local breed chicken and mix them with the layers. This did not help much because, eventually, all the chickens died within the first three months.

An outcry slowly started being heard, accusing him of misusing the funds. He was further accused that he was only working with the treasurer and side-lined other committee members. This project was being implemented during the time I was supporting the conservancy with the institutional organisation. The village had a bad reputation for not attending meetings. In the end, he was dismissed by the majority of his own relatives, who reside in the city of Windhoek, when they came for Christmas holidays at the end of 2011. They accused him of embarking on a poor project and that he could have consulted the agriculture livestock department about the viability of this project. He is a feared person in this community so he decided to quietly step down as chairperson but collected all the valuable assets of the project (2 solar panels, a generator and a battery) and did not account for any funds that could have been in his custody. He claimed that because he was forced to resign he would keep those items as his benefits and no one bothered to trouble him to surrender them. He warned of serious repercussions if anyone claimed those items. This is how the chicken project collapsed with no accountability for the remaining funds. During my last days of field work, I caught up with Mr GL and when I inquired about the project's assets he was holding, he claimed that because they forced him to step down he decided to keep them as his retirement package. Mr GL has since left the village to live in Windhoek because his pension money was released by the state.

My investigation showed that the people wanted a water supply project in the village. They wanted a borehole, a generator and piped tap water to all the houses, so they felt the chicken project was not a priority. However, Mr GL argued that the water project was a government programme because it needed more money and could not be done without approval of government. Hence, it was improper for the community to have expected him to do a project which was on the government's work plan. People shun meetings in this village but are quick to complain. The key dynamic is that the village is dominated by relatives in the extended royal family and there are family conflicts

which are typical in many a traditional hegemony in the African context. Sometimes they fight each other indirectly at the expense of community development.

Case 9: Community Shop at Masasa Village

This village is headed by a female chairperson (Ms F) and she is also the current conservancy vice-chairperson. She has, with approval from the village members, opened a shop at the centre of the village. Her village also received funding for community projects. They spent the first allocation of N$15,000 to buy 5 big village pots for use during traditional and Independence celebrations. They invested N$10,000 in a gardening project; however, it did not succeed. The community then decided to start a community shop at the centre of the village. N$18,000 was approved for this project, which is still operational to date (time of leaving the field). The committee built a small shop at the centre of the village and employed a watchman and a saleswoman. Most things sold are domestic items like sugar, salt, matches, salad and other essentials. The saleswoman keeps daily cash records which I inspected during my research. She gives cash weekly to the treasurer, who is believed to be depositing the money every month end. It seems this project has rules; every replenishment of stock has to be sanctioned by the whole committee. At the moment, the stocking levels are very low although the saleswoman stressed that a lot of the people come to buy from them. During the end of my research, this was the only conservancy funded income generating project operating. It would be interesting to return after one year to check if this project were still operational. It could be regarded as the only successful venture at the time of my research. I hope that this project does not end up like others. I met the committee during my research and they indicated that they want to be an example of a good committee. How long and how far this goes only time will tell.

There was a consensus among the village members on this project. They agreed that a shop building be built, a salesperson be employed and a watchman. They agreed that all sales would be recorded in a book, weekly stock checking would be done by at least the chairperson, secretary and treasurer and that every month the committee would receive a report on the progress, funds generated and approval of next orders and that, quarterly, the project progress would be reported to the community. They resolved that no one was allowed to get credit from the shop, including committee members. It seems these clear rules, approved by the membership, are being respected by the committee, making this an example of a better managed community project. My prediction is that, with time, the committee will start acting in coalitions and information will be sealed from the public; alternatively, the sales woman will sell and resign with the money and will claim benefits, citing many scenarios experienced in the other 8 cases of mismanagement, elitism and collaboration.

Discussion and conclusion

Small micro-enterprises as income generating projects at community level can contribute significantly to local job creation, at least in theory. They are intended to reduce poverty, provide alternative sources of income and livelihood for the rural communities. Financing for micro-projects like hammer mills, gardening, procurement of transport and other forms of business entities has been tried with limited success in many CBNRM programmes (Child et al., 2014; Lubilo and Child, 2010; Muyengwa et al., 2014). However, examples from Kenya and elsewhere show that low level investment can create employment opportunities that lead to increased participation of indigenous people in the economy. They use mainly local resources, promote the creation and use of local technologies and provide skills training at a low cost to society (ILO, 1989). A study conducted in Kisumu city by the Kenyan National Bureau of Statistics, 2007 on the performance of micro-projects indicates that 3 out of 5 micro-projects fail within the first few months of being in operation. Several reasons can be attributed to this state of affairs. Most problems are related to inadequate managerial and technical skills, low level of education, low participation, technology and elitism (Harper 1974; House et al., 1991; ILO 1989). Several reasons have been cited for poor implementation of micro enterprises and these include lack of planning, improper financing, poor management and limited skills within these communities (Longenecker et al., 2006).

These resonate well with the outlined failures and challenges in the implementation of income generating projects financed by the conservancy at Wuparo. There is limited technical know-how and the propagators of the conservancy put too much pressure on the community to invest in micro-projects without considering the difficulties and challenges associated with this, especially the capacity to run the projects properly and an institutional framework to counter the elite syndrome that is developing in the communities. There are also negative perceptions towards micro enterprises and this brings about doubt of the quality of these projects and their life spans (Amyx, 2005). In the face of limited research and scholarly studies in understanding how conservancies manage these micro income generating projects, this chapter is useful as it has provided empirical evidence on how the local communities struggle to effectively implement community micro-business projects. The analysis clearly indicates that more needs to be done in order for local communities in conservancies to manage projects. The issue of equitable sharing of benefits requires resolution as it seems to be a motivation for those who deliberately defraud the community of funds for personal benefit.

Conservancies generate limited resources or finances to meet the increased human demand due to multiple poverty factors affecting different categories of people in

these communities. Many people, including policy-makers, are opposed to cash payouts in the form of dividends by the conservancies, claiming that it is not sustainable and, instead, encourage conservancies to invest in income generating activities such as poultry, gardening and hammer mills to increase their revenues and contribute to employment creation and poverty alleviation. However, the experience drawn from the 9 micro-funded projects and how they have been implemented, raises a lot of concern about the effectiveness of this approach. The empirical evidence demonstrates that these micro projects are either mismanaged or benefit a few individuals, especially those in leadership positions. Cash dividends in these circumstances would be a better alternative as they will directly benefit the individual members of the conservancy. This line of thought is not the central argument of this chapter; however, it shows how conservancies continue to struggle with how to distribute the benefits. Cash payouts and struggles of who gets employed and elected are discussed in the next chapter, Chapter 7. The examples of the projects in Wuparo are generic of many income generating projects being forced on communities without proper orientation and institutional design which end up being disastrous.

This chapter provides adequate lessons for CBNRM and development practitioners and policy-makers to design projects and programmes that begin by building capacity and by strengthening rules and institutions that should guide the process of selection of projects and, also, ensure that finances are properly administered. The people in the conservancy all look forward to deriving benefits and because the opportunity is limited and competitive, everyone who comes across any form of opportunity to benefit exercises the opportunity to protect what they have. Implementation of community projects is problematic in many community projects. The failures are many and varied but can be linked to poor planning, lack of management and technical skills, lack of technology and weak institutional systems which result in elite control and elite capture. The weak institutional systems of checks and balances have made the income generating projects collapse, more so since there are no penalties imposed for mismanagement or negligence. Field data based on people's perceptions and detailed analysis in Wuparo case studies point to elite formations which lead to elite capture that has somehow been tolerated due to the poor governance system at conservancy level.

> *"Don't blame us for poor project management, we are not trained, we are just trying to do our best. IRDNC should come and train us how to manage projects"* (Fescah – chairperson for Masasa village).

The significance of this chapter is that it provides evidence that shows how the conservancy has struggled to effectively implement community based income generating projects at village level. These findings call for the formulation of workable

policies and institutional re-focus for proper management of micro-enterprise projects. IRDNC should provide capacity building at village level, good project need analysis, budget analysis, rules governing micro projects and monitoring systems so that misuse of funds can be controlled. It is also highly recommended that rules demanding transparency and active community participation be at the centre of the decision-making process at village level. Rules should not only stipulate how projects are selected but should also impose sanctions for misuse of funds, dishonesty and deliberate negligence. These sanctions should be well invested in the local communities, traditional leadership, village development committees and other institutional structures so that they can serve as a deterrent to those wishing to rise in conservancy leadership or employment to embezzle or to use their position to defraud the community of its limited resources. There is also a need for the conservancy to organise community dialogue so that they can do their own critical review of why all the 8 micro projects were not able to succeed. Individual or institutional self-reflection is a good management strategy to correct previous or past mistakes. Evidence of failure is there; therefore, it should be easier for the leadership to call for a review of the process to ensure that the income generating projects or funds allocated for any project are not misused or captured by the few elites in the villages.

It was assumed that conservancies would distribute benefits and use the acquired resources. However, the everyday life and actions of the conservancies led to various social struggles, contestations of decision-making, elite capture and, above all, misuse of the limited and meagre resources available. Political struggles over who should benefit and uneven distribution are against the principles that communal conservancies were founded on. The next chapter looks at benefit sharing, with more focus on who gets jobs in the conservancies.

My field data illustrates how community micro-enterprise projects have not been able to achieve the intended objectives of bettering the lives of the local people. The process of selection of community projects remains a contentious issue within communities. The conservancy institution has shown serious weakness in how it manages these resources, which have ended up in the hands of a few individuals or have been misplaced at the expense of the local community. A few elites, using their influence, single-handedly decided on what projects to invest the allocated funds in. Procurement of project materials ended up in the same individuals' hands without their being accountable to the community. The inability by the conservancy leadership to monitor and supervise these projects can be understood from many dimensions. All the Chairpersons of these village projects are members of the conservancy committee and, since they are somehow involved in the dismal performance, it is difficult to pursue a line of correction when each one of them is in the same boat of

mismanagement or misapplication of conservancy resources. These projects have in most cases not been designed or executed properly and those in management positions have abused their responsibilities which has led to many of these projects collapsing in their infancy.

Chapter 7:
Benefit distribution: Who gets the Jobs in the Conservancy?

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the struggles experienced in securing employment in the conservancy, as it is a crucial process. Many people find it difficult to be considered for employment and/or to be elected into conservancy positions. Employment opportunities and being elected into positions in the conservancy create opportunities for direct cash benefits and other forms of indirect rewards. Cash benefits come in the form of wages and allowances and indirect benefits are associated with training exposure, capacity development, etc. There are, however, often conflicts about who actually is or will be employed in the end or get into elected positions. Distribution of jobs is a contested process within the conservancy arena, as very few positions are available to cater for the increasing demand. Those who are able to be employed or elected into conservancy positions access financial benefits through allowances and wages. They also access training, skills development and exposure that makes them better than the rest of the residents. I attempt to answer some pertinent questions in this chapter, in order to contribute to the current debates on how conservancies work and whether conservancies are able to realise their twin responsibilities of conservation and rural development. Importantly, this links to the central theme as it shows the problematic nature of communities with the conservancy model.

This chapter re-enforces the central argument of this thesis that 'Conservancies are assumed to be collective communities that should be acting as one'. So they do, not along the idealistic ways of the CBNRM programme designers (MET, NGOs, IDRNC, experts, etc.) but along 'their' rules and political practice: elite control seeking accommodation through and in traditional rulers but contested by ordinary members who invariably lose out. It is all about how communities are assumed to act and how communities enact themselves. This work analyses how the struggles amongst and between conservancy members manifest when it comes to distribution of limited jobs and limited positions within the rank and file of communal conservancies. The availability of jobs and positions is not adequate to accommodate the increasing demand. The current structures can accommodate between 10 to 30 persons. This number is far too low when compared to conservancy eligible membership, which over all the three conservancies amounts to more than 8,000 registered members. Elites have emerged in these communities and, as a result, filling up of employment and other positions has become the preserve of the ruling elites, i.e., traditional leaders and conservancy committees. These tendencies have broken the commonality and social

assembly of the communities. Struggles over who actually gets employed or elected into positions have become highly competitive, often making or breaking the conservancies.

This chapter explores the difficulties of and the struggles involved in who actually gets employed or elected into positions. I set out by describing different forms of direct cash and monetary benefits, employment procedures, what the main paid jobs and elective positions are and who gets employed and elected. I further attempt to qualitatively analyse why some people get employed and elected into conservancy management structures. This chapter also refers to how conservancies are organised, managed and how decisions are made (see Chapter 4 of this thesis on conservancy institutional arrangements). The chapter concludes with a critical analysis of the issues propelling disagreements and discrepancies in the distribution of jobs among residents. Territorial differences within the establishment are also discussed.

Conservancy sources of income

The conservancies raise their income from both consumptive and non-consumptive uses of wildlife resources. Consumptive uses include trophy and 'own-use' local hunting, sales of timber and other non-timber forest products. Non-consumptive uses include income from tourism lodges (photographic safaris) and joint venture partnerships. The conservancies sign concession agreements with private companies to hunt their game within the hunting quotas approved by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism. These hunting operators pay concessions and animal fees. Concessions and animal fees differ significantly from conservancy to conservancy. The Ministry only provides minimum prices but communities have the final say on animal and concession fees to be paid by the private operator. Those involved in non-consumptive tourism negotiate with the conservancy committees on behalf of communities about concession and occupancy fees. These, plus a general fee for operating the business within the jurisdiction of the conservancy, must be paid and must accrue to the conservancy. Conservancies work in partnership with private hunting companies and tour operators promoting tourism related activities. IRDNC and WWF have been instrumental in helping the three conservancies' communities to attain some skills and be able to negotiate favourable deals with the private sector. Safari hunting is a primary source of revenue for Wuparo, Sobbe and Kwandu conservancies. Wuparo Conservancy runs a campsite offering camping facilities to visiting tourists. In 2011 a new tented lodge, the Nkasa Lupala Lodge, with a 36 bed capacity was opened through a joint venture partnership with a foreign business (Wuparo Reports). This lodge provides extra income to the conservancy. Annually the lodge provides not less than N$100,000 to the conservancy. In addition, the lodge

employs at least 15 local residents on a full-time seasonal basis: most of these are employed as waiters, gardeners, drivers, Safari Guides, chefs and for general maintenance. Table 2 provides detailed revenues that the three conservancies earned between 2007 and 2011. Wuparo earns slight more than Kwandu and Sobbe conservancies.

Table 2: Conservancy income from safari hunting 2007-2011 (in NAD)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Wuparo	-	309884.00	384286.86	1274230.00	1406900.00
Sobbe	127100.00	302412.08	471132.95	521000.00	300000.00
Kwandu	286609.14	-	221890.00	184785.00	342550.00

Source: conservancy financial records (2012)

The three conservancies over the 5 year period between 2007 to 2011 generated N$6,132,780.14 from safari hunting (Conservancy financial reports). Wuparo Conservancy generated an extra N$300,000 between 2011 and 2013 from the joint venture Nkasa-Lupala tented lodge. Sobbe and Kwandu have not developed their lodges yet and their incomes have solely been raised from hunting fees. Kwandu Conservancy also generated an extra 20% of its income from the timber logging concession in the Kwandu community forest. This is made possible because the community forest and Kwandu conservancy are managed as a single entity with a single committee. At Sobbe Conservancy the community forest is managed by a different committee and whatever funds are generated do not accrue to the main conservancy's financial stream. Wuparo has not designated any of its land for community forestry, opting to maintain the current conservancy land use option.

Different forms of cash benefits

The benefit sharing I discuss here can broadly be defined as an arrangement where various benefits are distributed among the rural communities resident in the conservancies. This is part of the 'technology' of conservancies in Namibia and CBNRM programmes more broadly. In the case of conservancies and CBNRM programmes in Southern Africa, benefit sharing refers to sharing income generated from various sources. This includes consumptive use of the wildlife through hunting and live sales, fisheries, timber, non-timber forest products (honey, edible insects, such as Saturniidae caterpillars) and non-consumptive uses such as photographic safaris and traditional tax rates for community members (e.g., on non-timber forest products and fisheries, etc.). Murphree (1991, 2001) and others (Murphree and Jones, 2004; Roe et al., 2009; Suich, 2010) insist that revenue sharing with the local communities should be adequate to offset the opportunity cost of living not only with wildlife but other

natural resources and should be able to provide sufficient incentives for the communities to effectively participate in the protection and management of wildlife and other natural resources. The monetary and non-monetary benefits available are not generated in abundance in the conservancies, as can be seen from the average incomes over a 5 year period. This inadequacy creates space for competition over access to benefits in conservancies. There are over 8,000 eligible beneficiaries combined for all three conservancies in this study, who expect a fair share of the conservancy proceeds. Conservancy structure establishes elective positions and employable jobs for the local people to generate an incentive for being in the communal areas. The following are commonly practised incentives in the three conservancies, i.e., Wuparo, Sobbe and Kwandu:

- **Cash dividends** being made available to all qualifying local residents in the conservancy. These are often paid out once a year. All three conservancies, provide regular cash dividends and this is dependent on the financial income generated. Over 30% of the conservancy income is shared as cash dividends annually.
- **Salaries/wages** for those who are employed on a full- or part-time basis in the conservancy. They either work directly under the conservancy establishment or work in the partnership business ventures, like joint venture lodges, and hunting concessions. This accounts for over 50% of conservancy income for Sobbe and Kwandu, while Wuparo has structured itself such that it spends <50% on management costs.
- **Monthly allowances** for those who hold elective positions, such as area representatives and Traditional Authorities (indunas and chiefs) for their role in the conservancy activities. This accounts for between 5-10% of conservancy income.
- **Cash donations** to institutions like churches, schools, youth groups and other activities in the community usually account for between 1-2% of total income.
- **Cash** and other forms of assistance during funerals involving a conservancy member include provision of transport, coffins and any other support as decided by the conservancy leadership. This amounts to not more than 1%.
- **Cash for human/wildlife conflicts:** conservancies set aside about 5% of their income towards providing relief to those whose fields get destroyed, mainly by elephants and/or for loss of livestock from wild predators. Though very problematic to manage, they work closely with the Ministry of Environment and Tourism in managing this Human/Animal Conflict self-insurance scheme to provide some form of relief to affected residents.

