



Securing rights and restoring land:

midterm evaluation Botswana



Securing rights and restoring land: midterm evaluation Botswana

Evaluation conducted July 24th – 30th 2012

Evaluation team: Ms Masumi Gudka and Mr Pablo Manzano (contact Masumi.gudka@iucn.org)

Table of Contents

Summary	3
Introduction and Evaluation Approach.....	3
Site Description	5
Project Summary and Overview	5
Activity Highlights	6
Project Successes	8
Project Challenges.....	9
Project Lessons	11
Project Recommendations.....	13
IUCN	13
Government	15
Community.....	15
Lessons for wider consumption and Global Learning.....	16
Annexes.....	18
Annex 1: General Terms of Reference	18
Annex 2: MTE agenda and outline	21

Summary

The Botswana mid-term evaluation was conducted at national and district government levels which included the project government affiliates, Department of Forest and Rangeland Resources (DFRR). The evaluation also included the four BORAVAST communities and the IUCN staff.

This evaluation report discusses questions and activities in the methodology that were used during the Mid-Term Botswana Evaluation. A brief description of the project overview and summary and main activities implemented through the project is subsequently provided. The major successes and challenges presented by the various project stakeholders have been discussed in the main body of the report. After a critical assessment of the evaluation outcomes, improvements to the project have been recommended. A synthesis of all evaluation outcomes from the Botswana project component have been summarised to provide guidance for similar projects, with similar goals that are conducted in other regions of the world as our contribution to global learning.

In general project implementation has been slow due to various challenges, the most striking being the remote management of the project in the absence of a project field officer, leading to the difficulties with fostering relationships between government focal persons and community members. However, despite the challenges, the project in Botswana has made some significant strides to engage the community and government through a *Prosopis* forum, which as a result has stimulated the development of district plans to eradicate the invasive alien species *Prosopis*. A study on land tenure, although not disclosed yet, will probably yield useful recommendations for sustainable land management. The confidence and level of engagement of the local community is also a positive outcome of the project so far, as well as the influence on other projects in promoting a more participatory approach. Through the project evaluation several recommendations have been given to each of the stakeholders concerned with the project. The most important recommendation for immediate action is to hire a project field officer, which has the potential to eliminate a number of the challenges highlighted in this report.

Introduction and Evaluation Approach

This evaluation was conducted in accordance with European Commission expectations, to evaluate the progress of the project in Botswana (as part of a wider four-country evaluation). The methodology of the evaluation conducted in Jordan was used in Botswana although small adjustments were made to accommodate the necessary protocol of Botswana. During the evaluation period, wider issues were explored, treating the EC project as a component of a longer-term initiative implemented by a number of different agencies over several years at the BORAVAST community site.

The evaluation was conducted in an approach that complemented on-going community-based participatory approaches that the Botswana government and communities were familiar with. Participatory approaches were also used to ensure ownership by communities/partners, and allow the participants to reflect on participatory plans made in the previous two years.

The evaluation focused on the following five major issues (see Annex 1 for more detailed Terms of Reference):

1. Review progress in the implementation of project activities – are partners delivering according to the EC requirements? Are they on track to complete the project in the allotted time?
2. Review progress towards the project goals and objectives (review activities against the theory of change) – how are our activities taking us towards our objectives? What assumptions is the project making and how do they stand up to scrutiny?
3. Review of challenges – what challenges are being overcome? What challenges still need to be resolved, and what modifications to the project will this require? What lessons should be learned about project design based on these challenges?
4. How effective is the project monitoring strategy? What lessons is the project yielding so far and what more monitoring and evaluation is required?
5. What is already known about the next steps after this project is implemented? What follow up activities are needed and what are the fund raising priorities?

The evaluation consisted of a day with the IUCN project team identifying delivery challenges and updating on overall progress, constraints and also to demonstrate the participatory evaluation methodology to the participants ; two days with project partners and community delegates to evaluate project progress and; one day conducting the evaluation process at the project site in Bokspits with the communities; a final day with the project IUCN team and DFRR associates implementing the project with government TAC focal people to reflect on lessons and ways forward. Each evaluation conducted was run between 4-6 hrs.

The workshop methodology was participatory in order to draw on reflections of community members and Government affiliates. The basic methodology (which is outlined in more detail in Annex 2) consisted of two steps:

1. Discussion and consensus on the overarching vision and broad aims of the initiative (thinking further ahead than the limits of this project);
 - a. Part 1 focused on the larger ambitions of the project in order to shift attention away from delivery of outputs and towards how the overall implementation process contributes to long-term ambitions such as empowerment, governance, self-sufficiency etc.
 - b. Part 1 also gave a good insight into how the project goals and objectives are understood by different participants.
2. Discussion and analysis of progress in implementing activities and how they contribute to achieving the overall vision.
 - a. The discussion with project partners focused more on activities as defined by the project, whereas the community discussion focused on the activities they had prioritised through their Community Environmental Management Planning (CEMPs) processes.

Finally each meeting closed with an open discussion around relationships, identified changes and what happens in the future (questions of sustainability).

