Khama Rhino Sanctuary Trust

**Project background**

**Species of focus:** • Rhinoceros

**Country/Countries:** • Botswana

**Site(s):**

Khama Rhino Sanctuary Trust covers an area of approximately 4,300 hectares of one of the country’s controlled hunting areas (CHAs) (163 across country in total) and is located 25 km north of Serowe along the Serowe–Orapa road, 7 km east of Paje and about 11 km north-east of Mabeleapudi. CHAs are typically located around existing villages and settlements.

**GPS coordinates:**

No data

**Project web site:**

http://www.khamarhinosanctuary.org.bw/

**Summary description:**

The Khama Rhino Sanctuary Trust (KRST) is one Community-Based Organisation (CBO) of many in Botswana. It was set up to promote rural development in the country by involving communities in tourism and conservation activities. Set up in 1992, KRST’s main aim is to save white and black rhinos and to bring about economic benefits for locals, through tourism and the sustainable use of the available natural resources. KRST has a number of objectives. These include amongst others; to establish, develop and manage the Khama Rhino Sanctuary on behalf of the community; to protect the environment within the Sanctuary and to protect and nurture endangered rhinoceros and all other fauna and flora; to establish, maintain and preserve the biodiversity within the Sanctuary; to generate revenue for the local community from tourism and other uses of the Sanctuary’s renewable resources and to provide environmental education to Botswana and the general public.

**Land management type:**
### Product(s) in trade:
- Horn

### Product value at site level:
No data

### Types of poachers:
Unspecified

### Details of 'other' poacher type:
No data

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### Project implementation

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<th>Is the project implemented by an external party?</th>
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<th>Implementing organisation:</th>
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<th>Name of funding organisation(s):</th>
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### Community organisation(s) involved:

The Khama Rhino Sanctuary Trust is an initiative of three villages of Serowe, Paje and Mabeleapudi (Sebele, 2005). Serowe, the biggest village in the district, had a population of 42,444 people during the 2001 census, Paje had 2088 and Mabeleapudi had 1780 during the same period (Botswana Central Statistics Office, 2002). The sanctuary is governed by a board of Trustees which has 10 members; 8 from Serowe, 1 from Paje and 1 from Mabeleapudi (Sebele, 2005). The uneven nature of the board membership is attributed to the disparities in the population sizes of the three villages.

**Was the project established specifically to engage**
Community engagement

**Approach taken to community engagement and its rationale:**

- Community members benefit from tourism as a conservation incentive
- Community members benefit from development projects (e.g. infrastructure development such as health or education facilities) as a conservation incentive

**Details of 'other' community involvement approach type:**

- No data

**Financial:**

Research findings indicate that community-based tourism at the Khama Rhino Sanctuary Trust (KRST) has become a very important source of employment for local communities, with the Sanctuary employing locals in a variety of jobs ranging from cleaners, drivers, guides etc. Results from interviews with the Chief Warden indicate that KRST employs 26 permanent staff members, with 23 coming from the 3 member villages of Serowe, Paje and Mabeleapudi and the remaining 3 coming from other parts of the country. Furthermore, results indicate that casual labourers are occasionally hired when the need arises.

KRST also contributes to local economic development, with results indicating that people who are employed use their wages to assist family members financially, thereby improving their living conditions. Wages obtained from this CBNRM project are used for various activities, including the payment of school fees, the buying of food and clothing and the construction of traditional dwellings/huts.

Other indirect benefits trickling down from the KRST include through rent for local house owners. Results indicate that all workers from Serowe rent houses in Paje (as it is the...
The community engagement project is a stand alone initiative. Focus group discussions as well as the interview with the Chief Warden indicate that community-based tourism (CBT) has enabled the sourcing of goods and services from the local community. Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) as well as informal sector operators provide a number of services to the Sanctuary. These services include; welding, thatching grass, roofing poles, petrol and diesel from a local filling station and food. Furthermore, arts and crafts are obtained from a San project in a neighbouring village (although not part of KRST). The sourcing of locally available goods and services is very important for this community as opportunities are created for small scale, informal sector operators, who otherwise would not have access to the mainstream tourism industry, which is mostly foreign dominated.