The struggle that the conservancy experiences in its daily life is how to distribute these limited opportunities to the membership. While rules may be enacted on how jobs should be distributed and who qualifies to be employed, the conservancy leadership has always been entangled in the changing of procedures and rules to allow their close allies to get employed, thereby disadvantaging those without close associates. This

state of affairs supports my central theoretical argument about what constitutes community in conservancies: community is an assemblage of competing interests and needs and, thus, some kind of a social arena characterised by a continuous and endless struggle over resources. The conservancy committees are expected to distribute jobs equally; however, there are many competing forces and interests that those in leadership are faced with. They face difficulties on who to employ and not to employ: they have a choice between either fairness and equity or selectively employing their close allies. I use local narratives to demonstrate how this struggle manifests into contestations in the conservancies and how conservancy residents fight for the jobs, as being employed, more than any other option, is the surest way of reaping financial benefits.

What direct jobs are being contested for?

Conservancy paid jobs refer to permanent employees such as Game Rangers, Resource Monitors, Conservancy Managers and Book Keepers among others who receive monthly wages/salaries from the conservancies. People in elective positions, such as Area Representatives (AR), are entitled to a monthly allowance and other benefits, including access to loans, training, funeral assistance and non-monetary incentives. Conservancies derive their employment opportunities through the institutional design that allows the employment of a conservancy manager and other support staff mandated to carry out day to day operation of the conservancies. In cases where the conservancy is engaged in other enterprises, like campsites, lodges and hunting camps, new employment opportunities arise. These jobs are a mixture of full-time, seasonal or part-time. Paid or salaried jobs are few and limited in the conservancy structure, hence, cannot accommodate everyone in the conservancy. This limitation of job opportunities is a problem as those who are already in the system, such as traditional leaders and conservancy committees, use the opportunity to employ their own associates. The elites seize the opportunity to capture most of these jobs, contributing to the fluid nature of how conservancies are enacted. Furthermore, conservancies' own income is limited, making it difficult to meet the increasing demand for support for and cash payment to all the members of the conservancies.

Conservancy structure salaried jobs are: Conservancy Manager, Book Keeper, Enterprise Officer, Office Clerk, Secretary, Treasurer, Field Officer (supervising Game Guards), Driver, Game Guards, Resource Monitors, Campsite staff, waiters, cleaners, security guards, gardeners. A total of 71 Staff in these categories is employed in the three conservancies. Table 3 provides information of the permanent jobs positions in the three conservancies.

Table 3: Permanent conservancy office jobs

Direct Conservancy office Jobs			
Job title	Wuparo	Sobbe	Kwandu
Conservancy Manager	1	1	1
Office Clerk	1	0	0
Enterprise Officer	1	1	1
Book Keeper	1	1	1
Secretary		1	1
Treasurer		1	1
Field Officer Anti-bush-meat hunting	1	1	1
Forest Guards			3
Community Game Rangers	12	12	12
Cleaners	2	2	2
Security Guards	2	0	0
Resource Monitors	4	6	6
Campsite staff	3	0	0

Source: conservancy staff financial records (2012)

Table 3 provides the permanent job positions that have been established through the conservancy structures. These positions are usually filled at community meetings or through interviews, depending on what each conservancy committee decides to apply. It is these positions that are scrambled for when conservancies are in action.

Some conservancy members get employed in joint venture partnerships, such as hunting camps and lodges. Hunting camps and tourism lodges often offer very limited full-time jobs. Most of the work is permanent though it is aligned to seasons when the business is in operation. The hunting season runs from May to December each year, while tour operators running tourism lodges operate from March to December. These tourism jobs have a mandatory one month non-paid leave for staff each year. Tourism jobs include workers who are employed at Safari hunting camps which are seasonal – from January to about November each year. Hunting camp jobs include trackers, skinners, waiters, chefs and general staff, who are deployed to undertake different assignments at the hunting camp. These camps provide jobs that are a mixture of full-time and seasonal. Safari and tour guides, drivers, room attendants, waiters, cleaners and general staff usually work for at least 9 months a year during the tourism season.

Table 4. Indirect conservancy jobs from safari hunting

Categories of part-time jobs created by Trophy hunting Companies			
Full time-Seasonal Staff	Wuparo	Sobbe	Kwandu
Trackers	3	3	3
Skinners	4	3	3
Waiters	6	5	4
Chefs	1	1	1
Drivers	2	2	2
Camp maintenance staff	4	4	3
Part- time staff			
General support staff	3	3	2
Camp building staff	16	10	12

Source: conservancy staff records

This category provides an additional 100 jobs in conservancies. As stipulated in Table 4 Wuparo employs (39), Sobbe (31) and Kwandu (30).

Women in Tourism Jobs

Though this study did not conduct a detailed inquiry of women's participation in employment opportunities, the data from the field reveals that fewer women are employed in the conservancies than men. At Wuparo Conservancy less than 2% of all women are employed in the conservancy and about 3% are involved in self-employed self-help enterprises, such as craft businesses. At Kwandu Conservancy about 2% are employed in the conservancy, mainly as Resource Monitors and about 10% are involved in self-help craft businesses. At Sobbe Conservancy about 4% of women are in employment and about 6% are involved in tourism related businesses (Conservancy Status reports, 2013) The field narratives indicate that more men are employed than women in the conservancies. Most women prefer to stay home and do chores while their husbands and men friends are released to work and fend for them.

Conservancy employment processes

The Conservancy Constitution has formal rules that act as guiding rules for making decisions, including about employment and the election of officers to manage the conservancy. While, theoretically, the rules should always be adhered to, there is substantial evidence to show that these rules are often disregarded. The daily practice of conservancy life is a mixture of application of both formal and informal rules, depending on what is at stake at that particular point in time. The conservancy constitutions empower conservancy committees to employ conservancy staff. The supplementary procedures are staff policies developed by IRDNC to assist the conservancy in employing and managing staff. These guidelines or policies insist on

the use of interviews as a means for employing people. However, this procedure has met with great resistance from the local residents in the three conservancies, as the local people feel that this process is aimed at side-lining uneducated people, who form the majority of the conservancy beneficiaries. The people opt for open selection at public community meetings:

> *"We need to announce any vacant post during public community meetings and the people in attendance should be allowed to vote for who should be employed in the conservancy"* (Resident at Sobbe, 2012).

This process has constantly been contested by the majority of conservancy members, who claim that this interview process allows only those that are educated and with social or family relations with those already in employment or elected positions to get employed.

Personal observation and participation at various meetings in the conservancies confirms that local people have consistently demanded that decisions about employment should be made at public meetings, so that the members may have a say in who is employed and to ensure that the jobs are equitably distributed among various villages. However, supporting agencies such as IRDNC and MET have insisted on the use of interviews as a mechanism for employment. The agencies' insistence is based on their belief that conservancies are a single community entity and that communal decisions should be binding on them. The empirical data validates my assertion of the diversity of the conservancy values, as people within the local set-up have enacted new rules to suit their own interests. In contrast, the argument advanced by supporting agencies is that at public meetings people elect incompetent and unqualified persons. Similarly, the communities claim that interviews are a form of exclusion and allow room for the elites to manipulate the process and employ personal friends and relatives:

> *"We know why NGOs want to force us to employ people through interviews, it's to enable them to give jobs to their friends. The conservancy is for the poor people, less educated and less privileged and, therefore, the people should be allowed to freely choose who should work for them. Let those educated find better jobs in town"* (Community member at Wuparo, 2012).

The competition for jobs and positions often has led to changes in the rules. Local political practices are designed to suit the interests of the local elites (indunas, chiefs, elected officials, educated people):

> *"We have often noticed that local people don't employ qualified people through public selection, hence, we consider use of the interviews as a better way to employ those who*

deserve and are qualified to hold those positions. However, as you may know communities are very complex and would always complain" (NGO field Officer).

The frustrations of the supporting agencies can be understood, as their perceptions are that conservancies will be influenced by their support to follow formalised rules when they are being enacted. Training, capacity building and democratisation processes have been imparted to rural residents. However, in action the conservancies' rural beneficiaries have always politically changed the rules to conform to their own desires. The objection to the use of interviews is one such clear example of how communities detest so-called imposed instructions. They prefer to follow their own rules (Muyengwa et al., 2014) as it is more convenient for them and easier to deal with than a complex set of rules that are not in touch with local realities:

"People should, in fact, find other alternative jobs. Conservancies can only employ a very small number of people and this is always a source of problems because many people especially the young ones who finish their secondary education expect to be employed in the conservancy. It's a great challenge, therefore, NGOs are accused of biases yet we have no role on who is finally employed" (NGO representative, Zambezi, 2013).

Conservancy constitutions give a mandate to the conservancy committees to be responsible for employing staff to work at the conservancy. Conservancy committee decisions have to be approved by a general meeting of the conservancy members. The fairly high degree of unemployment and relative poverty among conservancy members makes the limited job opportunities a contested and competitive matter. The contestation hinges largely on those in leadership positions who manipulate the process to suit their needs.

Who is being employed?

The section below deals with the difficulties involved in securing jobs in the conservancy. To be employed in the conservancy for many rural people in communal areas is the most important incentive, as it contributes to better livelihoods. However, not everyone has an equal opportunity to be employed, resulting in contestation within the conservancy programme. At the inception of the conservancies, employment was open to everyone who was interested in taking up the jobs and this was done at the community general meeting or by appointment by the traditional or tribal authorities through the sub-khuta. Employment reduces poverty among the people. Those who are employed are encouraged to be good conservation volunteers and usually support sustainable wildlife conservation:

"When we started the conservancy things were easy because not everyone was interested in the jobs being offered by the conservancy. This made it easier to fill all the vacancies at community meetings" (Resident, Wuparo).

The rules of employment were decided at community meetings based on the need for the kind of position or job that was available. The conservancy never worked on strict formal rules. It was based on consensus building during meetings. Consensus building is an important process in harmonisation of various interests but, as communities have grown, many competing needs and elites have arisen and taken control of the conservancies:

"People who had nothing much to do took up positions to work for the conservancies but later, there is increased realisation that the conservancy is an institution that can provide jobs, hence the competition and the rules of employment had to change" (Area Representative, Kwandu).

Conservancies are governed by the rules agreed upon by the local residents who constitute these conservancies. A basic rule on accessing jobs is that you have to be a bonafide resident to qualify to be a member of the conservancy (Conservancy constitutions). Field data validates the complexity and contestations that have arisen in the process of employment in the conservancy. In a survey of 15 Game Guards drawn from the three conservancies, all maintained that they were selected by their village representatives and local indunas and headmen because of their close relationships:

"Many people did not like to work as Game Guards because the salary was very low and the conservancy had not started making money, so Indunas and Area Representatives selected their relatives to be employed" (Game Guard, Sobbe).

Fewer than 3 of the Game Guards interviewed claimed to have been employed on merit. These are positions that began as voluntary with not many people attracted to this job. However, with time the conservancies were able to generate income and were able to pay the rangers much better compared to the initial years of the conservancy formation. Employment of the Conservancy Manager requires proper selection and, because of the importance of this position, people opted to elect the managers at public meetings. Field facts illustrate that the employment is offered to anyone deserving; however, many of the people employed in the conservancy are either related to the induna or are relatives of the area representatives. At Wuparo the Manager was first elected as conservancy chairperson because he was an influential church elder from the local dominant Seventh Day Adventist Church. The public meeting in 2008 decided to appoint him Conservancy Manager without going through interviews:

"We know him as a good person at church and he can run the conservancy as a manager as well" (local induna).

At Sobbe Conservancy, the Manager who was selected at a community general meeting belonged to the Masida sub-Khuta establishment and had good support from the Field Coordinator of the supporting NGO in the area. Similarly, the Manager of the Kwandu conservancy had close links with the local traditional leadership, received support from the local field staff from the NGOs and was selected at a community public meeting. Table 5 tabulates statistics on the relationship between those employed and those in leadership.

Table 5: Employment of Game Guards and their relationships

Conservancy	No of guards	Non-relation	Relationship to Area Representatives	Relationship with TA	Reformed Poacher
Wuparo	12	1	4	4	3
Sobbe	12	2	6	2	2
Kwandu	12	0	6	6	0

Source: Face-to-face interviews

Long before my doctoral research and work as a Research Assistant on the Collaborative interdisciplinary research project co-financed by WWF and the University of Florida, I made my first contact with some conservancies in Zambezi in 2007. I was tasked with the responsibility of hiring local school leavers to assist as field data collectors. We insisted that only those who had finished Grade 12, were able to speak good English and were not related to those in the committees, indunas, or conservancy employees should be contracted. Each of the five conservancies identified 10 persons whom I later trained and they worked as Data Collectors for the Collaborative Inter-disciplinary Research in Zambezi Region. Despite a clear guideline on who to recruit, it later turned out that all 50 identified data collectors were either directly or indirectly related to officials working at the conservancy office. This was a clear demonstration of how conservancy jobs and benefits are distributed in the conservancies. This single example justifies my findings in the current study:

"There are few job opportunities in the area, and it is not wrong to involve our relatives in the conservancy work because they are also members of the conservancy" (area representative).

While the point is true that these are also members of the conservancy and should not be discriminated against because of their relationship with those in conservancy leadership, those in leading positions fail to appreciate that the beneficiary base should be broader to include all the other people in the conservancy. This scenario is prevalent in all the conservancies I have worked with and studied. Employing close relatives and friends is seen as normal and practical. At Samalabi village when the

Game Guard stopped work to join the Namibia Police Service, they replaced him by employing his wife as a Resource Monitor. The people in Samalabi claimed that the replacement should be from the same household. This was not an isolated incident: many similar actions are common in the conservancies.

I was present in a meeting where the conservancy chairperson banned fellow committee members from participating in the selection process of the workers at the partnership lodge so that the investor could employ deserving and qualified persons. However, this was against a background where the partnership agreement demanded that the investor and the conservancy committee appoint a recruitment committee with equal representation from both parties. The chairperson and the powerful Field Officer wanted to have their wives employed at the lodge and, realising that they may not be employed if the other conservancy members participated in the interview process, changed the rules of the game to allow only the investor team to interview. The other committee members succumbed to pressure and left in frustration. Once the interviews were concluded the chairperson's wife and that of the Field Officer topped the list of successful applicants. This raised eyebrows and led to serious name calling and a witch hunt until the indunas were called in to resolve the impasse. The Chairperson is a direct nephew of the local traditional Chief: as such, the indunas had to find ways to justify the appointment of the two women. They noted that the two women were conservancy members who were, therefore, eligible to benefit from employment (Pers observ, 2012). Table 6 is an illustration of the key conservancy staff earnings.

Table 6: Key staff monthly earnings

Salaries for key Staff (in NAD)	Manager	Game Guard	Others
Wuparo	2800	1200	600
Sobbe	1800	1000	500
Kwandu	1500	900	500

Source: Conservancy financial records, 2012

Wuparo pays their Conservancy Manager much more than Sobbe and Kwandu. Wuparo makes a better income than the other two and is able to pay its staff well. Annually Managers receive N$33,600 (Wuparo), N$21,600 (Sobbe), N$18,000 (Kwandu), while a Game Guard receives an average of N$14,400 (Wuparo), N$12000 (Sobbe) and N$10,800 (Kwandu) and other staff receive N$7,200 at Wuparo and N$6,000 at both Kwandu and Sobbe conservancies. These figures, considering the poverty levels in these communities, are very attractive for everyone to jostle for the opportunity to be employed. Ordinary members receive less than N$300 on an annual basis through the cash dividend disbursement. These figures illustrate the lucrativeness of being employed in the conservancy.

In Wuparo Conservancy at least 4 of the 12 Game Guards are indirectly related to each other; the same is true in Sobbe, where the majority of employed staff are all from the Masida village which is a single village consisting of a large extended family. At Kwandu many of the Game Guards are related to village indunas. So people who get employed in conservancies must have close bondage with the traditional leadership, Area Representatives and/or have some links with the staff from the local NGOs who participate in the interviews and are believed to advance their personal agenda to give jobs to friends. A local resident in Sobbe Conservancy remarked that:

> *"It is very difficult to get fair job distribution in the conservancy because of the limited number of jobs and those who have influence would like to employ their relatives and friends, hence, conservancy is considered to be benefiting the same few families, and this is our cry that we should be able to rotate conservancy staff every 3-5 years so that many people can also benefit".*

These views are shared by many people in the three conservancies as they feel that the conservancy jobs are allocated to the same people and this is the reason why there is apathy towards conservancy activities. Conservancies are complex social arenas with competing interests, making it a problematic space for negotiating group benefits. Field data presents facts that illustrate how the conservancies are struggling to equitably and fairly distribute the jobs. In addition, those who are in commanding positions in the conservancies are exploiting the situation to employ and empower their close associates.

Distribution of jobs

The struggle for equitable and fair distribution of jobs has brought demand for the conservancies to balance the distribution of jobs and positions according to village areas and zones, as a way of maintaining an enabling environment and controlling conflicts. Conservancies are zoned into various areas along the line of villages. Conservancy incentives are supposed to be equitably accessed and all bonafide members should have the same opportunities without anyone being disadvantaged. Unfortunately, this is not the case. In Samalabi Sub Zone, when the Game Guard resigned to join the Namibia Police service, a vacancy arose but when the Conservancy Committee wanted to advertise the position, the Sub-Zone Committee in Samalabi protested, demanding that the zone select a replacement to the position. The position was later replaced with the Game Guard's wife as the Resource Monitor. This was to ensure that the household did not lose the opportunity to benefit through employment. This is not an isolated incident. In Kwandu, when the Manager from Sesheske Sub-Zone was fired, the people in Sesheske demanded that the position be filled by someone from the same area. Due to the seniority of this position, the

Enterprise Officer from Singalamwe was promoted and someone from Sesheske was employed to occupy the position of Enterprise Officer:

> *"We want jobs to be distributed evenly among all our sub-zones so that we can all feel represented and involved in the activities of the conservancy leadership and benefits. We can't allow a situation where people from the same zone are being employed or elected into positions"* (Resident, Kwandu).

In Sobbe Conservancy issues of unfair distribution of jobs resulted in physical violence where several people were injured. One of the area zones claimed that their area had no one employed and demanded that a job position be created to accommodate the concerns of that particular area. Violence at Sobbe followed when another group who claimed not to have benefited enough attempted to petition for the dissolution of the conservancy. Their efforts met with a seriously violent response from the majority Masida village.