Site Description

The project component in Botswana consists of four communities which are collectively referred to as BORAVAST (named after the villages of Bokspits, Rappelspan, Vaalhoek and Struizendam) in the Kalahari ecosystem. The larger villages are Struizendam and Bokspits (which is located at the confluence of the Molopo and Nossob Rivers) while Vaalhoek and Rappelspan are the smallest of the four villages. Bokspits is the “economic hub” of the four villages hosting all the government departments, the school, an electrified guesthouse, the water purification dam/plant, a larger grocery store as well as basic restaurants/eating houses. It also has easy access to the South Africa border posts via tarred roads. Women are well represented in the structures of the community especially on the Village Development Cooperation (VDC), the BORAVAST Trust and with a female Kgosi (chief) at Bokspits. Mainly Afrikaans but also Setswana is spoken in all four villages.

Additionally, the village of Khawa is included in the project but was not directly assessed in this evaluation. UNDP implements activities in Khawa and the Government of Botswana requested them to adopt IUCN’s approach to strengthening governance as a platform for sustainable resource management. As a result Khawa communities are engaged in some of the project activities (e.g. participatory planning) but UNDP and the Kalahari-Namib project (also implemented in Khawa) is responsible for responding to community plans through its interventions.

Project Summary and Overview

The EC project is managed by the South African IUCN team in collaboration with the Botswana Government Department of Forest and Rangeland Resources (DFRR). The EC project was originally proposed to be co-financed by a project entitled Managing Biodiversity, but that project was ultimately not started. The EC project is therefore now co-financed by the UNEP-GEF Kalahari-Namib Project (executed by IUCN) which has also been working closely with the EC project at the site as a complementary project. Some of the delays noted in project delivery relate to the challenge of bringing two projects online simultaneously to contribute to common goals.

One of the main overarching problems associated with the BORAVAST communities is the spread of the exotic invasive plant *Prosopis*. The species was used by DFRR as a means to stabilise sand-dunes in BORAVAST but it was also introduced in South Africa and Namibia and it appears likely to have spread into the Kgalagadi District as well. Recently the communities have strongly advocated against *Prosopis* and its spread. The issue was taken to the attention of the President of Botswana who has urged the DFRR to find a solution to the problem. The Kalahari is an area already with a scarce water supply now further exacerbated by the *Prosopis* invasion. The spreading plants are extracting ground water, lowering the water table, creating an increase in ground water salinity and compromising local wellbeing and livelihoods.

Mismanagement of livestock has led to losses in livelihoods while inappropriate rangeland management has led to bush encroachment of pasture and habitat degradation, as identified in the Community Environmental Management Plans. The current land tenure arrangements, promoting fencing and land privatization, allow further degradation of the rangelands through over-grazing by large herds owned by

wealthy individuals. Although the individual wealthy livestock owners have been allocated their own parcels of land they are still free to graze their livestock on community rangeland, and the community does not have the authority or power to regulate them. The community does not have a long standing tradition of pastoral management and their use of herd mobility as a management strategy does not appear to be strongly developed, although more investigation is needed into local herding knowledge.

Alternative livelihood options are limited and livestock rearing is the principle industry. Efforts have been made to strengthen this sector through breed improvement, for example with Dorper sheep, but this has not been done in conjunction with rangelands management planning, so it poses an environmental and economic hazard. A native species of cactus called Hoodia, with medicinal values and an international market, has been promoted but the industry has not taken off due to a combination of market constraints and poorly planned project-based interventions that have failed to stimulate suitable market conditions.

Governance in a broad sense emerges as a critical factor in sustainable management of local resources. Degraded resources can only be sustainably restored if users are able to impose and enforce rules and regulations over their use. Since much of the land is communally managed this requires strong institutions, and it also requires commitment from both community and local government to establish plans and rules and to uphold them. The participatory approach used in this project and the focus on building the relationship between communities and government is coherent with a long term strategy of establishing more effective, locally-adapted governance that is acceptable to local customs as well as national policy.

Activity Highlights

The main activities that have been undertaken with the BORAVAST communities related to the EC Botswana component include:

- Community workshop to discuss aligning the BORAVAST trust with the National CBNRM policy (convened by DFRR) in November 2010. This initiative will be assisted by the EC project and is currently in progress.
- Community Trusts Training Workshop from 7 – 11 February 2011 by the Department of Forestry and Range Resources and IUCN. A training workshop was convened based on training needs identified by the Forestry Department during community consultations. Participants included the BORAVAST and Khawa Board of Trustees and the members of the Kgalagadi Technical Advisory Committee. The training sessions included: The History of CBNRM in Botswana, Role of the Technical Advisory Group, Trust Structure and Understanding of the Deed of Trust, Basic Financial Management, Project Cycle and Developing Funding Proposals, Product Marketing and Joint Venture Partnerships
- Training of Trainers in CEMP in March 2011. The purpose of the CEMP Workshop was to (i) Train the Kgalagadi TAC and Community Facilitators on Community Environmental Management Planning (ii) Develop Community Environment Management Plans, (iii) Raise awareness of the roles of the TAC and Boravast Trust Board to the communities, (iv) Raise Awareness of the IUCN Programme of Work in the Kalahari Namib Area to the broader Boravast and Khawa Community