Non-financial:

Results from an interview with the Village Development Committee (VDC) chairperson in Paje show that KRST has assisted the needy within the community with funds obtained from the CBNRM project. In 2004, KRST made a donation of P4000.00 (around US$ 645) to the Paje VDC, to assist in the construction of a house for orphans in the village. This has been the only form of financial benefit the community has been able to get from KRST so far. Although this is commendable, after twelve years in operation this may not be enough, bearing in mind the goals of CBNRM (poverty alleviation and rural development).

Details of wider response:

No data

Do community guards carry firearms?:

No data, possible values:
- Yes
- No
- Not known
- Not applicable

Do community guards conduct joint patrols with formal guards?:

No data, possible values:
- Yes
- No
- Not known
- Not applicable
Are community guards unarmed, without armed backup?:

No data, possible values:
- Yes
- No
- Not known
- Not applicable

Do community guards have rights of arrest?:

No data, possible values:
- Yes
- No
- Not known
- Not applicable

Do community guards have specialist training:

No data, possible values:
- Yes
- No
- Not known
- Not applicable

Are community guards covered by military law in the case of someone being killed or wounded?:

No data, possible values:
- Yes
- No
- Not known
- Not applicable

The community has traditional authority to sanction poachers from within their community?:

No data, possible values:
- Yes
- No
- Not known
- Not applicable

What “rules of engagement” for working with
communities does the case study address?

Build the capacity of local people to manage and benefit from wildlife
Ensure wildlife generate benefits, both tangible and intangible, for local people

Other key principles for engaging communities emerging from this case study:

No data

What has been the impact on poaching/IWT?

Don't know/Case study/project has not assessed impact on poaching

What has been the impact on wildlife populations?

Wildlife populations have increased

Further detail about the impact on poaching:

At the start of the project, 14 rhinos were translocated to the sanctuary (between 1993 - 1999). At the time of data collection (2004) there were 56 rhinos in Botswana, with 27 of them being at KRST (personal communication with the Chief Warden).

What worked and why?; What didn’t work and why?

What worked about the community engagement approach and why?

Not specified.

What did not work and why?

Challenges include:

1. **Costs outweigh benefits** - there is no benefit distribution plan, and as such currently it appears that the costs of the sanctuary outweigh the benefits to local community members. Although the numbers of tourists have been increasing steadily over time (1996 - 2003), benefits (in terms of financial benefits to community members and employment creation) to the community have not. The Chief Warden attributes this to amongst other things, high operational costs and a shortage of capital.

2. **Loss of access to resources** - community members in the three villages are unhappy because they lost a number of valuable natural resources, now found and
located within KRST (i.e. their communal land and associated resources such as firewood). Furthermore, locals also lost the opportunity to gather and sell wild fruits, thatching grass and roofing poles.

3. **Failed promises** - the sanctuary has, so far, failed to deliver on promises made at inception, such as the building of schools, clinics and the distribution of benefits from profits made. For example, the community expects more benefits in terms of employment and income generating activities.

4. **Poor managerial, entrepreneurial and marketing skills** - the lack of finance has made it difficult for the CBO to market itself internationally, regionally and domestically. The Ngamiland District, where the world famous Okavango Delta is located, remains the most attractive area in the country, in terms of tourist numbers and marketing campaigns, by both the private and public sectors. It is hard for the sanctuary to compete.

5. **Lack of community involvement and participation** - although, at the initial stages of the project, consultations, through kgotla meetings were held to get the locals’ permission to use their tribal/communal land, results indicate kgotla meetings are now held once a year to give an annual report and every two years to elect board members. This lack of interaction means the community’s voice is seldom heard. The implications is that decisions made may not represent the wishes of the community. Newsletters produced by KRST are written in English and this further alienates those who are illiterate and do not understand English.

6. **Elite capture** – some community members feel that the enterprise continues to be dominated by individuals who were at the forefront at project inception. Locals believe they are being used, when in reality, the elites are the ones controlling and deriving benefits from the enterprise.

7. **Imbalance in board representation** – 10 members come from Paje, 1 from Mabeleapudi and 8 from Serowe. The Chief Warden attributes this imbalance to the differences in the population sizes of the three villages. However, in determining the figures, no ratio was used; the decision was just made arbitrarily. Due to this imbalance, residents of Paje and Mabeleapudi state that Serowe residents have an unfair advantage over them.

8. **Reliance on donor funding** – an overreliance on external donors makes the economic viability of the project uncertain.

**Further comments or additional information about community engagement:**

No data

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**Bibliographic information**

*Main source(s) of information:* Published documentation