Conservancy elective positions

Elective positions, such as Area Representatives, attract cash incentives for conservancy members who assume these positions. These positions are competitive because those elected are entitled to monthly cash allowances; hence, struggles are prevalent on who gets elected into these positions. It is a legal and policy requirement that conservancies must be managed by a conservancy committee to represent the rural people's interests. As discussed in previous chapters (see Chapters 2 and 4), all the conservancies have an elected committee. Elective positions include a Conservancy Chairperson, elected at the Annual General Meeting and Area Representatives to represent their village's interests at the conservancy level. At Wuparo there are 8 Area Representatives, including the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson elected from among the Conservancy Management Committee. At Sobbe there are 12 Area Representatives and a Chairperson to represent the 6 Villages and Kwandu has 12 Area Representatives and a Chairperson. The Area Representatives, the Chairperson, plus a Conservancy Manager (an ex-official) and representatives of the Traditional Authority constitute a Conservancy Management Committee which is tasked with the responsibility of managing the affairs of the conservancy. At Kwandu 6 indunas are part of the CMC, while in Sobbe and Wuparo only a single representative from the TA sits in the CMC meetings. Table 7 shows elective positions that are competed for in the three conservancies.

Table 7: Conservancy elected Area Representatives

Position Title	Wuparo	Sobbe	Kwandu
Chairperson	1	1	1
Vice-Chairperson	1	1	1
Conservancy Secretary	1	1	1
ViceConservancy Secretary	1	1	1
Conservancy Treasurer	1	1	1
Area Representatives	8	12	12
Trustees/Indunas	3	6	6

Source: Conservancy Management Reports (2013)

Due to the nature of their positions, the CMC is expected to meet at least 6 times a year to deliberate on the activities of the conservancy and members are entitled to sitting allowances equivalent to the number of meetings. However, the practice in the three conservancies is that these members claim monthly allowances, as they claim that they do a lot of work and cannot do it for free. At Wuparo and Kwandu the Area Representatives get at least N$500 monthly while those at Sobbe get up to N$1,000 monthly. These fees are on top of other incentives such as travel allowances, meetings, attending workshops, training and many other issues, including accessing large chunks of game meat. Those in leadership can also influence employment of their relatives and friends and so it makes sense to be in an elected position. Jealousy, competition and differences are visible when you interact with the members, as those outside leadership try to find excuses why they need to vote them out so that they can also be elected and benefit. In any area where the majority of people are poor and have no income, it is a rewarding position to be in the conservancy leadership. In many instances, people with links to local traditional authorities, with education and who belong to a large family network get the privilege of being in elective positions.

Table 8: Monthly allowances for Area Representatives

Monthly Allowances (in NAD)	Wuparo	Sobbe	Kwandu
Chairpersons	1300	1000	1200
Area Representatives	500	1000	500

Source: IRDNC Conservancy financial records (2013)

Table elabrated the earnings of Conservancy chairperson and Area representatives Wuparo spends N$15,000 annually on direct cash payments to the chairperson, while Sobbe and Kwandu spend annually N$12,000 and N$14,400 respectively. Both Wuparo and Kwandu spend N$5,000 for each Area Representative annually, with Sobbe spending N$12000 for each Area Representative annually. These figures are clear evidence of why it is attractive for those holding elected positions; hence, they manoeuvre to perpetuate their stay in these positions.

Who is being elected onto conservancy committees?

Elective positions are important in the conservancy establishment because those who assume these responsibilities make decisions on how the conservancy is managed and how benefits generated are distributed. Since these are influential decisions, they raise a lot of interest in who is finally put in the positions. Different people with different objectives and interests are also present in the conservancy; hence, each time an election takes place people want to elect those they are closer to and comfortable with. Experience from the three conservancies paints a similar picture of elites and their relationship to local traditional structures.

In Wuparo the chairperson is from the main Shehe village where he is a member of the Royal Family. In Sobbe the Chairperson is a retired principal of a local primary school and related to the Masida royal family and sub-authority and in Kwandu the chairperson is a Field Officer from the local NGO (IRDNC) which has been supporting the conservancies over the last three decades. Area Representatives to be elected must be in good standing with the traditional authorities (indunas) from the villages where they come from. Very few people are elected on merit. These people once elected into these positions, their priority is to provide for those who helped them ascend to the power of running conservancy affairs. Although elections are used to fill the gaps in the conservancies, people with strong community relations and social networks end up being the ones elected to preside over conservancy affairs:

> *"Everyone is allowed to contest for any position in the conservancy, however, we elect those who we feel can work for the community"* (Resident at Sobbe).

> *"We don't just elect everyone, those who are well known with the community, and the community trust them, can be elected into positions"* (Local resident, Wuparo).

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the social struggles and contestations the conservancies in their daily lives face, especially difficulties in dealing with equitable distribution of jobs as a form of benefit. The local narratives show that elite elements within the conservancy structures have emerged, with social networks that have excluded some groups of people from accessing jobs. I further argue that the current conservancy establishment, in light of the increased demand for jobs, though enacted to deal with equality and fairness cannot adequately fulfil the increased demand.

Conservancies assume community to be acting as one. So they do, not along the idealistic ways of the CBNRM programme designers (IDRNC, MET, WWF, etc.) but along 'their' rules and political practice: elite control seeking accommodation through and in traditional rules but contested by ordinary members. It is all about how

communities are assumed to act and how communities enact themselves. This discrepancy has caused competition and acts as a motivation for those in leadership to work with their closest allies in the sharing of jobs and leadership positions. Traditional elites and elected officials have become barriers to fair distribution of resources in the conservancies. The multi-faceted nature of the conservancies is complex and makes it an arena for enacting new rules and processes with regard to how decisions are made and points to some of the shortcomings of the CBNRM programmes and projects in the region. These shortcomings manifest in defiance, apathy, the continuation of local bush-meat hunting (Chapter 8) and general despondency. This does not make CBNRM and conservancies, in particular, alternative options. Some critics argue that it is better for the government to assume responsibility so that the whole community can benefit rather than leaving this to a few privileged individuals (field discussions).

The analysis of the data I collected demonstrates that the distribution of jobs and elective positions is subject to intense social struggles and disagreement. The contestation in essence is not only about social relationships per se but also spans conflicts over territorial boundaries. Conservancies are strategically positioned to contribute to biodiversity conservation and reduction of poverty among the rural communities. Job creation is a key element in the conservancy benefits. Conservancies are designed to conform to collective processes in the distribution of jobs within the conservancies. The field evidence explains how the various interest groups and strategic groups, especially the elites, become manipulative of the system and make the jobs available to their close allies. Conservancies are enacted to follow a set of rules, such as conformity to the Nature Conservation Amendment Act, locally composed constitutions and staff policies developed by supporting agencies. However, I note that in the daily life of the conservancy, the formal rules are irrelevant as local people are opposed to adherence to systems that disadvantage the majority of the poor people. Evidence from Wuparo AGM minutes of the 2010 new constitution building process clearly states that the members demanded that all employment positions be filled by the members during public meetings, as opposed to using interviews for selecting staff. This argument is based on their experiences that those in leadership use the interview process to employ their own relatives and friends But also possible that those employed through public voting at a general meeting may use their networks to buy their way in. In Kwandu and Sobbe conservancies similar challenges exist. Employment accessibility remains a contested process, as it does not cater for the majority of the needy residents. The exclusion of some from accessing employment and elective positions is a true manifestation of how unstable the CBNRM programme is. The romantic nature in which CBNRM practitioners portray the programme is

defeated by the continued, repeated and consistent failure of the system to equitably and fairly distribute the benefits to the members.

Securing of paid jobs and elective positions is an incentive, as it provides multiple monetary and non-monetary benefits. To access employment you have to be socially well-connected within the community establishment. Conflicts arise in the conservancies as many people jostle for positions and jobs. Those in leadership use their positions to secure long-term stays by favouring those who can support them to stay. Elected committees and traditional leaders often build local alliances to ensure that their priorities are addressed. Local non-governmental organisations have been caught up in the complex scenario as their demand for interviews as a means to employing people is constantly opposed because it is considered biased towards a certain class of people.

Chapter 8:
Bush-meat hunting in communal conservancies

Introduction

In Africa, forest is often referred to as 'bush', thus, wildlife and the meat derived from it is referred to as 'bush-meat'' (www.fao.org/forestry/wildlife-partnership/bush-meat). This term applies to all wildlife species, including threatened and endangered, used for meat. It includes elephant, gorilla, chimpanzee and other primates, forest antelopes (e.g., duikers), crocodiles, porcupine, bush pig, cane rat, pangolin, monitor lizard, guinea fowl, etc. (www.bush-meat.org; Bollig and Olwage, 2016). Bush-meat hunting refers to hunting specifically for meat. The use can take different forms, either hunting for household consumption or for sale to raise income. Bush-meat hunting is still rampant in the conservancies I studied. Because bush-meat hunting is most often practised by local communities without permits or licences, it is closely linked to illegal hunting of wild game by the local residents in these conservancies. The ever-increasing human population and high demand for bush-meat has resulted in the decline of many species, justifying a need to explore opportunities for sustainable management options. In this chapter I explore how bush-meat hunting has continued to exist in the communal conservancies and is becoming a threat to species survival. It was assumed that the demand for bush-meat would reduce with the establishment of the conservancies, however, the field study and local narratives point to the

contrary. This chapter tries to unpack why bush-meat hunting is necessary in the three conservancies. Bush-meat hunting covers many aspects of removing wildlife species for purposes of using the meat as relish and/or for ritual purposes. Bush-meat hunting is practised in all three conservancies. Methods used include the use of guns, snares, traps, trenches and domestic hunting dogs.

In this chapter I present evidence of the continuation in subsistence bush-meat hunting (which is done outside the legal parameters) and I then explore multiple dimensions that shape and drive local bush-meat hunting practices. These multiple factors can be described as a) an expression of resistance or disobedience to conservancy framework/rules; b) the continuation of acceptable traditional or cultural rights of the local people; c) the hunting for food as an alternative source of livelihood for many people, especially marginalised and poor families; and d) an expression of lack of control by the conservancy leadership to contain the practice. These factors make sense to be explored as they arise in the face of shifting policies towards devolution as the panacea of CBNRM process. However, this policy shift has been compromised by the failure of the system to address many concerns, such as the multiple factors influencing local bush-meat hunting, which demands careful thought and ultimately links to re-thinking the approach through policy or legislative reviews in order to take on board local needs.

Bush-meat and illagal hunting

Bush-meat hunting and illegal hunting are linked. This is so because any form of hunting that is not permitted by state laws is seen as illegal. Most bush-meat hunting is done without legal permission and so relates well to the other kind. In this chapter the two terms will overlap. The term bush-meat is commonly used for meat of terrestrial wild feral mammals, killed for subsistence or commercial purposes throughout the humid tropics of the Americas, Asia and Africa. The Bush-meat crisis refers to unsustainable hunting or harvesting of often endangered wild mammals. In this chapter, I study bush-meat hunting in the conservancies as subsistence hunting conducted by local residents as a form of livelihood for many households. Bush-meat hunting covers many aspects but is limited not only to hunting for meat but also for rituals, income generation and resistance and disobedience to the conservancy rules imposed on local residents.

Bush-meat hunting refers to the off-take of wildlife resources (Kahler et al., 2012) and has numerous ecological and social consequences that affect natural resource management within the community based conservation programmes. Hunting decreases wildlife abundance and distribution and if not contained could lead to extinction of some species (Woodroffe et al., 2005). These outcomes are likely to

endanger and disrupt ecosystems (Wright et al., 2007). Loss of wildlife may affect rural livelihoods by decreasing household food security and, where commercial uses occur, may reduce income from trophy hunting and limit the conservancies' capacity to support sustained CBNRM programmes (Bowen-Jones et al., 2003; Robinson and Bennett, 2004). Bush-meat hunting if not authorized by state agencies is an illegal activity and often is very difficult to monitor and regulate (Solomon et al., 2007). The failure to adequately understand the intensity of bush-meat hunting can limit the ability of wildlife managers to set sustainable harvest quotas for wildlife and may affect the ability of a conservancy to meet its obligation of improving local livelihoods (Sethi and Hiborn, 2008). To curb and control local bush-meat hunting requires extensive human and financial investment to develop strategies to monitor illegal activities that may affect benefit flow to the rural residents (Kuperan and Sutinen, 1998; Kean et al., 2008). It has proven difficult to track proper bush-meat hunting trends in conservancies as this information is extracted from data collected and recorded in Events Books by the local staff and is usually based on surveillance which may sometimes not be very reliable. As noted above, un-regulated bush-meat hunting is illegal and very difficult to monitor, hence, it is difficult to indicate to what extent it may have negated the conservancy concept. Notably, the concept of the conservancy was aimed at reducing or eradicating the illegal harvesting of wildlife resources – especially through hunting – by attaching economic value to the use of wildlife in a sustainable manner in designated communal conservancies. Local narratives and field experience indicate the challenges encountered and stress that local subsistence hunting for meat still occurs, as not only has it been practised over time but also it makes a direct contribution to household needs. Prior to Independence, in the 1980s and early 1990s, illegal hunting of wild game was considered to have been considerably high in Namibia. With the introduction of conservancies after Independence, it significantly reduced (Nott and Jacobson, 2004). The conservancy programme is assumed to have contributed to this decline (Vaughan and Long, 2007). The conservancy programme was intended to redress the danger of unsustainable hunting by allowing communal commercial use and collective community ownership of the wildlife resources. However, Zambezi and many rural communities in this region continue to be impoverished and, hence, they continue to rely on natural resources, especially wildlife (Suich, 2010).

My personal experience (see Chapter 1 of this thesis) as a rural dweller who grew up in a village was that I actively participated in the killing of wild game, especially small mammals, for various reasons including hunting for food, cultural norms, leisure, medicinal and ritual purposes. This experience is re-enforced by my many years of practising and implementing CBNRM programmes at different sites in Southern Africa. It shows how the local people continue to resist, reject and disobey modern

ideologies and the concept of community conservation. As these ignore paramount values, social construction and livelihood needs that link with local people's perceptions. I use this chapter to address many factors that have contributed to this state of affairs, despite decades of CBNRM practices. Local hunting is a process where the local people residing in communal areas kill wildlife mainly for meat and the use of bush-meat products. CBNRM hopes to eradicate or reduce this practice. However, evidence shows that this practice is embedded in people's lives and is seen as an expression that is influenced by multiple factors, which is the main thrust of discussion in this chapter. CBNRM aims to address biodiversity loss, especially of wildlife, by devolving management responsibilities to local people who live close to these resources and making the programmes valuable to their livelihoods (Child, 1996; Gibson and Marks, 1995; Lubilo and Child, 2010).

Local bush-meat hunting and conceptualisation

Local bush-meat hunting is sometimes referred to as the unsustainable harvesting of wildlife resources by the local people residing in communal areas (Bollig and Olwage, 2016; Kahler, et al., 2012). This practice can be viewed through many lenses, either through a state-regulated framework or through locally designed traditional rules which do not criminalise hunting for meat as it is part of the cultural practices of the rural communities in these conservancies. State policies criminalise any form of bush-meat hunting without permit authorisation. The government through state agencies has imposed a licensing system for any form of hunting and this discriminates against the local people, who are usually poor, marginalised and have lived all their lives on their ability to use the local wildlife resources to supplement their wellbeing. This requirement is what criminalises any form of killing wild animals without a permit issued by the state agencies responsible for wildlife utilisation. While CBNRM devolves user access rights to local communities, it is based on collective gains as opposed to individual benefits in many instances. This common property regime does not address the individual needs of many families and households. Most of the benefits are captured by a few elites who have emerged in the communities through their strong kinship, political and religious networks. Hence, elements of exclusion and inclusion come into play. The amount of benefits is also not adequate to satisfy the growing demand and population in these communities.

Bush-meat hunting as a specific act could be said to have emerged in the 18th century. Before that time each of the different social strata enjoyed their own set of tolerated illegalities (www.rses.anu.edu.au/..../publication.html). Ordinances were then introduced by the colonial governments to regulate wildlife off-takes, which alienated the local people from their much dependened upon source of livelihood. Historical

narratives and literature indicate that local communities through traditional structures were involved in hunting. The form of hunting was traditionally regulated, where specific species could not be hunted or could only be killed with consent of the chief. Local rules existed on how the trophies would be treated and, normally, trophies like elephants tusks and lion skins would be given to the chief and used for traditional ceremonies and other such events, as may be decided by the traditional governance system (Murombedzi, 2003). One would argue, therefore, that this was a form of community based natural resource management, though it was within traditional knowledge as opposed to the current CBNRM approach that is mostly influenced by scientific data. From the above argument and my personal experience, local bush-meat hunting usually targets smaller species which are of less significance in terms of economic value and international policies and laws. Global restrictions on the hunting of elephants and rhinos are being regulated by CITES.

Managing wildlife resources in communal areas

Wildlife resources are valuable for their part in regulating the composition, abundance, and productivity of plants and animals within diverse ecosystems. Managing wildlife resources and using them sustainably to meet current and future needs of the communities living around them is the premise on which CBNRM is founded. The shift in policy with regard to wildlife resource management in Namibia is based on the realisation that wildlife has disappeared in many communal areas largely because of bush-meat hunting that has driven many animals, especially elephants and rhinos, to near extinction. To many people, these animals have an intrinsic value and convey a profound sense of the wonder of nature (Bennett, et al., 2006). Local communities are expected to collectively conserve wildlife resources and the habitat in which this wildlife lives. This policy shift is structured in integrated and collective management systems where local people have to work together with government and partners. This collaboration is assumed to propagate the sustainable use approach. Bush-meat hunting has largely been linked to the unsustainable exploitation of wildlife resources and to the bush-meat trade. Is this as a result of the failure of development policies, that has led to an absence of rural sector investment and secure sustained income opportunities for marginalised poor communities? (Bennett, et al., 2006). In responding to this question later in this chapter, I describe the multiple factors that support local bush-meat hunting.

Local communities are expected to manage their wildlife species based on combined management strategies that integrate indigenous and scientific knowledge, as they complement each other and should assist in the making of wise decisions regarding wildlife utilisation. An example of this is wildlife quota setting, where a list of animals

is usually set aside by the government to be hunted on safari hunting, for own use hunting, traditional ceremonies and for scientific or disease control and research purposes. Sometimes, local community input is ignored, the argument being that their decisions are not based on sound ecological and scientific knowledge and have the potential to endanger the wildlife populations. However, local knowledge has proved to be realistic, as the local people have a better understanding of the nature around them (Bond, 1999; Rigava, 2003; Taylor and Bind, 2000). Ignoring their contribution could prove dangerous to species control. Local communities are expected to abide by rules governing exclusive areas where human activities (farming, settlement, cattle grazing) are prohibited for the sake of using those areas for either safari hunting or photographic tourism. Usually, people want to burn their areas for various purposes, such as killing mice and other small animals but have to wait for the conservancy authorities as there are fire management controls. Collectively, people have agreed to conform to these regulations; however, in practice, as illustrated below, there is clear resistance and disobedience to these rules which have, instead, been re-defined and reconfigured to match the current systems. People agree at meetings but they go out to kill animals and they set fires and these become the order of the day. This resistance normally puzzles the state and NGO officials who run these programmes.