- Community Environmental Action Planning in March 2011. The activities undertaken here allowed priority activities to be identified for the 4 villages. The priorities of the 4 villages are as follows:
 1. Bokspits (Rotational Grazing, Fencing and Rehabilitation of sand dunes, reintroduction/marketing of hoodia and devil's claw, commercialised borrow pit, cutting down/control of *Prosopis*, Protection of endangered species, construction of a lodge)
 2. Rappelspan (vegetable garden or nursery in sand dune stabilisation project, construction of *Prosopis* Shading, fodder production from *Prosopis*, Pan fencing and construction of a reservoir, rotational grazing and reintroduction/marketing of hoodia and devil's claw)
 3. Vaalhoek (Rotational grazing, cutting down/control of *Prosopis*, planting indigenous plants).
 4. Struizendam (Reticulate water to grazing land, fencing and rehabilitation of sand dunes, reintroduction/marketing of hoodia and devil's claw, cutting down/control of *Prosopis*)
- National Inception meeting for the co-financing Kalahari Namib Project (KNP) in June 2011 (representatives from all four villages and Khawa participated). This inception meeting for the KNP highlighted gaps in the 2009 KNP Baseline study which includes the BORAVAST villages. The priorities for communities in the project sites were also discussed.
- Negotiations with UNDP and the government of Botswana to ensure that programmatic approaches in Khawa and BORAVAST were coherent and were not setting unrealistic expectations for communities.
- Land Tenure Study conducted in 2011 to review the National Policy Environment, particularly related to Land Tenure and Drylands Development and desertification. The study focussed on reviewing biodiversity governance in Botswana– policies, institutions, processes and power, analysed natural resource stakeholders (including institutional stakeholders) and land and resource rights in the project area. The study also reviewed current environmental conditions in the project area.
- Formation of the Botswana National Steering Committee (NSC), 1st Meeting and Committee Site Visit to the four villages in June 2011 (This Site visit provided an opportunity for the newly formed NSC to go to the villages, assess the status on the ground in terms of past projects, failures and successes, to gain an understanding of the challenges facing these communities and where assistance was needed).
- BORAVAST CEAP Ranking in February 2012 where communities were given an opportunity to review their CEAPs compiled in 2011 and to prioritise SLM and income generating projects (these priorities included *Prosopis*).
- Annual Regional Forum on *Prosopis* and Community Consultation Workshops in May-June 2012 where communities gave a presentation and made a case to control/eradicate *Prosopis* at the forum. This was followed by a field visit where community consultations were held at BORAVAST and Khawa. Community attendees shared learning from the forum, mapped the extent of the *Prosopis* Problem in their villages, debated the advantages and disadvantages of the plant, interacted with experts and gained/exchanged knowledge on the control of *Prosopis* and made a decision that the problem needed to be controlled. Roles and Responsibilities of the government and community members as well as the way forward were also discussed.

Project Successes

There have been some significant successful steps and activities carried out thus far in spite of the overall slow implementation pace of the project - for numerous logistical and other challenges. The project has received a strong degree of government support and backing from its inception, but as a result the delivery has been adapted to government procedures which have been time consuming and have at times led to misunderstanding and delays in implementation. The project and IUCN are well received by both the communities and the government department focal persons. There is strong evidence to suggest that the project is in a position to make unprecedented strides in improving the Kalahari ecosystem and the livelihoods of the communities who reside within it.

Prosopis Forum: This forum brought science, policy and local knowledge together, to reach consensus on solutions that were agreeable to all stakeholder groups. The community have now been presented with various sides of the *Prosopis* argument, related to its eradication, control or utilisation. The decision most favoured by the BORAVAST communities is to eradicate *Prosopis* using both chemical and mechanical measures which from an ecosystem restoration and resilience perspective is the most appropriate option and in-line with the EC project objectives. DFRR have taken on the planning aspect of the action to ensure all necessary steps and measures are taken.

Land Tenure Study: The draft land tenure study report has been completed and is ready for presentation to the TAC to highlight some of the policy challenges that contribute to rangeland ecosystem degradation. The nature of the issue is sensitive and highly political, a reason why the presentation of the draft land tenure study has been delayed to such lengths. There was a sense that the TAC was not fully aware of the links between land tenure (particularly communal land arrangements), local resource governance and land degradation. The land tenure study may help shed more light on the subject, but greater emphasis is needed on building awareness of the link between management of resources and the right to protect those resources from abuse by others.

Community Relations: Historically interaction among the BORAVAST communities has not been very well organised and there is a lack of coordination over natural resource management at the ecosystem scale that affects the entire community. Through this project the community interaction has increased due to joint workshops, trainings and meetings with an observable improvement in the relations between communities.