Bush-meat hunting is seen as a normal practice in these communities It is a continuation of the life style enjoyed and practised by their ancestors. It is a source of pride, is culturally acceptable and for some it is clear defiance of the imposed state permit system, that is exclusive to the elites, who have money and can afford to pay huge sums for animals. Local people as hunters told me that the approved quotas for own use are not enough to satisfy the high local demand (Local narratives). The key element of local bush-meat hunting is to supply bush-meat to the family for home consumption. The growth of the market and increased demand for bush-meat and other animal products has expanded the bush-meat trade tremendously in rural areas. Jones and Robinson (2003) used the commodity chain approach to understand bush-meat trade in West and Central Africa, where the practice is rife and bush-meat trade is at the centre of a debate on how to regularise it. This experience links well with the rural communities in Namibia, who have continued to use wildlife resources for their local food requirements.

Legitimising local bush-meat hunting

Bush-meat hunting of wildlife resources is a daily occurrence in the conservancy. A detailed study of these communities provides relevant data that shows that hunting for meat activities takes place although it is sometimes an invisible reality. Case study data shows some progress in terms of arrest, convictions and efforts to deter bush-

meat hunting. NGOs and CBNRM managers claim that CBNRM has controlled poaching levels. However, what has not been adequately researched and written about is the fact that there is the deliberate concealing of information by some of those who are in charge of the programme on the ground, such as the community Game Guards, who find themselves compromised in their relationships and networks within the community. In Wuparo, official data generated from the conservancy records show that between 2009 and 2013 only three cases of bush-meat hunting were reported (Table 9) based on the data extracted from the conservancy patrol records.

Table 9: Bush-meat hunting data at Wuparo

	Bush-meat hunting cases at Wuparo Conservancy				
Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Commercial	0	0	0	0	0
Subsistence	2	1	0	0	0

Source: Conservancy patrol data (2013)

When interviewing the local Game Guards and some community members on whether this is a true reflection on the ground a mixture of responses emerged: there are those whose perception is that bush-meat hunting has reduced because of the presence of the conservancy and there are those who insist that bush-meat hunting takes place but is not reported and no arrests are made.

> *"It's difficult to stop local hunting. People snare when they take their cattle for grazing, and you can't stop people from taking their cattle for grazing, others claim to be fishing but they set snares and catch the animals. It's a problem, we are trying to educate them ... it is better now than before"* (John Mulauli, Chairperson, Wuparo).

> *'Problem is with our Game Guards, they don't want to arrest their friends, they know them but they are friends, they don't want to see them go to jail. If people who hunt small game were tried at the Khuta, many people would be arrested because they would be punished locally, but now, if they are arrested they will go to jail for many years, leaving behind their children to suffer. You understand that some of them do bush-meat hunting to assist their families'* (Induna).

Table 10: Catch efforts at Wuparo

	Catch efforts/success at Wuparo				
Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Snares /traps recovered	17	19	14	10	9
Firearms recovered	0	5	0	0	0
Bush-meat hunting arrests	1	5	0	0	0
Bush-meat hunting convictions	0	5	0	0	0

Source: Conservancy patrol records (2013)

These data shows that in the last 5 years only 6 people have been arrested and 5 convicted at Wuparo (Table 10). More snares have continued to be recovered at Wuparo indicating that local hunting exists. The data is derived from the records obtained from Game Guards' patrol data forms. These records show a great reduction in bush-meat hunting activities in this conservancy. However, local narratives contradict and dispute this data claiming that more illegal activities take place but that the community Game Guards have something to hide or to protect. This argument is not intended to discredit these young men and women, but it informs us of the realities that are shaping and reshaping how local people have redefined bush-meat hunting. Killing animals for domestic purposes seems to be acceptable, at least within the local domain:

> *"Most of the people involved are related to the conservancy officials, and some are related to the Game Guards. How can you expect them to be arrested? They can't arrest them"* (An official).

> *"We know people who poach but we can't report them, some of these people can witch you if you report them"* (Member).

> *"We cannot stop bush-meat hunting; it's our way of life. We use it for relish, we kill small animals for survival, the animals can't finish, and safari hunters are the ones who finish our animals because they kill all the big ones"* (Anonymous hunter).

At Kwandu the trend is the same: only subsistence hunting activities were recorded with about 45 incidences in 2009 and over the years this has dropped to 2 (Table 11). Over the same period, bush-meat hunting activities show a downward trend.

Table 11: Bush-meat hunting incidences at Kwandu

	Bush-meat hunting cases at Kwandu				
Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Commercial	0	0	0	0	0
Subsistence	45	0	1	1	2

Source: Conservancy patrol data (2013)

In the last 5 years, official arrests stand at 11, with 7 convictions (Table 12). And about 52 snares have been collected over the same period. Kwandu has over 6,000 people living in the community and many people are poor. Their main sources of income are farming, fishing and invisible hunting which, as in Wuparo, are not adequately captured or reported.

Table 12: Catch efforts/success at Kwandu

Catch efforts/ success at Kwandu					
Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Snares/traps recovered	33	12	3	0	4
Firearms recovered	0	0	0	0	0
Bush-meat hunting Arrests	4	0	0	6	1
Bush-meat hunting Convictions	0	0	0	6	1
Other illegal activities	1	0	3	0	0

Source: Conservancy patrol data(2013)

Sobbe is the only conservancy of the three that recorded only 4 cases (see Table 13) of commercial bush-meat hunting in 2013 and this involved hunting of elephants and the accusation was of foreigner poachers. Over the same period, only one incident involving subsistence bush-meat hunting was recorded. Does this portray a true picture of what goes on in the conservancy?

> *"We get our salary, that is fine, so why arrest people, our own parents, no it is not fair but we work hard, you can see there are no arrests, bush-meat hunting is gone, maybe in other conservancies"* (GG, Sobbe).

> *"They use snares to kill small animals, and it's difficult to know that people have snared an animal, people nowadays, hide their meat, they don't serve game meat to visitors, if you Rodger you go into the village, they will serve you beans, but when you leave, they will eat the meat because they fear to be arrested"* (GG, Sobbe).

Table 13: Bush-meat hunting cases at Sobbe Conservancy

Bush-meat hunting cases at Sobbe					
Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Commercial	0	0	0	0	4
Subsistence	1	0	3	0	0

Source: Conservancy patrol data(2013)

In Sobbe Conservancy 8 firearms were recovered over the last 5 years; 11 arrests and 8 convictions were recorded over the same period. The question still being asked is whether this means that local bush-meat hunting is on the decline or is under control. The answer is in the negative, as stories emerging from the local people on the ground is that cases of bush-meat hunting involving local members are not being reported. Just like Wuparo and Kwandu, local perceptions are that information is being concealed. Table 14 is an illustration of the catch efforts for Sobbe Conservancy.

Table 14: Catch efforts/success at Sobbe

Catch efforts/ success Sobbe					
Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Firearms	1	0	3	0	4
Bush-meat hunting arrests	2	2	3	0	4
Bush-meat hunting convictions	1	0	3	0	4

Source: Conservancy bush-meat hunting data (2013)

Bush-meat hunting activities are evident in local people's narratives. It takes place: it was there before, it is there today and it will be there tomorrow. What is not being done is to report on these activities, as it would negatively impact on the programme that has been broadcast as a success. Local people and their natural environment are inseparable and this connection can only be maintained by taking into account the local traditional values attached to different plant and animal species. The legitimacy of local bush-meat hunting can be described in many ways: a) those entrusted with the responsibility to arrest offenders or perpetrators of bush-meat hunting are reluctant to do so; b) bush-meat hunting provides for livelihoods; and c) bush-meat hunting is generally allowed by the local leaders. CBNRM is seen as a process of hope to enhance incentives for collective resource management. However, its shortfalls are manifested in the global demand for transparency, accountability and democracy that comes with it, which is usually in conflict with traditional decision-making processes.

Local chiefs in these communities have for a long time been demanding that local Traditional Authority Courts should be the ones to deal with the cases of hunting small species. They argue that the state should only deal with cases involving high value species like rhino and elephant because of its global sensitivity and economic value (field notes and minutes of conservancy meetings). This demand by the traditional leadership is viewed with suspicion by the government and NGOs. However, the insensitivity of and failure by the authorities to understand where this motivation is coming from has manifested in local leadership being compromised and not reporting bush-meat hunting by residents. Traditional Authorities have always generated their income through the imposition of fines for minor cases, empowering them to punish killers of small game. Granting them this authority would financially empower them and would also re-enforce their traditional control over the use of wildlife resources. From my own experience, local hunters know what type of animal(s) to hunt: they know they cannot hunt a baby animal, and sometimes they do not hunt female antelope because they understand they need to reproduce. They in their own way manage off-take rates using their traditional know-how. They know when to switch to killing small mammals, such as warthog and impala, and occasionally buffalo (Gibson and Marks, 1995):

"I am able to buy myself something once I kill an animal, as I am able to sell, buy some basics for my family. I am aware of the state that they have police to arrest us but I always pray that I am not caught" (Local hunter in Sobbe).

As noted above, bush-meat hunting provides a means for survival. Bush-meat hunting has, however, been blamed for over-exploitation of wildlife resources. Consequently, wildlife policy reforms in Namibia brought about communal conservancies as a deterrance to illegal harvest of wildlife resources. (NACSO, 2006).

I draw on field experience to show how bush-meat hunting has been modified and re-defined within the community circles and how it has been indirectly or directly tolerated. I also use data from the Eevent Books that are compiled by Community Game Guards in these conservancies to record and capture all patrol data. This book was designed by WWF (Stuart-Hall et l. 2006) to assist with and improve the data capturing system of the Game Guards, for easy monitoring and decision-making purposes. The patrol data forms capture information on events encountered while on patrol: it could be animal sighting, a snare recovered, hunting sighting, and arrests, etc. This data is then compiled and filed at the conservancy office for anyone to see. I studied these data books during my field-work to understand the extent of bush-meat hunting. The records show a great improvement in terms of arrests, convictions and snare recovery. The data shows that there has been a drastic drop in bush-meat hunting activities, as evidenced by the data that shows fewer bush-meat hunting encounters over the last 5 years. However, an ethnographic account based on interviews, participant observations and local narratives contradicts this data. Many of the people I spoke to, including the Game Guards, community leaders and ordinary members, claim that local bush-meat hunting is actually on the increase but that the people responsible are deliberately ignoring the trend for fear of losing their jobs if the conservancy programme is not successful.

Local people are generally poor and marginalised, with little rural livelihood sector improvement by the government. They have little hope of survival and use any opportunity available to exploit the resources near their surroundings. Having presented and discussed the data on bush-meat hunting activities in the three conservancies, I will now give detailed descriptive narratives of the multiplicity of factors influencing bush-meat hunting in these communities.

Bush-meat hunting as a traditional and cultural practice

Local bush-meat hunting could be described as a continuation of acceptable traditional or cultural practices by the rural communities residing in communal areas endowed with wildlife resources. Hunting of wild animals, as described in previous sections, is culturally embedded in marginalised poor communities, who from time

immemorial have used wildlife resources to make up their livelihood (Murombedzi, 2003). This is a continual process from generation to generation and cannot be easily taken away. People in the villages, families and households are born with the instinct that they carry in their blood and relate to the environment, where people are self-taught and practise hunting skills.

Some forms and practices that people in local communities use to hunt game are hunting using dogs, snares, traps, modern guns (shotguns, rifles, etc.), muzzle loading guns (African made), trenches, poison etc. This cultural practice is part of rural dwellers' development processes: at a tender age, they learn hunting skills, tactics and techniques and are exposed to understanding the different behaviour of various wild species. Since this is a cultural practice, the local people do not see this as being illegal. It is a practice that rural people pride themselves on. Hunting of game is defined by cultural values and beliefs: there are certain species that cannot be hunted without an elder's intervention, through traditional rituals, lest the experience prove unlucky (Wilkie et al. 2011; Bennett, et al. 2007) Such an animal is the Eland which requires some rituals before it can be hunted. In this way, some of the species became significant in the cultural, traditional and indigenous behaviour of the people and such species are protected from any form of hunting, unless permitted by the kings or indunas (Murombedzi, 2003).

> *"We also know what animals we can kill and not kill, for us we hunt for our families, we don't want to get rich, we just need for our pot, BUT those who kill elephants are poachers because they kill, remove the ivory and run away, leaving the meat to rot. That is not good, so those are poachers who should be arrested, not us who kill for relish'* (Traditional hunter).

My own parents have been involved in hunting of game and do not consider this illegitimate. To my parents, hunting is something they inherited from their parents and they consider it culturally acceptable. They explained how the elders decided what species to hunt and not to hunt and how to ensure that the hunt was traditionally acceptable. In a similar vein, hunting of buffalo needs careful aim and knowing where to shoot to avoid wounding it, as its reaction is dangerous. Local bush-meat hunting in the rural communities is usually for subsistence and is motivated by the demand for meat for household consumption This aspect makes it necessary to differentiate between local hunting meant for food and commercial hunting meant for economic gain because the two are motivated by different factors (Patel, 2010).

> *'We used to control the subjects on what to hunt, what time to kill, especially during ceremonies, funerals and rituals, and our people used to listen to indunas and headmen, but now you have the conservancy, unfortunately, no one listens to them so people poach, they kill at will. People here they eat meat, others sell in Katima but you can't*

see them, they hide. Government should give power back to us, the traditional leaders; we will be able to control the people, because we know them' (Induna, Sheshe).

The poor local hunters have fewer alternatives and, hence, continue to brave the risk of arrest and still opt to hunt. During my interaction with many local hunters in the three communities, they expressed their strong belief that man and nature are connected and that even Biblical teaching gives a mandate to man over wildlife.

"I stopped being involved in hunting when I started having alternative sources of livelihood, by rearing of chickens, goats and an income from growing cash crops, but many local people, especially the poor, have developed good hunting skills and to stop them from doing the vice does not make any sense in the absence of alternative choices" (A farmer at Sangwali).

The criminalisation of any form of illegal hunting has made local hunters reconstruct and reconfigure their hunting practices in order to avoid being caught and sent to jail. Bush-meat hunting has become an invisible act, unlike in the old days when this was done publicly. Local farmers set up hunting traps near their fields where they live most of the year because it is away from the community and makes it difficult for monitoring. Local farmers also use many hunting tactics to eliminate animals that give them trouble, such as baboons, lions and monkeys.

Bush-meat hunting as a birth-right for local people

Rural people see hunting as a birth-right because they are born and brought up in an arena where they learn about their environment and the resources around them and develop their ability to manage wildlife resources (Robinson & Bennett, 2000)(Robison and Bennet, 2000; (Wilkie , et al., 2006)Bennett et al, 2006; (Willcox & Nambu, 2007)Willcox and Nambu, 2007). Local bush-meat hunting is, therefore, treated as something that is part of their tradition and culture. My own village life is enough evidence to support this line of thought and argument because I indulged myself in local hunting at a tender age and did not require to be sent to do that. It was something I learnt while growing up as part of the life of a rural child. People hunt, use their skills, enjoy the art of hunting, and are proud of being a good hunter. Such skills are acknowledged in several forms in rural areas, including the firing of muzzle-loaded guns during funerals to signify prowess in hunting. Scholars and researchers may wonder how local bush-meat hunting became a birth-right (Wilkie, et al., 2010)(Wilkie, Redford & McShane, 2010). The answer is expressed by those rural people in these communities who are involved in bush-meat hunting. It is very rare to chat with real hunters in the communities because of their fear of being sold out, however, during my field visit I managed to informally interact and engage with local poachers, who expressed their motivation for continuing to practise what they perceive as their

God-given right to use the game. They expressed anger at being referred to as poachers, as they feel insulted (Child, 1996) (Child, 1996; Wilkie, Redford & McShane, 2010) . "How can someone who does not live here with us refer to us as poachers just because we harvest our own resources? We are just good hunters and, above all, we have kept this wildlife for many years" explained one of the local hunters in Sobbe.

> *"It is our birth-right as inherited from our forefathers that we should hunt wild game for meat, and use it in such a way we want. In the old days we used to hunt for the whole village. When I come from hunting I would distribute the meat to all the people in village, but today because of the government, we cannot openly do that. We hide because they have criminalised hunting of game which is not good. We will continue to hunt because we are entitled to eat meat and government can't stop us in order to make foreigners rich"* (Sangwali Adult).

These sentiments are shared by many of the local people in the communities, including the young ones, who add:

> *"Hunting is our right, and we should be allowed to hunt, and the conservancy should engage the government to change the laws. What do we benefit? Nothing, so when you hunt, you are able to have food for the family".*

This hunter explained that he normally hunts smaller species like Warthogs, Impalas and Grysbok because these are meant for food and are easier to kill.

> *"I used to hunt other big species like buffalo but because nowadays the law is bad, I only kill small game, using sometimes snares, just to have meat to eat. You see we don't get meat, it is only shared by the staff at conservancy office".*

Many rural people have a fair understanding of the local bush: where water is found and where to find what kind of species. They have also learned new tactics and understand the Game Rangers operative technology. They have with time been able to adapt to the modern way of doing things. My field experience reveals that some local hunters use traditional charms to kill or to be a good hunter. Use of charms in hunting is something that is deep-rooted in rural communities and, if you want to be a successful hunter, you should learn the art of using local charms to hunt without problems. This can be disputed by those who have not experienced or learnt about it but it is a reality for many renowned village hunters.

> *"You need to have some form of charms to be a good hunter, some animals are dangerous, and sometimes, other people can plan that you are killed while hunting, so you have to learn from the elders, traditionally, how to protect yourself from attacks. We have examples where hunters have been killed by animals because of witchcraft"* (A witch finder).

My own uncle attested to this when he told me: "You need to select which people to go out hunting with because some of them use charms to hide from Game Guards, or their enemies, including anti-snake bite, and such unlucky things befalling you". He explained an ordeal where his brother survived a hyena attack because one of the hunting troupe members gave him some traditional charm to plant where he was going to sleep. The hyena, which is believed to be a shy animal, came running straight to where he was sleeping but, because he had some form of charm protection. He foresaw the hyena coming and when it reached him he shot it dead. To the surprise of the team, the person who was sent cried terribly that he was scared and wanted to go back to the village to see if his grandfather was alive. When interrogated further, he revealed what he did and explained that he was given some charms to plant where this man was going to sleep. So that when his grandfather comes in the form of a hyena, he will sleep and then the hyena would bite him and he would die. Unfortunately, the charms went back to his grandfather because the hyena was shot and died a few meters away. Since this old man came in a magical form, people in the village were surprised by his sudden sickness and death. These are some of the traditional realities that people from rural settings grow up with.

Bush-meat hunting as an expression of lack of control

Conservancies are meant to control illegal harvest of wildlife. They carry out this function through the employment of community Game Guards who carry out anti-poaching patrols. A total of 38 Game Guards are employed (Wuparo 12, Sobbe, 13 and Kwandu 13) in the studied conservancies. Their duties are to go out into the bush every day to monitor any form of illegal activities and chase and arrest poachers if found. Fire control, removing snares and traps, recording all animal sightings, etc., form part of their larger responsibility. While Game Guards secure the forest against illegal activities, those in management committees are expected to raise awareness in the community, implement social and communal projects that add value to livelihoods, as a measure to get people to refrain from committing bush-meat hunting crimes. A total of 130 conservancy leaders (Wuparo 64, Sobbe 18 and Kwandu 48) are in place in the three conservancies to suprintent the conservancy activities including raising awareness (chapter 4). They have to manage member's expections of jobs, meat, access to resources and generally have to esnure that poaching is stopped by conservancy members.

Additionally, each scout is expected to conduct 14 days of active patrol every month. With a total number of 38 Game Guards, it means that a minimum of 532 days are worked per month in the three conservancies. With a salary of about N$1,000 p/m, a total of N$38,000 pm is spent every month. This accumulates to a total of 6,384 days

per annum with a matching value of N$456,000 annually spent on paying village scouts. Management committee members earn a minimum of N$65,000 p/m (i.e is an avarage of N$500 per member per month by 130 members). This translates into about an accumulated figure of N$780,000 per annum spent on allowances for the committee each year. More funds are also spent to train and equip these people with necessary skills. This is a huge investment on the part of the community.

However, field data shows that local bush-meat hunting of various game still takes place in the conservancies. One wonders whether the leadership, especially the community Game Guards, have failed or face challenges to combat bush-meat hunting crimes. The continued occurrence of these activities could be a sign of failure by both the committees and Game Rangers to stop bushmeat hunting.. Local narratives indicate that Local hunters/poachers have adapted to new hunting techniques: they have stopped using guns, they do not kill big game, they target small animals, and sell the meat far away from the village. Some have resorted to living permanently in their farming fields, claiming they look after their cattle at the cattle post. My investigation reveals that local people are not in a position to pay legal fees to hunt. Stories of witchcraft are more pronounced in these communities and Game Guards fear to be bewitched. They do not want to risk leaving their families behind to suffer. Community members spoken to during interviews claim that they don't receive benefits, hence the continuation of the practice.. A very small number of people and their immediate families reap financial as well as material benefits, hence, poachers have remained defiant. The conservancies are struggling to control this local hunting by their residents. Though the data captured in the event book does not show much of this happening- field interactions reveals the contrary. Some people (local residents) even expressed dissapointment that not much is being done to control this.

> *"Bush-meat hunting is still taking place, the Game Guards are deliberately not apprehending the people involved in bush-meat hunting, and they are not serious"* (Villager, Kwandu).

> *"Conservancy officials have lost control, and are not worried about the bush-meat hunting because the hunters are targeting small species, which are not linked to commercial purposes"*. (Hunter, Sobbe).

Conservancy leaders and CGG are concerned with bush-meat hunting involving big species which earn the conservancy substantial income. For example, during the 2013 hunting season, the Buffalo price was paged at N$65,000 and Elephant at N$125,000, compared to an Impala that cost less than N$600 (Brutus, 23/9/13, per com). It is evident that the conservancies are struggling to contain and curb the bush-meat hunting syndicates. It is very difficult to show visible proof of this failure but it is

strongly grounded in people's perceptions about the conservancy's inability to control bush-meat hunting.

It is surprising that more than 40% of total conservancy income is spent on paying wages to Game Guards yet they are still unable to effectively stop bush-meat hunting activities. I spent time with the Game Guards soliciting their opinions on bush-meat hunting. Their response to bush-meat hunting statistics is that bush-meat hunting has stopped because people appreciate the benefits that they receive from the conservancy programme. This is used as a good scapegoat for their reluctance to arrest the lawbreakers.

> *"People have stopped bush-meat hunting because they have realised the benefits they get from the conservancy, so they see no need to poach'* (Game Guard, Wuparo).
>
> *"People are very clever, they stopped killing big animals, they kill small animals, and you know that is for meat. Our people are traditional hunters, they can't stop completely, so we ignore them sometimes, but those who go for ivory, if we find them we arrest, we don't spare them'* (CGG, Kwandu).

When I asked some game rangers about their involvement in bush-meat hunting, as alleged by some community members, the Game Guards were quick to dispute this and claim that bush-meat hunting is happening only in other conservancies. Further pressed as to why it should only be in the neighbouring conservancies, the response was that they did not do bush-meat hunting and people knew that. However, some Area Representatives believe that the Game Guards are part of the cartel involved in illegal hunting and, as a result, they shield themselves and their friends. Another twist in this debate is that when local people are arrested and handed over to state prosecutors, the community does not gain anything: usually the meat found with them would be shared in town, instead of giving it to the community where the crime was committed. Sometimes when they are fined, the funds go to the central treasury and the local community does not benefit from this. This is still an issue that is being debated in many conservancies, arguing that if the state has devolved power, then the Traditional Authorities should be responsible for punishing and fining poachers.

Bush-meat hunting as an expression of resistance and disobedience.

My personal experience and field narratives show that local hunters continue to conduct their activities as a way of rejecting and showing resistance and disobedience to the conservancy framework, because it has not made their livelihoods any better. It is a protest against exclusion. Most people who poach are those that are less educated, poor and marginalised and are not able to be absorbed into the current management systems that require some level of education. Conservancies are not paying particular

attention to resource users like hunters. This is where the notion of community becomes problematized because community, in general, is heterogeneous and different resource users have different problems. The regular local hunters are normally not well-educated and cannot easily be employed or elected in the conservancy structure system and, hence, have no direct financial gain. Poachers realise that sustainable conservation will normally benefit the elite, the educated, and those in influential positions and, as such, they have no reason to stop the hunting which gives them the opportunity for survival. Many of those hunters I managed to speak to stressed that they make a living out of the exercise and would not stop for others to benefit.

> *"When there are jobs, we are not employed, they need educated people, they also employ their own children and friends, so for me, I keep quiet and kill whenever I get the chance, because if we talk they don't like us"* (Hunter Kwandu).

> *"When we kill an animal we exchange for basic essentials, sugar, money, clothes, etc., and we can survive, but when we stop, where will we get money and who is benefiting from this conservation?"* (Hunter, Wuparo).

> *"As long as we remain poor, we will continue to hunt the game, and we are ready to go to jail if arrested because we have no choice, look here, since we started the conservancy, we are not employed, it's the same people, and those educated who gets the jobs"* (Local Hunter, Sobbe).

These arguments may be considered to be partially true, as the distribution of benefits in conservancies favours a certain class of people. Parry (2005: 2) explains that the dynamism of elite domination can be demonstrated by a process of elite continuity, transformation and replacement through which elites cooperate, compete and reconcile their differences from time to time. These elements weaken the conservancy institutional capacity to stop bush-meat hunting activities. Some scholarly commentators have attributed the failure of community based programmes to poor institutional designs that expose them to weak institutional control mechanisms and create opportunities for local elites to syphon off substantial shares of local resources (Iversen, et al., 2006: 93; Wong, 2010).

My observation is that the institutional framework when employing Game Guards does not target reformed poachers. These could become a critical asset if we have to control local bush-meat hunting: they know the places and their networks. The purpose of employing reformed poachers is to encourage others to stop as they can see an opportunity to be integrated into a broader society that promotes sustainable benefits for the present and future generations. Out of the 38 CGG, fewer than three are real reformed poachers. So the local hunters feel excluded and have valid

arguments to continue protesting by continuing with bush-meat hunting. ADAMDE and Luangwa Valley projects in Zambia were successful because they embarked on a poacher transformation programme where those who agreed to reform were integrated into an economic value chain through employment and other skills development (Gibson and Marks, 1995). The employment criteria in this study site favour elites, friends, close relatives to traditional leadership and those linked to field staff of supporting NGOs and state agencies. This excludes those without connections within the community and they respond by being disobedient. This state of affairs has many interpretations. Some local poachers have developed networks with outsiders to provide a ready market, making local bush-meat hunting a form of employment for those involved.

> *"Hunting is a form of employment for us, we are not educated and we can't find jobs, so we hunt to support ourselves, that is the only thing we can do"* (Hunter, Kwandu).

Local people will continue to resist, reject and remain defiant towards sustainable conservation if they do not realise tangible benefits that have a direct impact on their well-being and that of their families. This is a call for a review of policy strategies and approach to ensure that various interest groups are integrated and are not treated as minorities, as that has the potential to further over-exploit wildlife resources.

Conclusion

The findings are clear and support the five main factors that have shaped bush-meat hunting. In the absence of alternative livelihood sources and in the face of unequal participation and sharing of benefits, bush-meat hunting remains an expression of resistance and disobedience to the way the conservancy is managed. Local people and nature have a connection, hence, bush-meat hunting can be argued to be a continuation of the traditional and cultural practices in which people have been brought up. Hunting for the pot is crucial to many local residents as a supplementary source of livelihood. The CGG and their leadership are overwhelmed by many challenges affecting the conservancy and their communities and, as a result, have lost control over local bush-meat hunting activities. It is, therefore, strongly recommended that there is a need for policy review that will take into account the interests of resource users such as poachers and other minority interest groups. Programmes need to be enacted that target semi-illiterate and illiterate people, so that all players are taken on board.. Wildlife benefits are supposed to accrue to the community through collective management responsibilities. These three conservancies were established for the purpose of increasing benefits and reducing poaching.. At the national level, a romantic picture has been drawn that praises the successes that the conservancies have recorded in helping to reduce illegal hunting and increasing income to

communities. These conclusions have been arrived at based on the information generated by the CGG and recorded in the Event Books. While the data captured by CGG shows a smart decline in bush-meat hunting activities, evidence on the ground suggests that local bush-meat hunting, though targeting small species, is a daily occurrence and has the potential to deplete these resources if urgent action is not taken (Sethi and Hilborn, 2008; Sheil, 2001; Solomon et al., 2007). The challenge of this data is that poaching is usually invisible, except where someone is caught. This is an emerging issue on the conservancy programme in Namibia and requires further research and contribute new knowledge to the discussion. The following chapter 9 deals with powers struggles over control of conservancy decisions.

Chapter 9:
Struggles over control of resources and challenges of co-existing institutional repertoires

Introduction

This chapter seeks to demonstrate how traditional leadership have strategically exploited the devolved management practices of communal conservancies to reassert themselves as a dominant force over conservancy committees in the conservancy. My assessment is based on and positioned within the context of the ongoing debates about the relevance and the role of Traditional Authorities and their ability to co-exist with modern democratic committees in the implementation of CBNRM.

The post-Independence wildlife policy and legislation in Namibia engineered the transformation process in nature conservation and management in Namibia (Jones, 2010; Jones and Weaver, 2009; Roe et al., 2009; Suich and Child, 2010; Tsing et al., 1999). In order to remove racial discrimination in the use of natural resources and to shape the rural economic development agenda, the new government enacted laws and policies for the empowerment of people living in communal areas to support sustained rural livelihoods through sustainable wildlife and natural resource off-take and utilisation (NACSO, 2006, 2007). This transformation embraced a participatory democratic process and an institutional arrangement for innovative community based natural resource management. The new system sought to devolve management, ownership and user rights back to the local people (Bucher and Dietz, 2005; Dressler et al., 2010).

This chapter discusses the problem of power and authority in conservancies role. Conservancies emerge as the arena where different power battles are fought. Elites, Chiefs, Indunas, Conserancy Committe chairmen struggle over influence and decisisons how to make use of the commonly pooled resources.

Dualism and decision-making processes

Conservancies as a CBNRM model represent an approach to conservation and development that recognises the rights of local people to manage and benefit from the management and use of natural resources, especially wildlife resources(Child and Barnes, 2010; Jones, 2010; Mosimane and Silva, 2015).The decision-making process is a cumbersome one in the conservancy model because the communities succumb to a dual structure system involving the Traditional Authorities and the elected committees. There has always been contestation about how decisions are made. This

makes the conservancy, as a model of negotiation, seek to build consensus but this has always been challenged and is often retrogressive, thereby affecting conservancy performance. Field data and experience show how difficult it is for the two structures to operate independently and sometimes this has led to open frustrations, as was evidenced at Sobbe where the minority groups wanted the conservancy to be de-gazetted. The CBNRM model is enacted to improve biodiversity and natural resource conservation for the benefit of rural livelihoods and rural development (Jones, 2010; Suich, 2009, Boudreaux and Nelson, 2011; Collomb et al., 2008). The conservancy model, however, generates many ambiguities (e.g., discrepancies, processes of social differentiation, elite capture) and faces many challenges. Jones and Murphree (2004:86) argue that CBNRM performance "has rarely approximated promises and in some cases has been abysmal".

The conservancy institutional framework is to ensure that the decision-making processes are arrived at after wide consultation with the membership of the conservancy. Decisions are many and varied. Most common decisions involve who makes decisions on the use of the revenues generated from the use of wildlife, who decides who should do business with the conservancy (selecting a hunting outfitter), who should decide on what positions, who should be employed where, when and at what time and how much should be paid. Who makes decisions on when to hold meetings and who ensures that the functionality of the conservancy is in line with national CBNRM Policy and legislation? What procedures are in place for making decisions and what penalties are in place for the making of wrong decisions?

Similarly, the conservancy as an arena for people with multiple interests has to deal with the growing demand for equitable sharing of the limited resources and limited opportunities. Hence, struggles emerge for control over the resources. These struggles are manifested in the interface of co-existing institutions' repertoires and rules that lead to the enactment of policies that exclude some people and include others, the formation of social networks and the use of witchcraft to intimidate possible challengers. These struggles come into play in the mix-up of who actually is in charge of the conservancy. Selected examples and case studies from the field are used to understand this problem.

Decision-making in the conservancy should take place at AGMs where all the members of the conservancy are in attendance to approve work plans and budgets and make modifications to the rules. However, in between the AGMs, the committee makes decisions and, where the need arises, they call for special general meetings at which the community is briefed and their decisions sought on how to proceed. While these are the rules and procedures, the decisions of these meetings are irrelevant if the Traditional Authorities through the indunas have not approved them. This is what

creates the problems of conservancy operations because democratic decisions are often overturned by the traditional leadership. This also confirms that the CBNRM conservancy as a model is complex and problematic.

In Wuparo during the 2009 AGM, the committee was found wanting as they were not able to account for N $26,408 of funds. The community demanded the dissolution of the entire staff and Area Representatives for failing to account for the funds. The AGM resolved to expel the Chairperson, the Manager, the Secretary and the Treasurer as the four signatories counter-accused each other of being responsible for the loss of funds. This prompted the Chief Representative to lead the closure of the office and send the four officials away from the office. However, the following day the local indunas convened a meeting with only the Chairperson and the Manager. The duo were pardoned them without an explanation to the community that took the decision to expel the four staff. Following the reappearance of the two senior staff, the local community representatives demanded the allocation of more funds to the Sub-Conservancy Zones as a way of reducing funding to the office activities. It was assumed this would reduce the amount of funds being misused by the office.

> *"We took a collective decision to fire the four officials, because this was to inform and send a strong warning to the new office bearers to avoid misuse of community funds, however, the indunas reinstated the Manager and Chairperson. In our view this was wrong because, the indunas have usurped the power of the community members"* (A local member at Wuparo, 2012).

At Wuparo the community opted for a more devolved structure from the conservancy to the sub-conservancy and demanded the allocation of more funds. It is surprising that there is minimal record of misuse of funds or of indunas indulging in dominance. This begs the question as to why indunas or chiefs find it easy to influence centralised decisions but cannot do this at the village level. My interviews and interactions reveal interesting perspectives:

> *"Indunas are able to influence or intimidate the committees and are not in the habit of conflicting with the majority of the people in the village. They don't want to lose respect, hence, they are able to influence decisions when it comes to the committee, but when things are at their village, they tend to side with the community, because they realise that their power is with the people and not the committee members"* (A local member at Sobbe, 2012).

> *"We as committees we are afraid of challenging our indunas, and so what they say is respected and we follow"* (Committee member, Kwandu 2012).

My findings are that there are often power struggles in conservancies about where the ultimate power to make final decisions rests. Conservancy Committees adjust and

conform to traditional dictates as their own positions get compromised if they fall out with the traditional leadership. For their own survival, conservancy committees as players accept to follow the instructions of traditional leaders because disobeying them may even mean being booted out of the committee.

In Zambezi, especially Wuparo, Sobbe and Kwandu conservancies, all decisions and actions must have the full blessing and endorsement of the traditional leadership structures. The contestation of power between traditional leadership and democratically elected committees is not unique to Zambezi but is evident in many CBNRM sites in Zambia, Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe (Lubilo and Child, 2010; Muyengwa et al., 2014). This chapter demonstrates the problematic situation the communal conservancy programme has found itself in. Communities are heterogeneous, hence, have many different strategic groups with varying interests and needs. This brings local institutional interface overlaps, often making or breaking the conservancy programme when in action. Institutional repertoires are in constant friction as each group or institution tries to position itself, leading to power struggles and contestation over control of the resources when the conservancy is designed.

This chapter defines how the conservancy is organised and managed, how it defines the role of the traditional leadership and how the latter interfaces and overlaps with the role of the elected conservancy committee. The chapter further demonstrates how the two institutions compete over control of the conservancy resources and explains how this interface makes or breaks the conservancy programme in Namibia. This chapter further demonstrates the problematic situation in which the conservancy operate. There issues that emerge in the process understnding the power relations in the conservancy management.

> *"Our indunas are a very important source of power and influence on how the conservancy is managed, organised, because all decisions have to have the blessing of our leaders, even the committee members are afraid to do things on their own without first consulting with the TA/indunas"* (Local community member at Kwandu, 2013).

> *"As a Manager of the conservancy, it is my duty to always ensure that the indunas and the TA know what we are doing at the conservancy office, because it is important for them to be aware. In fact, on all key issues we need their authority, for example, we need to discuss with the indunas and the TA before we can allow any investor in our conservancy. We have had problems in the past where the previous committee wanted to be doing things on their own, and were accused of being corrupt and removed from the office. I wouldn't want that to happen to me"* (Conservancy Manager, 2013).