Understanding the Role of the BORAVAST Trust and alignment of the BORAVAST trust constitution with the Botswana CBNRM policy: The importance and potential of the BORAVAST Trust to influence livelihood and ecosystem improvements for the BORAVAST community and Kalahari ecosystem have been realised explicitly through the project and the mid-term evaluation. This realisation is integral to motivating the community to improve the management of the Trust without which, no current or future projects can establish effectively in the area. The trust provides a structure and a means to reach out to the communities as a whole. It also provides an important interface between the community and government.

Motivation of Government: The Botswana Government have taken a major role in supporting the project and acting as mediators between IUCN and the BORAVAST communities. In Botswana the government has an existing relationship with communities who are more likely to trust and work with projects if the government are on board. There was an interest in the project from the national to the district government level highlighting the potential for tangible success and sustainability of achieving the project objectives.

Alignment with other interventions: Agreement was reached with UNDP to align their approach to the IUCN approach, in order to shift from top-heavy interventions focused on infrastructure and delivery of goods towards bottom-up implementation based on strengthening roles and responsibilities. The government departments at the district level (TAC) have seen the value of the IUCN participatory approach to their own work and are attempting to adopt a similar approach in their own government-led initiatives. Khawa village (which was identified as a potential site in the project proposal) has been added to the project sites and will participate in capacity building and Community Environmental Management Planning work.

Project Challenges

Late Approval: Due to the delayed approval and start-up of the Securing Rights and Restoring Lands for Improved Livelihoods project the official partners outlined in the proposal were no longer operational on the ground. Additionally, the project that had been identified for co-finance was not operational and work was advanced in developing the KNP as an alternative source of co-finance. These challenges led to slow delivery and implementation of activities on the ground during the first year. The challenge of starting both this project and the KNP in parallel further delayed implementation and emphasis has been placed on establishing strong working relations with government as the platform for strengthening governance.

Budget Allocations: Allocated budgets for staff time are low compared to the amount of time reporting on the project requires. This makes it difficult to accelerate implementation with staff time as it is currently budgeted. Some amounts budgeted under expected outputs are very low (such as budgets available for studies) making it difficult to achieve the desired result. To address this, a great effort has been made to co-finance individual studies and other activities from the KNP and the process of getting buy in from project partners to this has been very laborious.

Government Affiliates: To strengthen the project in Botswana and as a means to bridge some of the gaps created by not having a partner on the ground, IUCN initiated dialogue with the Botswana Government. The Government has been an affiliate of the project since it began and as such it is providing support with implementation of activities. IUCN however faces a challenge with maintaining adequate influence over delivery of activities and maintaining a balance between government ownership of the project and IUCN responsibility to meet donor requirements. Ongoing discussions need to be held with the government of Botswana to address individual bottlenecks to implementation. For example, the department mandated to assist the project has been changed twice since the

beginning of the project from the Department of Forestry and Rangeland Resources (DFRR) to the Department of Environment and Agriculture (DEA) and back to DFRR.

There is a high turn-over in government staff, particularly project focal staff, which is a set back to the project each time it happens. Each new focal person has to re-familiarise themselves with the project concept and many different stakeholders which takes time. IUCN needs to invest more time in maintaining close links with government so that such transitions can be made smoother. In strengthening governance at the ecosystem scale it is essential to work across government sectors and integrate natural resource planning. This is a major role of IUCN, and in Botswana it is made more manageable by the existence of an active TAC at the district level. Nevertheless, there are a number of layers of government that have to be brought into consultations: at national, district and community level. This presents a significant challenge of relationship building that has to be factored into governance projects in future.

Working in collaboration with the government is an important feature of this project and will generate very important lessons about how to address governance issues with a high degree of legitimacy. However the project is learning the challenges that accompany this, particularly in terms of the rate of short-term implementation. For example, emails are not regarded as official communication and written letters must be posted to the department in order to schedule meetings. A patient approach is required to work with government. IUCN has to continue to adjust to the requirements of the Government of Botswana in order to accelerate delivery, but should not sacrifice the overall approach simply to achieve short term goals. It is important to measure progress in the working relationship with government and to evaluate this and the strength of the results that it will enable.

Remote Management: Project work involving multiple stakeholders, especially local communities, requires someone to be on the ground constantly championing activities and maintaining dialogue amongst the various stakeholder groups. This is essential to build trust and a solid foundation in which project implementation is facilitated. Remote management of a project essentially removes the daily personal interaction, ultimately resulting in slow delivery of projects that would otherwise take place more rapidly if a project partner was based at the site. Lack of close contact may also give rise to breakdown in trust and openness and an important lesson from this project is to give greater emphasis on relationship building and face-to-face dialogue, which demands a closer presence on the ground.

Documentation: There is a lack of adequate documentation and reports of what has been done previously at the community level despite a large number of projects having been implemented over the last few years (e.g. Indigenous Vegetation Project –IVP). The challenge for the IUCN team is to avoid repetition of activities that have already been conducted with communities, however there is no written account and duplication has been unavoidable.