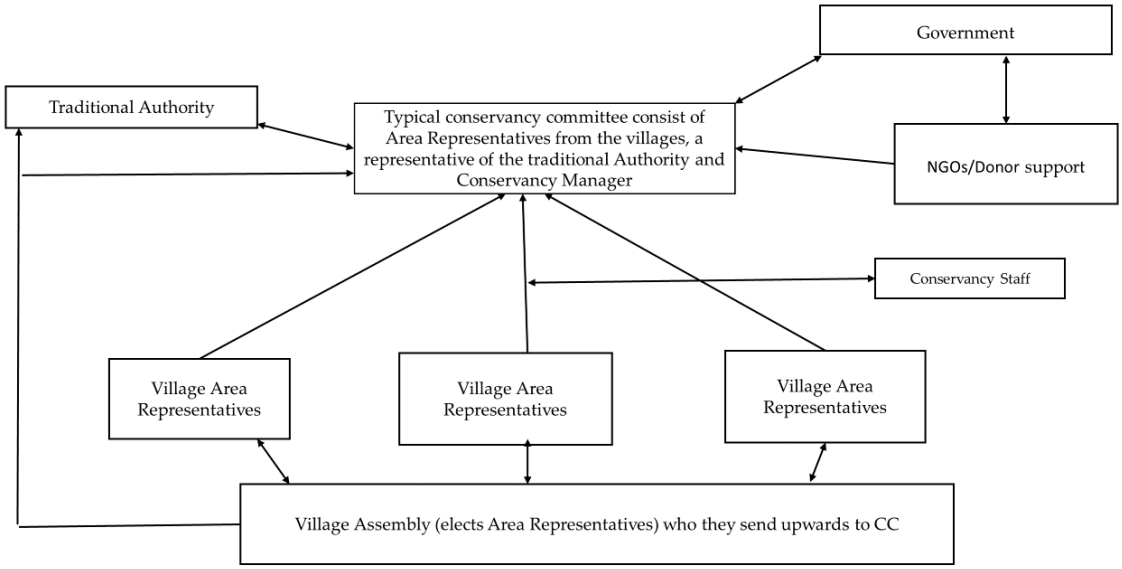

Figure 8: Conservancy structure

Source: IRDNC support structure for conservancies

Conservancy Committees are constituted from the elected Area Representatives elected at Village level to represent the interests of their village constituency in the Conservancy programme. At Wuparo and Kwandu conservancies, where further devolution has occurred, each village has a committee (referred to as sub- conservancy structures) to broaden and devolve decision-making processes and enhance benefit distribution. Sobbe has elected Area Representatives but does not have Village Committees, hence, their decisions are centrally decided by the conservancy committee or Annual General Meeting or public gatherings organised by the committee. Figure 8 elaborates to dualism of the management and power organisation of the conservancy model. Many actors are involved. The ordinary community members organised at village leve, Area Representatives, Chiefs, Conservancy committee and government and external agencies.

The Conservancy Committee

Each of the conservancies has an Mangement Executive Committee that consists of the Chairperson, Manager and other senior staff of the conservancy, who are tasked with the day to day responsibilities of running the affairs of the Conservancy. Each of the Sub-Zones has a working committee responsible for overseeing village development programmes and the leader of this committee represents the village on the

conservancy committee. In addition , there are also indunas that are elected to sit on these committees.

Table 15: Distribution of Conservancy committees

Name of conservancy	Number of Conservancy Committee members	Number of males	Number of females
Wuparo	8	3	5
Sobbe	14	7	7
Kwandu	13	6	7

Source: Conservancy records from Wuparo, Sobbe and Kwandu (2013)

Table 15 shows the distribution of conservancy committees among the conservancies. In the three conservancies the elective positions include the Conservancy Chairperson elected at the Annual General Meeting and Area Representatives to represent their villages' interests at the conservancy level. In Wuparo, there are 8 Area Representatives, including the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson on the Conservancy Committees. In Sobbe, there are 12 Area Representatives to represent the 6 Villages and a Chairperson. Kwandu has 12 Area Representatives and a Chairperson. In Kwandu 6 indunas are part of the Conservancy Committee, while in Sobbe and Wuparo only a single representative from the Traditional Authority sits in the Conservancy Committee meetings.

The Role of the Conservancy Committees

The Namibia Nature Conservation Amendment Act of 1995 provides for the constituting of a Conservancy Committee (CC), as a representative body of community members to manage the affairs of the community in an area where the conservancy is gazetted. The Act does not prescribe how the committee is supposed to be constituted. It is assumed that an election process is embraced (Jones, 2010). In Wuparo, Sobbe and Kwandu the conservancies have constitutions that stipulate how the election of the conservancy committee will be done, describe the tenure of office and roles and responsibilities.

The Conservancy Committee shall manage the Conservancy and administer its property and rights for the benefit of all members of the Conservancy. The CC shall act in the best interests of the Conservancy and its members and shall have all such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable it to achieve the objectives and carry out the other terms and conditions as set out in the Conservancy Constitutions. These are:

- To manage the conservancy affairs;
- To invest any capital or income or other monies received in a bank or other financial institution registered in Namibia;

- To use the proceeds of disposition of any assets or any monies of the Conservancy as authorized by annual or special general meetings of the members;
- To purchase, sell, let, hire or otherwise deal with any movable and immovable property as authorized by annual or special general meetings of the members;
- To distribute funds and other forms of benefits on a timely basis to the members through the AWCs as provided for in this Constitution's relevant guidelines and policies and as approved at the annual or special general meeting of members;
- To open, operate and control any bank accounts or accounts with other financial institutions and to pay all operating costs of the Conservancy as outlined in the budget from the Operating Account (as hereinafter defined);
- To employ staff and consultants to render services to the Conservancy on such terms as the Committee deems reasonable;
- To enter into or guarantee the performance of contracts or obligations of the Conservancy, including the power to enter into agreements relating to consumptive and non-consumptive use of game;
- To institute or defend any legal court, arbitration or other legal proceedings and to settle any claims made by or against the Conservancy; and
- To delegate any of such powers to any staff person to the extent and in such a manner as the Conservancy Committee may, by resolution, determine.

From the above, it is clear that conservancy committees are granted an adequate mandate and responsibility to manage conservancy activities. However, the practice is different as this mandate is incomplete if not liaised properly with the Traditional Authorities, whose invisible hand has great influence in what happens in the conservancy in its daily life.

> *"Our own people, even the NGOs and government leaders listen a lot to our Traditional Authorities, so who are we as a committee not to obey our leaders? We are duty bound and as a chairperson I am happy to work with and listen to the wise counsel of our indunas because, in case of any problem, they will defend us"* (Conservancy Chairperson, 2012).

> *"We as indunas we are custodians of our land, whatever we do and decisions we make are in the best interests of the community. We can't let the committee work without involving us because they make mistakes and they start doing things without regard to the people. It's not that we want to dominate but it is a procedure, our chief needs to know what is happening, so that if there is a problem we can resolve it"* (Local induna, Sangwali, 2012).

The CBNRM model is both complex and problematic in nature. The committee's power is limited to its tenure arrangements (ranges from 1-3 years) while the traditional leadership is inherited and its lifespan is longer than that of elected committees. It is assumed, therefore, that the long lifespan of the traditional power is more respected in the communities than the elected leadership. Those in committees

appreciate the need to continue to be in the committee to access material as well as financial gains and it pays to be loyal to the traditional governance system.

> *"The indunas have been there long, and have witnessed the process of the evolution of the conservancy, and have better historical ideas about the conservancy, and why it is there. If you look at those working at the conservancy, and those in committees, they are all young people who are looking for jobs, today they are here, tomorrow if they get a better job they will leave, so they are interested in money benefits, and can't be trusted a lot, so our local indunas help us to keep these young leaders in check, otherwise, things will go worse"* (A local resident, at Sobbe, 2013).

> *"Our previous managers have been misusing or stealing money from our conservancy, and it becomes difficult to remove them but once this is brought to the attention of our TAs/Indunas, they will sanction a General meeting where new employees can be elected, so you see, we trust them"* (A local woman, 2012).

> *"Sometimes our indunas demand a lot from us as a committee but it is difficult to explain to the members that this induna is asking for this because that would be disrespectful, and sometimes no one will believe so in the end we as a committee or staff are hated for some decisions that actually come from our parents (indunas)"* (Committee member, Sobbe, 2012).

The power of the Traditional Authorities is also widely recognised within the Namibian context and, especially, in Zambezi region; though their role is often contested, they are also considered key allies in Conservation. In the early years of CBNRM programmes, IRDNC convinced some chiefs – among them, Chief Mayuni – to start a Game Guard anti-bush-meat hunting unit and this was key in the formation of the conservancies, as the community Game Guard project proved to be worthwhile (Beaven Munali, Director, Natural Resource Management, for IRDNC, Zambezi, 2013).

> *"I was involved in the early stages of this project and I understand it well. We had to convince our Traditional Authorities, and this is what makes them very strong. Even now as an NGO we need the support of the Traditional Authorities to make the conservancy programme work"* (B. Munali, 2013).

It is expected that the conservancy committees should always operate in harmony with the traditional authorities. Although this implies that the committee has no absolute power to decide on issues of land allocation and take other decisions, we encourage the committees to work independently. As evidenced by the above there is strong interface –leading to two centres of power at the local level but also external power of the government and business people who come to do business with the

community. I now turn to what the role of the TAs is not just with conservation but social cultural and political interface.

The Role of the Traditional Authorities

In many rural African communities, local people are organised in social groupings linked to their tribal or cultural lineage. Local communities are grouped into clans, tribal ethnicities and have cultural bonds that socially connect them and their environment. In African societies and rural communities Chiefs or Traditional Authorities enjoy the power of a monarch, where they rule over their people and exert great control over land and other resources on it (Corbett and Daniels, 1996; Cousins, 2000; Corbett and Jones, 2000)These powers are often inherited within the family and kinship group. Usually, each tribe has its own chief or king. People pay them homage and they enjoy uncontested power within the communities. The inheritance of chiefs in Zambezi, specific to the Siyeyi and Mafwe, follows a patrilineal system and is aligned to a specific family tree that produces chiefs. These families have also got their elders that they appoint as indunas that run sub-khutas on behalf of the chiefs. In Namibia, Traditional Authorities are recognised by the state and their powers, as outlined in Law, are also supplemented by the customary tenure system that has been enjoyed over time. It is this customary practice that gives the TAs power and authority over their subjects. Each traditional community has its own traditional leadership: the Traditional Authorities Act (TAA) of 1995 defines what constitutes traditional community and Authority.

A 'traditional community' is defined as "an indigenous, homogeneous, endogamous social grouping of persons comprising of families deriving from exogamous clans which share a common ancestry, language, cultural heritage, customs and traditions, recognise a common traditional authority, inhabit a common communal area and include the members of the community residing outside the common communal area. Such a traditional community is entitled to a chief or a senior traditional councillor" (TAA, 1995).

In Namibia, the powers, roles and privileges of the chiefs are contained in the TAA of 1995. This piece of legislation establishes and recognises the immense role of Traditional Authorities in the leadership of their communities and the safeguarding of their environment and considers them as crucial partners in national development. Burmeister and Partners (1998) conclude that TAs play an important role in the rural areas of Africa. Along with community based organisations, they play a major role as a cultural asset when it comes to managing the environment and natural resources, including land and local people. Thus, the involvement of the chiefs is crucial for the ownership of communities. This broad description of the TAs gives them an edge over

elected structures, though that is not the intention of the law. Local customary practices are already entrenched and local subjects play to the gallery of their leadership.

In Wuparo, Sobbe and Kwandu Conservancies, the local people are politically organised through the chieftaincies. Chief Mamili of the Mafwe People and Chief Sifu of the Siyeyi people preside over these communities and are extremely influential. State agencies and Non-Governmental Organisations work with communities and conservancies through the local traditional structures. Traditional Authorities as custodians of cultural and ethical values are important institutions in the Namibian communal conservancy programme. They play the role of neutral mediators, have to assent to the creation of the conservancy and are central to any decision-making process. They are also part of the emerging conflicts with regards to fair distribution of benefits, elite capture and biased decisions that contribute to making or breaking the conservancy model.

Specifically, Traditional Authorities (TAA, 1995):

- Preside over traditional and cultural ceremonies and provide traditional leadership to the community. They play a role in community conflict resolution, such as land allocation disputes, marriage disputes or clanship conflicts;
- Have critical control over land allocation for commercial purposes, such as signing concession agreements for trophy hunting and photographic tourism. Chiefs, through their local indunas, are responsible for ensuring that land allocated for such purposes is not in conflict with other subjects and, if such arises, they preside over decision-making processes;
- Play an overseeing role in many development projects in the community, including overseeing the performance of the conservancy committees in the management of the wildlife and natural resources. Such overseeing includes approving employment, ensuring that benefits are distributed to the members and consenting to concession agreements;
- Play a role in community mobilisation to support development activities in their communities. They attend meetings and encourage their people to support or reject certain activities.

However, due to the constitutional provisions relating to customary and traditional rights, the TA often assume a lot of power over their subjects and their decisions are mostly unchallenged. This conflict of interests has manifested itself in how the conservancy committees and the general democratic processes in conservancies are managed. The ambiguity of the TA powers creates a fluid situation and has the potential to cause conflict, as their power overrides that of elected structures. The conservancy programme is presumed to follow a path of democratic process and

devolution of power. Excessive control by the chiefs is actually recentralising power to a few individuals and leads to elitism which affects the pattern of benefit distribution.

The Indunas' Participation in Committees

In each conservancy, the indunas serve as a liaison between the communities and the Traditional Chief and play an active role in conservancy affairs. They attend all meetings of the conservancy, they receive allowances for participation and are key to any decision being made at the conservancy level. They assume more power than the elected structures in the context of the conservancies in Zambezi. Table 16 shows the distribution of indunas directly involved in conservancy decision making process.

Table 16: Number of indunas involved in committees

Name of conservancy	Number of indunas	Number of males	Number of females
Wuparo	3	2	1
Sobbe	6	6	0
Kwandu	6	6	0

Source: Conservancy records at Wuparo, Sobbe and Kwandu (2013)

The Conservancy Staff

The conservancy staff form a critical part of the governance structure because they are responsible for the day to day functioning of the conservancy (see Chapters 4, 6 and 7). Most of the staff are paid monthly wages. They implement the objectives of the community as directed by the conservancy committees. The way they are employed is discussed in Chapter 7 of this thesis. Table 17 shows the number of employed staff in the 3 conservancies.

Table 17: Number of staff employed in the conservancy

Name of Conservancy	Number or employed staff	Number of males	Number of female
Wuparo	29	20	9
Sobbe	24	15	9
Kwandu	28	17	10

Source: Conservancy records at Wuparo, Sobbe and Kwandu (2013)

There is male dominance on all conservancy committees and this is a source of concern, although women have now started to emerge within conservancy structures. For example, all the book keepers in the three conservancies are women and this points to the fact that women are trusted to keep the resources, especially financial

resources, much better than the menfolk. Decision processes are left to the men. I will not dwell much on this subject of gender balance as it is not the focus of this chapter.

> *"Women show that they can keep money much safer than men, even in our churches, the responsibility of keeping church funds is more aligned to women, so we are comfortable with them"* (An elder from Sobbe, 2013).

> *"We have had no records of women in our area embezzling funds but where men are involved we get records of misuse. It does not mean that they the women are angels, no, but they can discipline themselves, while men ... are willing to take risks"* (Community Game Guard, Wuparo, 2012).

Governance, Contestations, Power Struggles and Overlaps

The constitution gives an ambiguous interpretation of the rules governing communal areas, which to some extent affects how CBNRM is practised in Namibia. Some scholars and policy analysts argue that the chiefs and headmen have retained important powers over allocation of land according to customary law, whilst others are of the opinion that they enjoy extremely limited authority over land administration since such customary rules have been over-ridden by the statutes (Cobbett and Daniels, 1996).

In the context of CBNRM, the designation of the traditional leadership structure might have important ramifications for the management of the natural resources and the right to benefit. Traditional Authorities are allocated a slot in the Conservancy Committee and this may give them more power than they already enjoy under the Traditional Authorities statutes (MET, 1996; Cobbett and Daniels, 1996). The statutory functions of the TA that have a serious bearing on communal conservancies include:

- To advise the Council of Traditional Leaders concerning the control and utilisation of the communal land;
- To assist the police and other law enforcement agencies in the prevention of crime and the apprehension of offenders (this could improve the protection of the environment);
- To ensure that members of the community use natural resources on a sustainable basis and in a manner that conserves the environment and maintains ecosystems.

These statutes give traditional leaders powers as environmental guards. They also have unrestricted power to uphold government policies and strategies and their cooperation is critical in fostering better management together with their community representatives. It is clear that the laws provide for the traditional leadership to play an important role in ensuring that, where CBNRM produces significant financial returns, these should be equitably shared. However, conflicts may also arise about

how these resources are disbursed and traditional leaders could be the mediators of fair play and justice. While this is the discourse, the practice is different. Often the chiefs and their indunas have used this power to wrestle control over how the conservancies are managed and they reap more benefits than their subjects (see Chapters 6 and 7) .

Field data from the three conservancies provides empirical evidence and reinforces my argument that suggests that chiefs and their indunas use their power to dominate decision-making, access benefits and direct how communities conduct themselves. They are usually sceptical of any form of criticism and believe their decisions should not be challenged. This is re-enforced especially in situations where community conflicts arise. The aggrieved people will rush to the indunas for intervention. Many examples show that chiefs and their indunas dominate the conservancy practice. For example, a conservancy manager at Wuparo was asked to pay the Chief an amount of N$20,000 in concession fees, instead of the required N$10,000, so that the other half of the money could be distributed among his three indunas (Muyengwa, et al., 2014; Lubilo, 2011). In order to avoid further trouble from the three indunas, an unbudgeted R6,000 was paid to the three indunas by the committee.

> *"We did not want as a committee to have trouble with the indunas, because they complained that since we gave all the money to chief, what was their share, so we decided to find some contingency money to pay them so that we diffused the tension, anyone would do the same when it comes to dealing with our indunas"* (Manager, Wuparo, 2012).

The community decision during the 2009 AGM to expel four senior conservancy committee officials after they failed to account for R26,000 was overturned by the indunas the following day, without any explanation to the community. Since indunas are held in high esteem, no one was willing to challenge their decision. The officials resumed their duties without the funds being recovered from them.

> *"We got surprised to see the people that we fired at the AGM still operating from the office, it's the indunas who reinstated them because they said, they don't want to disrupt the conservancy activities. We know that those officials are liked by our indunas"* (A youth from Wuparo, 2012).