Activity Implementation: The BORAVAST community and Government of Botswana are growing impatient with the consultation/planning and dialogue phase and want to see implementation on the ground. This is partly due to the extensive number of projects that have gone through the project sites without showing many tangible outcomes, thus leaving a negative perception of projects among the

recipient community. IUCN needs to maintain closer presence on the ground both to scale up delivery and also to maintain clarity of communication with the community over the value of the CEMP approach. This is a capacity building project to enable the community to be more self-reliant and less dependent on external (usually unreliable) investment projects – this point needs to be continuously reinforced.

Community and BORAVAST Capacity: The local BORAVAST Trust, which is the main vehicle through which the community is mobilised and projects are run, currently lacks the necessary capacity in terms of management and expertise to perform efficiently. Efforts have been made to strengthen capacity but more support is needed to strengthen the community-wide legitimacy of the trust and its overall accountability. As a deliverable of the EC project this could be a high value activity that would greatly enable the sustainability and impact of future interventions.

Project Lessons

Project Design: In the first year for longer-term projects there should not be such an emphasis on delivering activities related to outputs but instead more emphasis should be placed on building solid relationships and partnerships. This is a key factor if the project is to be delivered successfully. Project proposals should consider identifying more than one project partner in the event that one can no longer support the project at the start or other eventualities that might occur, thus strengthening the project risk management.

Government Affiliations: Working alongside local and national government is expected to increase the sustainability of a project, by building more durable relationships and supporting government to implement its own policies. In the case of Botswana the project is regarded with a higher level of importance by all stakeholders involved. Furthermore, joint implementation and action-learning has been demonstrated to be one of the more effective means of policy-related communication. Despite the lengthy processes of working closely with the government departments the project must be flexible and allow for this type of collaboration. Projects of this nature should accept the challenges and maintain a patient approach to reap the extensive benefits from working in conjunction with government.

Project Logistics: Where project sites are remote and difficult to access by project staff a site office could be a potential solution to the challenges of remote management. An office would facilitate site visits to maintain a constant presence and dialogue between stakeholders. In addition to this a project officer or focal person should urgently be hired by the project, possibly from the local area, to champion the activities and facilitate buy-in from the stakeholders. Hiring someone from the project area will also improve the sustainability potential of all actions even after the project has been completed. The staff should also be capable of championing the governance approach in discussions with government partners at local and national level and therefore needs to be able to gain a degree of credibility in their eyes.

Strengthening Partnerships: The project as it has been implemented has created a direct link between different stakeholders who would otherwise be conducting activities completely independently of one

another. For example, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) are now viewed by the community as being more active and taking a greater interest in local communities issues building a positive relationship. The project has also introduced the government departmental focal people/ policy makers to the sites and the ground level to gain a first-hand experience of the issues.

There is a much more direct link between science and policy as a result of the interactions and dialogue facilitated through the project. For example, the *Prosopis* forum held in Bokspits early this year through the KNP as co-finance for the EC grant which enabled a dialogue between the scientists from universities around Southern Africa to present their research to the government and community stakeholders. As a result the government has taken action and is developing a *Prosopis* eradication strategy which has been influenced by both scientific research and the wants and needs of the local communities.

Partnership with other development partners can be challenging since each agency has its own approach and its own constraints to delivery. All partners need to exercise flexibility in order to streamline approaches and to ensure that one intervention does not undermine another – for example, a project that spends money fast to deliver quick results may appear more attractive but may lack sustainability, as has been seen from past interventions in the project area. Time and resources need to be devoted to building an understanding with different partners in order to achieve more synergistic approaches.

Participatory Planning: All the stakeholders associated with this project (Government departments, local communities and IUCN) found participatory planning to be favourable and beneficial to the project. It encourages project ownership by all stakeholders and thereby also adds a level of accountability and sustainability. Participatory planning provides clarity for each group/individuals role and involvement, and it encourages information sharing and assists in mobilising resources.

Project Perceptions/Expectations: Through the evaluation process of reflecting on past and current projects, the community realised that although they had not seen tangible outputs from all the projects, they had received numerous amounts of training in various skills (livestock husbandry, finance, project management, computer courses, environmental awareness etc.) which has enabled them take action (e.g. fund raising) and advise future projects of their needs. The community perception of the value of capacity building and training workshops has subsequently improved.

Sustainability: This issue of sustainability has been addressed at various levels of this project. By involving the community at every stage of the planning their ownership and buy-in of the project has been strengthened. The TAC and IUCN are dedicated to building the capacity, which empowers the communities so that they may have the resources and skills to continue restoring and sustainably managing their natural resources. The involvement of the government in the project has improved its level of importance and allowed for opportunities to influence policy and national level changes.

Joint handling of both the EC project and the Kalahari-Namib project helps devising a more strategic approach from the communities, government and IUCN point of view that can last for a more extended time, thus reinforcing the actions developed in both projects.

Building Community Capacity: One of the important actions required to improve the project implementation on the ground is to revive the BORAVAST Trust and build the board members capacity. Continued support from the IUCN and Botswana government is needed to enable this process.

Delivering Tangible Results: As explained above, the project approach focuses on creating and enabling conditions for sustainable development within the community. The emphasis is not so strong on tangible delivery. However, such deliverables are desirable as they can demonstrate the value of the stronger governance arrangements. In this project it is important to follow up the preliminary CEMP work with practical response to priorities. CEMP is not a one off activity and it needs to be refreshed each year as part of a culture of participatory planning, but communities lose their interest in such planning if they do not see results.

In particular in this project the *Prosopis* work is already a good step towards addressing priority activities, but it is recommended to follow up with action on rangelands degradation and sustainable management, identified as a priority issue by all communities, and also to increase attention to livelihoods activities. Rangeland management planning is not identified directly due to a poor coverage during the initial CEMP exercises, but on close examination of the village CEMP priorities rangelands management is referred to indirectly ten times: for example as rotational grazing, fencing of dunes and pans, protection of native flora/species.

Project Recommendations

IUCN

Theory of Change: IUCN needs to strengthen its internal capacity to use the Theory of Change (ToC) as a communication tool, for demonstrating the logic of project activities consistently and continuously to all partners. Further workshops to re-emphasise the ToC may be counter-productive until more concrete actions can be demonstrated, but it is imperative that every activity and every discussion that takes place is accompanied with clear explanation of how it contributes to the ToC. It should be the basis of all communications with partners about the project. Better use of the ToC will enable a better understanding and vision of the project objectives and why they are important. For example, government at the national level were unclear in regards to the concept of 'land rights' in the project, which could be clarified by explaining the ToC more explicitly.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Outcome mapping exercises should be used as a means of monitoring the project outcomes and should follow on logically from discussion of the Theory of Change. Outcome Mapping can demonstrate the various steps that have been taken to reach a project objective and goal. Future projects must incorporate a larger budget and emphasis on annual monitoring building up on thorough baseline studies which also measure ecological variables. However, within this project it is important to treat all ToC and M&E exercises as part of routine communications with the community rather than a stand-alone activity. This will be possible with greater presence on the ground.

Accelerate project delivery: Two steps are recommended to greatly increase the rate of delivery of this project. Hiring a project officer is imperative to give a burst of activity and to consolidate the relationship with all local partners over the next 12 months. It is strongly recommended that the officer be hired without any further delay.

It is further recommended that IUCN SA identify high-value activities to prioritise during the next 6 month period for maximum impact. Prioritisation should follow criteria such as: delivering a high and lasting impact (e.g. trainings, rangeland management forum); activities that can be conducted independently by IUCN; following up on recommendations from this evaluation; finalising anything to do with the baseline. Support will be provided by the coordination team to facilitate activity prioritisation. Prioritisation of the work plan will assist completion of the project in the designated time-frame without compromising the projects value.

Alternative Livelihoods: The BORAVAST community are in need of alternative livelihood options which are environmentally sustainable. The study on market and value chain analysis, under expected result 3 will be able to guide the community and the government towards a suitable solution. It is recommended to accelerate this study and focus on concrete options for livelihoods diversification in the area. Particularly to IUCN and given the links of the organization with the pharmaceutical industry (particularly Roche labs, the supporter of MAVA Foundation, in turn a key IUCN member), links should be explored to facilitate the incorporation of the local *Hoodia* production into the pharmaceutical value chain.

Rangeland Management Forums: As mentioned above, rangelands management is identified throughout the CEMP exercises, but due to low awareness of options and opportunities it has not been prioritised explicitly. It is recommended to organise a forum similar to the *Prosopis* forum to focus on rangeland management to share ideas on new concepts and approaches, to bring to the debate solutions to challenges present in the area (e.g. human-wildlife conflict) and to more deeply assess the current situation. The forum should bring together rangeland experts and scientists, community and government focal points. Through a rangeland management forum it is possible to introduce the poorly understood issues of land tenure and governance arrangements in the Kgalagadi District and present some of the findings of the Land Tenure Study. It would also be possible to establish communal resource management plans and regulations that build on local knowledge and herding practices, and which will be much more cost effective, sustainable and ecologically sensitive than fencing.

Exchange Visits: IUCN should organise an exchange visit to an area where there is good rangeland management actively being practiced (e.g. Namibia). Selection of community members and government representatives should be strategic to maximise benefits from the visit. IUCN should ensure a reasonable representation of both government and community members in these visits. This activity can also be carried out in conjunction with the rangelands forum.

Clearly Defined Tools: It seemed evident from the evaluation that there is confusion over the use of the terms Community Environmental Action Plans (CEAPs) and the Community Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs). These two acronyms relate to the same participatory approach and to all intents and

purposes they imply the same thing – their difference simply relates to their evolution within IUCN (IUCN now uses the term CEAP, but at the time of project development the term CEMP was in use). The choice of acronym is not important but the project team should ensure consistency in the version they use to minimise confusion.

Government

Awareness Raising: The Department of Forest and Rangeland Resources (DFRR) could use lessons from other project country component strategies for rangeland management such as Jordan. The focal person from DFRR should be supported by the coordination unit to identify technical aspects of rangeland management and ecology for community-government learning for improving natural resource management. New concepts around planned grazing have been pioneered within Southern Africa that offers good opportunities for innovation.