The induna from one of the villages in Wuparo Conservancy misused the money meant for the community project at Samudono village but despite the conservancy committee's being aware of this, it could not question or take any action because doing so would have serious repercussions.

> *"We expected the conservancy committee to discuss with the induna, but they are so scared and no one in the village wants to be seen to be in the forefront confronting the*

induna, he also benefits like those in the committees" (Village Representative, Wuparo, 2013).

Kwandu conservancy's constitution prohibits the members of the Traditional Authorities from seeking fully paid jobs or positions in the conservancy establishment, however, this piece of legislation has been ignored and one of the local indunas is the current Manager of the conservancy. I was able to discuss this with the Manager: when I reminded him that the local rules do not allow him to be working at the conservancy office, he said that he qualifies and that all the other indunas are happy.

> *"You will be expelled from doing your research in our area if you start asking those questions, we have our own way of doing things. I qualify to be working here and also to be a village induna. What is wrong, there is nothing wrong but for you people researchers you think this is wrong"* (Manager, Kwandu, 2013).

His argument demonstrates how the conservancy still continues to grapple with power dynamics when dealing with powerful individuals. It seems this induna belongs to a strong traditional elite that cannot be easily challenged or removed and, hence, enjoys a monopoly of authority. This scenario is prominent in the Zambezian conservancies.

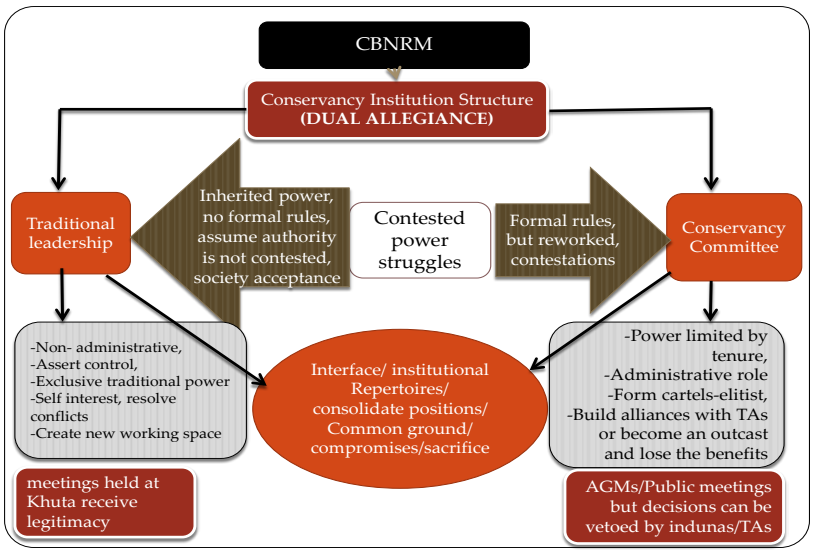

Figure 9: Conceptual relationships between traditional and democratic structures

Source**:** Compiled by Rodgers Lubilo adapted from the operating guidelines for conservancies as developed by IRDNC**.**

Traditional and Modern Forms of Power

CBNRM management in southern Africa is largely top-down (Murombezi, 2010). CBRNM reforms seek not only to transform rural landscapes into a form palatable for national, regional and international capitalist interests but also to change local practices – in particular, for traditional systems to become more democratic. Democratic practice in CBNRM promotes "equity, democracy, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability". Democracy also provides communities with the choice to allocate financial resources in participatory ways (for example, participatory budgeting and approving of projects at a meeting) that traditional governance structures have failed to do. Democratic reforms have improved women's decision-making in public fora. At best, local experiences with democracy have been described as providing communities with the ability to exercise their civil rights as full members of democratic societies (Johnson, 2009). As part of the institutional transformation, communities are expected to write or adopt a constitution to facilitate decision-making. The organisation and management of communal conservancies is trapped in a dual allegiance (see figure 9 shows the complex interface between democractic and traditional structures): communities have to adhere to traditional tribal and elected democratic structures. The two operate at the same level of community and, hence, there is friction and competition. The CBNRM model has been designed to work at the level of community and institutions such as conservancies are expected to adapt and adjust to the new forms of communication, reporting and realisation. These two structures are expected to deliver similar goods and services. CBNRM and Conservancies emphasise participatory and democratic rural institutions. As part of the CBNRM process, communities are required to adopt "democratically elected 'modern' political and development institutions" (Anstey and Rihoy, 2009: 53) that govern through a formal constitution and participatory platforms, such as quarterly and annual general meetings, that foster leadership accountability.

The CBNRM policy and wildlife laws require that a conservancy should have an approved constitution, which stipulates how the community should govern itself. This set of rules spells out how local decisions are to be made. The constitution provides provision for the registration of members, their rights, obligations and how they can access and participate in decision-making processes. The constitution also requires that each conservancy shall have an elected committee to preside over conservancy affairs. In June 2010, I facilitated the review of the constitution process in Wuparo to assist in framing a constitution with the participation of the local members. In November of 2010, Sobbe Conservancy also adopted a revised constitution that enabled the members to participate in its formation. Kwandu conservancy went through the constitution review process and adopted their revised constitution in

April, 2011. The objective of this process in the three conservancies was to come up with a constitution that had a popular mandate from the members to set out what kind of decision-making processes should be undertaken. An important element of the new constitutions was that they were founded on a devolved process, which gave more power to the members at village level.

However, the rules are usually not fully adhered to. The committees have often not used the constitution adequately and, in most cases, they resort to traditional ways of making and passing decisions. There is always an overlap between the use of democratic formalised processes and the traditional system of governance. These discrepancies necessitate asking whether it really matters to have constitutions in conservancies, as local institutions, while framed to adhere to formalised rules, opt to do things in their own way. In Wuparo, as explained earlier, the expelling of the committee and closure of the conservancy office following the 2009 AGM was reversed by a team of traditional indunas, contrary to principles of the constitution. In Sobbe Conservancy, the committee members and senior employees awarded themselves loans, in disregard of the constitution that prohibits the granting of loans in whatever form.

Institutional Interface, Elite Capture and the Co-creation of Communities

The struggle over control of conservancy resources is a major governance issue in many conservancies, especially in the three case studies: Wuparo, Sobbe and Kwandu. The emergence of elite formations and elite capture are also evident in the daily management of the conservancies. Drawing from literature, personal experience of working in CBNRM programmes and having worked with all of the three conservancies, over a three year period, I fully acknowledge the governance challenges, i.e., the mushrooming of elite formations and elite capture by those in powerful positions who wield influence over others. In the context of the three communities, elite means "those who enjoy privileged status and exercise decisive control over the organisation of society" (Sindzingre, 2010:352). The understanding of elites may differ in different cultures, such as in western or European cultures. In Zambezi, local elites could be the Traditional Leaders, elected committees, teachers, volunteers, etc., who, through their positions, have assumed a privileged status because they have acquired new knowledge. They are listened to and shape how conservancies are organised and managed. Elite theory postulates that power and political processes are controlled by a few individuals in any society (Kolegar, 1967; Zuckerman, 1977; Abzug, 2007). Elite capture occurs when the elite "control, shape, or manipulate decision-making processes or institutions in ways that serve their interests and priorities, typically resulting in personal gain at the expense on non-elites and

local communities" (Labonte, 2011:20). Traditional leaders (chiefs, indunas and their associates on committees or staff) become local elites who are able to exploit the conservancy resources themselves and make the other community members receive minimal benefits (see Chapters 6 and 7).

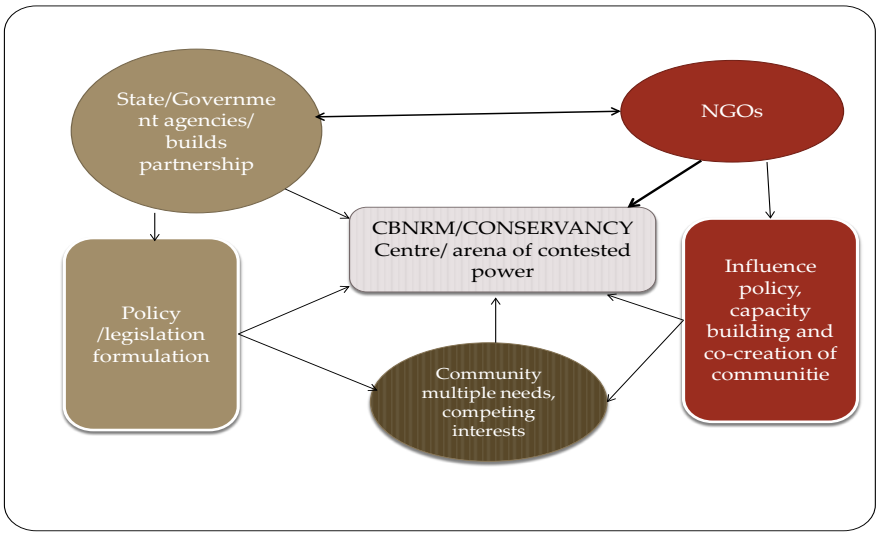

Figure 10: Conservancy as an arena and competing needs
Source: Compiled by Rodgers Lubilo, adapted from the institutional design of the conservancies from NACSO.

Figure 10 demostrates the competing interest of actors and players in the enactment of the conservancies or CBNRM.Elite capture is defined and understood differently. Sara Palin, former US Republican Vice-Presidential Candidate when asked what 'elite' means replied: elites are "people who think they are better than anyone else" (NBC Nightly News, 23 October, 2008). Her definition highlights the subjective dimension of elite capture and suggests how elites command 'moral superiority' (a term used by Mosca, quoted in Higley and Burton 2006) to make their claims. However, her definition is not complete because elites are dependent on non-elites. In Fumanti's words, elites come to power "through publicly recognised merit, inheritance, or even force" (Fumanti, 2004:2). Elite capture is, therefore, a situation where elites manipulate the decision-making arena and agenda and obtain the benefits (Wong, 2010).

Discussion

Understanding the interface between traditional governance and modernity and how communal conservancies have been struggling for political space within the context of community based natural resource management programmes is complex. This chapter has demonstrated how traditional leadership has strategically exploited the devolved management practices of communal conservancies to re-assert themselves

as a dominant force over conservancy committees in the conservancies and the CBNRM model. This assessment is based on and positioned within the context of the ongoing debates about the relevance and the role of Traditional Authorities and their cultural abilities to co-exist with modern democratic committees in the implementation of CBNRM. The TAs have crucial ties to resource governance and their mediation role in the resolution of disputes is well-intentioned and undisputed within the scholarly literature and field of experience. However, some TAs have used their presumed uncontested authority to dominate decision-making and, in the process, have been biased in their decisions, especially about the sharing of benefits. Their desire for material wealth has often manifested in conflicts with the democratic structures. Chiefs and indunas want to know what is taking place, who is receiving benefits and who is being employed and trained. While this looks good as an accountability measure, the reality is that chiefs would like themselves and their cronies to lead and access the benefits, at the expense of their marginalised subjects. When vacancies occur in the conservancy, indunas have to be consulted first, so that they can nominate their preferences. They choose those considered to be loyal. The conservancy committees, also, find their own ways to access some form of benefit to themselves and their close associates.

> *"We as a conservancy can't make any decision without consulting the indunas, if we make decisions without them, even if the decision is in the interests of the community, the Traditional Leadership will sanction and threaten us with dismissal from our positions or jobs"*

> *"Our traditional leaders, instead of supervising the committee to do good things, they in fact work closely with them to get more benefits: if it's game meat from the hunter, the indunas receive more meat, they receive cash, so it's like the conservancy in most cases is benefiting the indunas and their relatives".*

From many CBNRM sites in Southern Africa, including Namibia, the role of the TAs is recognised socially, as well as for political purposes. Politicians need the support of the TAs during contested national elections. If politicians need the patronage of the chiefs, what about the conservancy committees and communities? They do what their chiefs and indunas want.

Despite the tainted picture of traditional leaders, the policy and legislation recognises them as key partners and leaders in achieving sustainable management of wildlife resources. TAs, despite their already enormous powers, have been integrated into the management of the environment. They are often seen as the safeguards of community interests and institutions because of their supposedly unbiased role. However, their interaction with democratic institutions has always posed a threat to their unchallenged powers. TAs access more benefits at the expense of their subjects whose

interests they are supposed to protect. At Wuparo Conservancy, the Committee was forced to pay the chief R20, 000 for fuel for his travel for Independence celebrations in Windhoek, despite the fact that the Traditional Authorities participation was budgeted for by the state (Muyengwa et al., 2014).

Conservancies are framed and then reworked in practice. They create a space and act as a social arena where different social actors, policy-makers and consultants meet to negotiate, re-negotiate and bargain in order to satisfy their different aims and purposes. The Conservancy governance model as an expert externally designed framework runs into conflict when it comes into contact with local realities, as communities are used to working in informal systems and structures. The expert approach is to train the local community conservancy committees in the modern administrative systems of formalised institutions that operate through rules and guidelines. Such rules include the holding of regular elections, the making of well-reasoned budgets and participatory and democratic decision-making processes as opposed to ruling without a clue. This capacity building process develops a knowledge gap between those in leadership, who are exposed to training, and the rest of the community. This capacity and skills gap allows powerful forces to emerge and to view the local community as problematic and lacking in skills, therefore, making them incapable of making useful decisions.

Field experience and local narratives in the three conservancies concur with the notion that the supporting agencies have contributed to the knowledge gap., They provide much attention to those in elective positions and staff, and leave the community behind. Many people spoken to feel that support agencies have been partly to blame for the emergence of elites in the CBNRM programmes. It is important and necessary at this stage to borrow the definition of elites from Beard and Phakphian (2009) who have defined elites as "individuals who can exert disproportionate influence over collective action processes". Community based development has been criticised for its inadequate understanding of power relationships at the local level which leaves room for elite capture. So decision-making processes and struggles over control of conservancy resources are influenced partly by processes of elite elements within the conservancy establishments (Chiefs, indunas, chaairpersons, committees, workers etc) and partly by elite formations growing and emerging on a daily basis, as members fight over who should lead the conservancy to control the resources. Elite formations are evident: conservancy chairpersons and managers in all the conservancies wield power and control and establish cartels that exclude others from active participation in decision-making processes.

In examining elite domination, Plateau (2004) suggests four factors: disparate access to economic resources, asymmetrical social positions, varying levels of knowledge of

political protocols and different educational attainment in some cases (ibid:223). The power of elites is perpetuated through land holdings, family networks, employment status, wealth, political and religious affiliation, personal history and personality (Dasgupta and Beard 2007:234). In communal conservancies local elites emerge based on their social relationships: local ties, connectedness, marriages, etc., bring people closer in the conservancy and keep the same people together in leadership or employment. These traits are evident in Wuparo Conservancy. The Manager is a strong religious leader of the dominant Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) church and, even when he makes mistakes, the community does not see any reason to take punitive action like dismissing him from work (J. Lilata, pers com, November 2012). In Wuparo, the chairperson is the nephew of the chief and exerts much influence and control. His decisions cannot easily be challenged because the local Traditional Authority will get involved. In Sobbe, the Chairperson is a retired Principal in the Ministry of Education and is held in high esteem and in Kwandu the chairperson is a senior field staff member from IRDNC – a local NGO supporting conservancies. "The dynamism of elite domination can be demonstrated by a process of elite continuity, transformation and replacement" (Parry, 2005: 2) through which elites cooperate, compete and reconcile their differences from time to time. This non-linear development makes the solution to elite capture proposed by Plateau and Abraham (2002) plausible.

Elite control can be reduced by a heterogeneous representation of elites that would be "sufficiently diversified for a division of opinions to develop among them" (ibid: 124). The collaboration of elites in power-sharing, however, reduces the effectiveness of the divide and rule strategy. Some scholars have challenged the assumption that decentralisation and community based approaches are necessarily empowering processes that could counter corruption and other vices, like elite capture (Mansuri and Rao, 2004:57).

A conservancy may be conceptualised as multi-layered in terms of practices. The conservancy model inevitably – almost by design – runs into problems when it lands in the complex social, cultural and political realities of 'rural Africa'. Co-existing systems come into conflict when mixed with traditional systems/rules. This changes power relations and shifts power dynamics and this, in turn, affects the way people relate to each other, access benefits and arrive at decisions. These are locally specific making it difficult to generalise on conservancy dynamics and experiences. Interfaces are associated with knowledge conflicts (global-low knowledge/traditional way which has ecological significance), power inequalities and different interests and the spatial mobility of some conservancy actors. The interface involves different social actors, operating at different levels and positions within society, the economy and the

state. This implies we do not have an easy handle on rates of success of CBNRM projects.

These interfaces mean that the application of formalised rules finds itself compromised where traditional systems are strong and, usually, traditional systems have limited space for participatory decision-making mechanisms. As a result, they bring about contestation, conflict and power struggles, which may limit resource use and accessibility.

Conclusion

This chapter sought to demonstrate how traditional leadership has strategically exploited the devolved management practices of communal conservancies to re-assert themselves as a dominant force over conservancy committees in the conservancy and CBNRM projects and programmes. This assessment is based on and positioned within the context of ongoing debates about the relevance and the role of Traditional Authorities and their ability to co-exist with modern democratic committees in the implementation of CBNRM.

My findings are that there are often power struggles in conservancies about where the ultimate power to make final decisions rests. Conservancy Committees, like other subjects, adjust and conform to traditional dictates as their own positions get compromised if they fall out with the traditional leadership. For their own survival conservancy committees (players), accept to follow the instructions of traditional leaders (referees) because disobeying them has serious consequences. Members can even be booted out of the committee.

In Zambezi, especially Wuparo, Sobbe and Kwandu conservancies, all decisions and actions must have the full blessing and endorsement of the traditional leadership structures. These problems are not unique to Zambezi but are evident in many CBNRM sites in Zambia, Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe. This chapter raises critical issues that require further research to understand how local decisions, structures and institutions interact at the conservancy level and how these relationships contribute to sustainable community conservation projects and programmes. This chapter has pointed out and addressed the power struggles, elite capture and competing interests in the management of conservancies. This leads to the concluding Chapter 10 that deals with a reflective summary of the issues, enactment and problem of ‘ community’ and the development of conservancy programme in the Zambezi.

Chapter 10:
Enacting Conservancies

The thesis demonstrates the importance of associating the notions of 'community' and CBNRM as a 'global project' to explain the unfolding dynamics of conservancies in Namibia. The way community and the associated social complex have been enacted in the global project that aimed to reduce poverty and conserve natural resources explains a great deal about the actual performance of CBNRM generally and of conservancies in Namibia in particular. The study of the three conservancies acknowledges the social ties that exist within the registered members of the conservancies but also that the conservancy as a new institution has brought new controversies about who holds power and who controls the resources of the conservancy. It is this competition and struggle that in many instances explains why the conservancy model did not live up to expectations of the global project. It was intended to improve local communities' access to natural resources and to generate tangible and multiple benefits through forming a common property institution.