Alternative Livelihoods: More emphasis should be made by the government to provide alternative sources of livelihoods for community members to engage in. Avenues such as the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park in conjunction with the community's cultural heritage could be harnessed as sustainable livelihood options. Opportunities to reduce the human-wildlife conflict in prone areas should be explored further through the existing (hunting quotas) and new avenues. It is recommended that the government pays particular attention to the proposed Marketing Study that this project will deliver in the coming months.

Institutionalising community Plans: The TAC focal person can prepare a guideline to create and structure an official activity plan which can then be adapted and perfected by the responsible government department. It is recommended that the TAC consider ways to institutionalise the community based planning (CEMP) within government planning processes. Individual departments have already demonstrated their interest in adopting community priorities in their plans, but so far this lacks a more formalised institutional approach.

Community

Revival of the Trust: Board members must register the Trust as a legal entity and review the constitution through the assistance of DFRR. A re-election of the board members can then be processed to provide the leadership required to run the Trust and gain community buy-in. Motivated and committed members should be elected for positions on the board. A Terms of Reference will assist with role clarity. The Trust should also recognise its role in outreach to all the BORAVAST community to ensure that it is not accused of elitism and exclusion. Support from external partners may be needed here to effectively publicise the trust within the community.

Training: The appropriate community members (those with an interest or relevance) must be sent for any training activities undertaken at the community level. A record of all the trainings that have been conducted previously and in future must be maintained by the BORAVAST Trust and a reference of all community members who have an interest or would benefit in the training provided (e.g. farmers to be sent for animal husbandry training).

Financial and managerial training/guidance is required for all Trust board members.

Project Planning: The communities must be encouraged and supported by external project management/partners to create extensive plans of each activity before implementation providing a reference point for each stage of the action. The process of planning should dovetail with the CEMP process and should be seen as integral to all local decision making, rather than stand-alone project activities.

Documentation: All proceedings, actions and outputs at the community level should be recorded and stored in a central repository (BORAVAST Trust) to assist with continuity. This will help resolve the lack of information available for government and IUCN reference and for any future projects that establish in the community sites.

Facilitating intra-community Dialogue: Stronger dialogue is needed between community members and community groups to instil a greater value for historical information gained through the personal experiences of the elders in the community. This will also assist community members in understanding that some solutions to current problems can be attained through an understanding of historical context and identify a means to prevent those actions from occurring in the first place (what were the issues that lead to the degradation and exposure of sand dunes in BORAVAST communities in the first instance). There is a particularly good opportunity for strengthening the participation of youths and the elderly in intra-community dialogue. This has particular appeal given the process of out-migration from the area (particularly of educated youth) which is likely to be affecting the transfer of traditional knowledge between generations.

Lessons for wider consumption and Global Learning

These lessons are drawn from the project evaluation and should be shared with other projects to help strengthen their approach. They should also inform future initiatives in relation to dryland governance by IUCN and other partners.

Government collaboration lends legitimacy. Working with government allows you to really test out policy implementation with a high degree of legitimacy, and also to draw lessons that government itself can respond to. Although effective collaboration can be challenging, the benefits should outweigh the costs. However, particular skills and resources are required for relationship building. In Botswana the head of each government department at district level sits on a committee called the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), where projects and proposals are addressed in a holistic manner with input from each sector. This is an effective approach that can be adopted in other countries.

Prioritise relationship building, multistakeholder partnership and trust at different levels: the project is achieving most where it is building relationships, either between communities, between development partners, or between government and other stakeholders. This work is the cornerstone of effective governance and it demands time and skill. The value of meetings, dialogue and human resources needs to be reflected in project budgets and needs to be effectively evaluated for its impact on governance.

Institutional 'ego' can be a challenge to negotiate since each partner has its goals and ambitions, yet effective and sustainable development requires all partners to buy into a common vision. Over time this may become standard practice, but in the early stages it requires partners to compromise and this takes a lot of negotiation.

Adhere to the principle of responsiveness: projects come with pre-determined plans and yet this is contrary to the principle of responsiveness – which is a principle of good governance. Flexibility therefore needs to be exercised in specific activities so that they are aligned to community requirements, recognising that these requirements change constantly. Capacity building can open the eyes of community members to hitherto unknown opportunities, leading to changes in priorities, and project need to be able to follow these changes and remain relevant.

Monitoring and evaluation need to be rigorous from the start, encompassing behavioural change as well as bio-physical changes: It is important to evaluate changes in attitudes and partnerships that take place through governance projects, and which are essential if governance changes are to be sustained. A great effort is needed not only to reach consensus on a Theory of Change, but to constantly remind people of the goals and direction of interventions. It is important to find ways to popularise communication so that complex theories of change can be easily understood in the local context.

Identify local champions for strengthening governance. Governance work depends on the skill and character of a few key individuals working within a community. These people can be from the community, from an NGO or from government, but it is important to find people who are likely to remain in the site and provide continuity. These interlocutors are crucial for popularising understanding on governance work and require investment of time to build their capacity as project partners.