The empirical Chapters 4 to 9 underline that the most important objectives of conservancy development in Namibia have not been fully met. This concluding chapter serves to provide a reflective summary of the thesis and, more broadly, of my years of engagement with CBNRM. Being involved with three conservancies offered me a great opportunity to understand and explore the social mechanics of conservancies and to offer explantions as to why these do not operate according to the design.

Key Findings

The thesis brings out a series of critical issues:

- The conservancy model appears as an imperfect process that is inherently complex and continuously contested and recreates rural communities;
- Conservancies are social arenas where power, authority and control are always at the core of contestation;
- Conservancies are embroiled in struggles between democratic and traditional systems;
- Local elites have emerged and regularly manage to capture most of the benefits at the expense of the majority of the membership;
- Supporting NGOs (especially IRDNC) have had an integral influence on the organisation and structure of the conservancies and have greatly contributed to their creation. NGOs attempt to change behaviour, impose rules and norms on

how the communities should behave. These attempts have been and still are contested and resisted;

- Benefits have not been equitably shared and this has created confrontations in the process, leading to disunity and, thereby, contradicting the principle of community collectiveness;
- Poaching or local hunting for subsistence and survival, that has continued to be practised and has not been comprehensively reported as poaching, could endanger the existence of the conservancies;
- Conservancies, at the same time, are platforms of hope for enhanced conservation efforts and social livelihoods, especially for those hoping to access employment and other benefits. The reality is that the conservancy is unable to meet this demand;
- The Government and NGOs still recognise the importance of these structures to the management and sustainable use of wildlife and natural resources;
- Income from the use of wildlife resources (hunting/tourism) has gradually but continuously increased in many conservancies, including Wuparo, Sobbe and Kwandu;
- Conservancy membership has not declined despite the many pitfalls and challenges.

Chapters 6 and 7 show in detail how conservancy benefits are shared among the residents. There is no punitive action or sanction taken against those involved in or linked to misusing of the conservancy funds. Some of those found wanting are closely related to the traditional structures or are considered powerful and cannot be easily disciplined by the general assembly. The cases of conservancy leaders disappearing with conservancy funds and assets without accounting for them confirm the difficulties and challenges that many CBNRM (and other community based) projects continue to experience. Though conservancies are structured democratically, there are several instances where this is not the case. Chapter 9 explains this in detail. It clearly shows where the actual power lies between chiefs and elected committees. Democratic structures, as clearly stated and elaborated on in Chapters 6, 7 and 9, have come under severe pressure from the Traditonal Authorities when making decisions on how to use funds and what kind of employment should be generated. This includes making decisions on whom to do business with. Without the approval of the Traditional Authorities no concession agreements can be approved and, often, decisions are made at the *Khuta* while in theory democratic decisions should be made at the community general meeting according to CBNRM development principles and the Conservancy constitution. The continuation of hunting without permits from the state or conservancy can be interpreted as direct opposition to the conservancy model by those involved.

While NGOs have played a key role in establishing conservancies to participate in biodiversity conservation and rural development, they also have greatly contributed to changing dynamics within the rural communities. NGOs have developed and imposed several rules which communities have to adopt and these have been contested directly or indirectly and have become part and parcel of conservancy enacting. My research has clearly demonstrated that conservancies are not static entities. They have been able to reassemble or reorganise themselves socially, politically and economically as they strive to find a common space in which they can operate. The conservancy leadership have accepted and embraced the CBNRM model but with their own modifications. This has brought them often into conflict with the communities themselves, as well as the supporting agencies. Issues over who controls resources and where the ultimate power lies still occupy centre stage in the conservancy arena. CBNRM has undoubtely contributed to some progress into conservation and rural development.

Progressive or positive aspects of conservancies include:

- The enactment of the 1996 wildlife legislation recognised and empowered the residents of communal areas, including Wuparo, Sobbe and Kwandu, to institutionalise a conservancy which gave them the right to access and benefit from the sustainable use of their wildlife resources. The legislation also removed the racial barrier which was the norm before Namibia gained its political freedom;
- The new community institutions and, notably, the conservancy committees were allowed to negotiate commercial agreements with private investors;
- Conservancies are allowed to keep, manage and disburse finances accrued from the commercial transactions of wildlife quotas and tourism concession fees;
- This, in turn, provides an opportunity for rural communities to assume some form of control in decision-making and creates opportunities for jobs among the residents (e.g., Game Guards, hospitality workers, cleaners);
- New management regimes emerged with communities being part of quota-setting processes and participating in commercial business decisions (e.g., selection of hunting outfitters and/or tourism concessions). This, in turn, opened space for capacity building and national and international exposure, as the conservancies became centres of learning;
- Conservancies encouraged democratic processes in decision-making, though an interface with traditional authority was allowed to go hand in hand.

We need to salute all those early activists, such as Professor Murphree and Graham Child in Zimbabwe, Garth Owen-Smith in Namibia, Dale Lewis and Brian Child in Zambia among others, who stood up to ensure communities played a leading role in conservation. Conservancies are on a steep learning curve, especially as things have not evolved as initially envisaged.

The conservancy operational model, though well-crafted in theory, clearly provides space for more powerful individuals to reap more benefits than those with less power. Elite capture occurs and is in some cases tolerated by the conservancy members. Elite capture sounds negative as the members of the elite are seen to reap resources and contribute negatively. Some commentators attribute the failure of community based programmes to poor institutional design. Weak institutional control mechanisms create opportunities for local elites to syphon off substantial shares of local resources (Wong, 2010; Iversen, et al., 2006:93). Platteau (2004:225) argues that the newly created participatory space fails to mitigate the opportunism of the local leaders' and, instead, gives the elites incentives to intervene and to challenge traditional tribal leaders. The opposite, however, should not be ignored. Some scholars challenge the notion that decentralisation and community based approaches are necessarily empowering processes that can counter corruption and other vices, like elite capture (Mansuri and Rao, 2004:57).

The over-simplistic approach to institutions that has informed much of the CBNRM project fails to understand the nature of elite capture and how power and power relations work in concervancies (Masaki, 2007; Mehta et al., 1999; Leach et al., 1999). CBNRM projects such as the Conservancies in Namibia and also CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe clearly unfold as arenas. We cannot ignore that the processes at work in the conservancy arenas are shaped by broader processes of social differentiation and these cannot simply be prevented by spreading the gospel of equality and equity. Alliances based on ethnicity, clan membership, age and gender provide space for the powerful or those in positions of power to claim control of the local resources (Berry, 1989). Introducing new institutions creates positions of power for some (e.g., managers), irrespective of whether they are democratically elected or not. Cleaver (2002) comments on the instrumental use of institutions and the simplistic assumption of the linear evolution of institutions. These factors offer an inadequate understanding of the complexity and the unintended consequences of institutional crafting. For example, D'Exelle and Ridle (2008) suggest that setting up new formal institutions at the local level, such as sanctions and democratic decision-making by voting, are not effective in challenging the indigenous leadership because villagers are reluctant to openly make use of the punishment mechanism. Sneddon and Fox (2007) similarly comment that many CBNRM projects fail to address the problem of unequal power relations amongst communities. Local elites often act cleverly and are able to strengthen their positions by building on the social, political and economic capital they previously accumulated (Platteau and Gaspart, 2003). I have provided in Chapters 6, 7 and 9 examples of how elites use their social capital to defend their interests. The poor and marginalised rural people who contribute their time, effort and labour do not harvest enough benefits. They get disillusioned and discouraged

from active participation (Marcus and Asmorowati, 2006). To a degree, the poor and marginalised do not simply act passively. Chapters 4, 5 and 9 show how discontent with the way the conservancy is being managed is aired in the community. 'The weapons of the weak', as James Scott (1985) coined it earlier are not to sit passively. Chapter 8 specifically positioned poaching as an act of resistance against the conservancy mode of disciplining its subjects.

Conservancies, thus, unfold as arenas of contestation where various often contrasting discourses have developed over time. Positioning the CBNRM as such allows one conceptually to give space for the disillusion with the success of CBNRM that gradually was ventilated in the academic literature and CBNRM reports. There is a general sense that CBNRM in Central and Southern Africa has failed. It has failed to deliver, as Nelson and Agrawal (2008) argue. Jones and Murphree (2004:86) point out that CBNRM performance "has rarely approximated its promise and in some cases has been abysmal". Blaikie (2006) suggests that local efforts to involve local peoples have only succeeded in reproducing earlier more coercive forms of conservation. Ribot (2004:3) concludes that the prevalent failure to transfer sufficient decision-making powers to the local level "turn most decentralisation reforms into charades".

CBNRM as an arena of contestation does not only unfold at the local level, at the interface between community, elites and conservancy managers. The arena also spans other social actors, such as the state, regional and international NGOs and agencies such as WWF and IUCN. They also played their role in the formation of the CBNRM model by designing and implementing an idealised institutional form that is meant to discipline communities and to make sure communities enact CBNRM as designed. The model mostly concentrates on training the leadership, thereby creating a knowledge gap between the leaders and their followers, which has made it difficult for residents to effectively hold their leaders accountable. These agencies also reflect the role of the market and how market relations make or break conservation efforts. The CBNRM neo-liberal approach links to global market conditions, where the world dictates the outcome of community conservation efforts. The conservancies, in particular, strive to generate income and revenues from the use of the resources. Without this commercial aspect and these markets conservancies struggle to survive and meet their mandate.

Way forward

CBNRM and conservancies are paved with good intentions. My analysis of the processes of concervancy formation and enactment indicates that the conservancy model currently is at the crossroads between elite capture and limited distribution of benefits and a return to fortress conservation to prevent further loss of bio-diversity.

Is there a road in between? Should we now forget about CBNRM and explore new ways of conservation, poverty reduction and so on? Should we return to 'fortress conservation'? Should the CBNRM movement embrace initiatives like Peace Parks (www.peaceparks.org) that pivot on public-private partnerships and implement CBNRM in a rather similar discipline mode? Any attempt to redesign or rejuvenate CBNRM needs to re-define and refine what constitutes 'community' and consider the conditions of the markets and global development conservation agendas. There are but there should not be blueprints for implementing CBNRM programmes. Each conservancy or 'community' must be allowed to develop itself through what the residents see as feasible and attainable according to their capacity. This entails providing space for communities to find ways to curb openly or covertly the power of elites. Government and supporting NGOs should provide space and opportunities to support these initiatives rather than coming up with blueprints and models. Moving beyond current CBNRM practices entails dealing with the contestations that the interactions between 'global' and 'local' interests and discourse bring about. The reality remains: CBNRM is a rigorous process of institutional reform that combines devolution and delineation of property rights with collective action in rural communities to improve the value and sustainability of wildlife resources. It is the mode of enactment that matters and that includes struggles, arguments and counter-arguments at various levels. Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan (1997, 2003, 2014) observe that the absence of the state in most rural areas of Africa is an issue and displays state failure to engage with rural communities in meaningful ways. This absence threatens the use of the wildlife and other natural resources. In this space of state absence, local life may suffer from under-administration but still be characterised by latent greed, conflicts and negotiations between various authorities, clans and factions. The pivotal point of argument by Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan is that local powers are organised within the socio-rural realities. There are various political processes that reshape rural communities far away from the modern, developed administrative centres. In essence, rural people through their village structures, re-assemble themselves into some form of local institution to guide their development path. For rural communities the advent of CBNRM projects and programmes has changed the local power dynamics, as more and more become aware of the economic value of some of the wildlife resources. This realisation is closely linked to global markets and trends. The organisation of the conservancies is based on collective processes where the local communities within a defined geographical boundary are given legitimacy to manage and benefit from the sustainable use of the wildlife resources. In enacting the conservancies, a set of rules are put in place through the national policy framework that guide how the conservancy communities should discipline themselves.

These projects are as a result of the global development discourse that recognises the failure of 'fortress' conservation that is strict on preservation and protection. Many social scientists and conservationists, like Marshall Murphree and Gart Owen-Smith, believe that wildlife resources can be saved only if they are valuable (commoditisation) and that the local communities must be the unit of management and benefit. This concept is at the centre of community based conservation approaches. Within these communities, however, different strategic groups emerge and, although the people may share common natural boundaries, their actions are motivated by different interests that in the process manifest into contestations. The enactment of conservancies by design implies that communities enact themselves as self-governing entities. In the process of self-enactment strategic groups compete among themselves. Whether influential or powerful or not, members of conservancies need to be attributed agency; they react, quarrel, gossip, take money, poach etc. This is a reaction to how the conservancy discipline and enactment is ordered and expresses the pitfalls facing CBNRM. The conservancies as an organised society or social order and the interaction of local communities among themselves and with the NGOs, state officers and strategic groups, could be deemed to be influenced by many social and cultural values. We learn from Latour (2005) that that is the world we live in: it is influenced by many processes at play and is continuously reshaped. It is an assemblage of various strategic groups, with heterogeneous interests and composition. Conservancies are designed and made so as to enact within defined social, political, ecological and ethnic boundaries. Local people's social life is, however, not restricted to these boundaries. This makes disciplining conservancies extremely difficult and complex. The policy shift of decentralising and transferring some powers and responsibilities to the 'lower' communities is laudable.

The thesis, however, learns that decentralisation involves not only a redefinition of the relations between central and local powers but also raises the local presence of a state which, in many African countries or communities, is currently remarkable in its absence (Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan, 1997, 2014). CBNRM, framed by neoliberalism, strengthens this even further and shifts responsibilities further away from a potentially democratically structured state in favour of globalising markets which operate at a distance from the community. It is clear and evident that 'fortress conservation' is not the solution to problems of conservation and development. CBNRM is and remains a necessary ingredient but it needs an overhaul where the state repositions itself from being a rigid regulator of community activities to one that regulates markets for hunting and tourism in ways that resonate with everyday life experiences at the level of local communities. This entails that the state takes an active role in curtailing the political power of Traditional Authorities, politicians, businessmen and conservancy managers. The state should be more present at the local

level if only to provide political space for local conservancy actors to wage their struggles with the powerful. NGOs should, in the process, reposition themselves in the conservation arena, which entails a shift from conservation to an inclusive development perspective.

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About the Author

Rodgers Lubilo was born on 31 October, 1974 at Lubilo village in Mambwe District of Eastern Province of Zambia. He is number 5 in a family of 13 (3 girls and 10 males). Mr Lubilo attended his primary education at Msoro Primary School from Grade 1 to 3, between 1980 and 1982. He later did the rest of his primary education at St Francis Primary School from Grade 4 to 7, between 1983 to 1986. He did his secondary education from Grade 8 to 12 at Msoro Day Secondary School between 1987 and 1991.

He completed a one year certificate course at the University of Zambia studying Purchasing and Supply Management in 1993. He later did his Diploma in Natural Resources Management at the Southern African Wildlife College, South Africa in 2003. He studied conflict Management in Rural Development programmes, and later proceeded to study as a trainer completing a Trainers' course in Conflict Management through the Inwent (International Capacity Development Programme) in Germany in 2004, 2005 and 2006. He later studied at Durrell Institute for Conservation and Ecology (DICE), University of Kent, Canterbury, England between 2010 and 2011 and graduated with a merit in Master of Science in Conservation and Rural Development. Mr Lubilo has also undertaken short courses in Wildlife Management, Project and Financial Management, HIV/AIDS workplace studies, youth and sport studies, monitoring and evaluation.

Rodgers work experience spans over 20 years in community based natural resource management programmes in Zambia and other countries in Southern Africa (Namibia, Botswana, Mozambique and South Africa). He has conducted interdisciplinary research in understanding community governance, managing institutions and livelihoods. His research interest is in interdisciplinary research on understanding communities, governance, livelihoods, benefit sharing and community anti-poaching hunting programmes.

This current PhD project is a build-up to my long term career to understand how communities are enacted in community based natural resource management programmes, with a specific focus on understanding operations at Wuparo, Sobbe and Kwandu Conservancies in Zambezi Region of Namibia.

Rodgers is happily married to Vidah Ndelemani for 25 years and has seven children: two girls: Gracia and Loyce and five boys: Remmy, Dean, Rodgers Junior Trevor and Nathaniel.

Summary

This thesis is about community based natural resource management. This form of resource management is well known globally and locally through its acronym: CBNRM. It stands for the devolution from the state to local communities of rights to manage and reap the benefits from natural resources. One of CBNRM's objectives is to empower rural communities through providing material and non-material incentives for assuming management responsibility over natural and wildlife resources. CBNRM initiatives have globally been triggered by substantial losses in biodiversity and marginalisation of rural communities. Enduring poverty in communities residing in communal areas bordering protected areas and non-involvement in management, decision-making and access to benefits are often seen as causing biodiversity losses to occur. For many academics, NGO-practitioners, rural people as well as national and regional policymakers, CBNRM has evolved to become an important model for conservation and rural development. The realisation and widespread failure of centralised, top-down approaches, also referred to as 'fortress conservation', combined with the belief that wildlife could be sustainably conserved if its management was partly transferred to the people who live with these resources, contributed to the growth and expansion of CBNRM projects and programmes across the globe. CBNRM - if well designed and implemented – is positioned and believed to be a model that potentially simultaneously conserves biodiversity and reduces poverty.

This thesis explores a critical dimension of CBNRM: the community, and particularly the community in interactions with a range of actors operating at global and local levels. CBNRM stands analytically a *multi-actor* and *multi-level project*. CBNRM projects evolved to be the sites where global and local processes and projects interact and intersect creating in turn many interesting interfaces and learning moments for all that are involved in conservation. Such focus helps to understand what a conservancy actually is and how these were introduced and enacted in villages. The idea gradually developed that a conservancy evolves as an area where a diversity of actors socio-politically relate to each other and operate to satisfy their specific but different needs and interests in distributing the benefits of CBNRM and to attempt to access jobs and yield power in the process. I conceptualise the conservancy as an 'arena', as the social setting or site of enactment of conservation practices, social relations and processes and, simultaneously, the site where the struggle over control over conservancy resources and power takes place. This focus allows for a detailed analysis of a range of critical issues including socio-economic inequality, gender, traditional authority, benefits sharing, elite behaviour or capture, competition, transparency and accountability. The empirical setting of the thesis is three

conservancies in the Zambesi region of Namibia: Wuparo, Sobbe and Kwandu. The author has worked with these conservancies for over 8 years, in many capacities: as researcher, as practitioner/consultant and as a more then interested bystander given his involvement with nature conservation from his high school years.

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