Make sure that short term tangible impacts are delivered. It is essential to follow up governance work with real changes to people's environment or their livelihoods, in order to motivate people to sustain the effort that governance requires. Immediate improvements in livelihoods may not be realistic on a large scale but tangible short-term improvements in the natural resource base on which people rely should be achievable through project interventions.

Annexes

Annex 1: General Terms of Reference

Davies, 20/04/2012

Objective of the evaluation: **review project progress, identify challenges and propose modifications for finalisation of the project**

6. Review progress in the implementation of project activities – are we delivering according to the donor requirements? Are we on track to complete the project in the allotted time?
7. Review progress towards the project goals and objectives (review activities against the theory of change) – how are our activities taking us towards our objectives? What assumptions are we making and how do they stand up to scrutiny?
8. Review of challenges – what challenges are being overcome? What challenges still need to be resolved, and what modifications to the project will this require? What lessons should we learn about project design based on these challenges?
9. How effective is the project monitoring strategy? What lessons is the project yielding so far and what more monitoring and evaluation is required?
10. What do we already know about the next steps after this project is implemented? What follow up activities are needed and what are the fund raising priorities?

Review progress in the implementation of project activities

- Review of all project documentation
 - Are all project documents complete, up to date and effectively organised and used?
 - Review of all reports – are community plans well documented? Do communities and local partners maintain copies of these plans?
- Review of work-plans
 - How realistic are planned activities? Are they up to date?
 - What has performance against work-plans been like so far?
- Review of planning and coordination deliverables
 - Review of Community Action Plans
 - Discussion with communities about planning processes and how they use the plans
 - Discussion with other project partners about project process – planning, meetings, workshops etc.
- Review of actions on the ground
 - How do you judge the technical merit of project interventions to address desertification or economic development?
 - Are these the highest value actions that could be conducted with the funds available?
 - How well do actions on the ground respond to community priorities?
 - Are these actions adequate to address desertification at scale, and what would be required for them to go to scale?
- Other deliverables

- What is our opinion of the technical quality of publications and other communications?
- What other deliverables should be considered?

Review progress towards the project goals and objectives

- Review of Theory of Change together with key project partners and community representatives
 - How is the ToC understood amongst these stakeholders?
 - How well does the ToC actually represent what we are trying to achieve?
 - What important issues are overlooked by the ToC?
 - What important actions are needed, beyond this project, to deliver our ToC?
 - What obstacles lie between our actions and our intended goals?
 - What assumptions are we making, and how realistic are they?
- Review of progress
 - How well does the monitoring strategy reflect the theory of change? Is the strategy adequate?
 - What indicators of change are being collected already and what are they telling us?
 - How effectively are our actions moving us in the desired direction?
 - How effective is the project process as opposed to delivery of activities? How do we assess level of ownership, participation and understanding amongst partners and communities?
 - What have been the most significant changes brought about so far by the project in relation to different steps in the theory of change?
 - What is the evidence of changes in attitude and behaviour during the project?
 - What surprising (unplanned) outcomes have occurred (positive and negative)?
 - What further monitoring and evaluation is required?
- Review of project partnerships
 - Are the current partnerships working effectively to deliver on our ToC?
 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of current partnerships?
 - Are the partnerships enough to deliver our ToC? Which other partners are needed?
- Sustainability
 - What sort of sustainability is the project aiming to deliver?
 - How is this being monitored and how is the project performing?

Review of challenges – what challenges are being overcome? What challenges still need to be resolved, and what modifications to the project will this require? What lessons should we learn about project design based on these challenges?

- Challenges in project delivery
 - Administrative and management challenges
 - Funding and co-finance challenges
 - Performance of different project partners
- Challenges in achieving project impact
 - Following on from the previous section, what are the key barriers to successful outcomes/impacts?
- Recommended changes

- Changes to partnerships, budgets, work-plans, implementing arrangements, project outputs etc.
- Changes to overall strategic approach
- Lessons and how to use them
 - What is the audience for the lessons learned in project implementation? How can relevant information be conveyed – how can ICUN learn as an institution?

What do we already know about the next steps after this project is implemented? What follow up activities are needed and what are the fund raising priorities?

- Areas of intervention that need continuation
- Areas of interventions worth scaling up
- Opportunities for project continuation – compared with IUCN exit strategy
- Roles and responsibilities for next steps in project development or continuation

Proposed outline of each country evaluation

This outline does not allow for travel to the field. Additional days should therefore be inserted where required. This plan can be modified according to the needs of each country.

Day 1	Review of project documentation with project team, meetings with support staff and technical coordinators.
Day 2	Meeting with key project partners – full day (6 hours) Simple workshop format with presentations of project outline, feedback on progress and partnerships, breakout sessions to discuss performance etc. National Level Government Officials.
Day 3	Meeting with the Key project partners – full day (6 hours) Simple workshop format with presentations of project outline, feedback on progress and partnerships, breakout sessions to discuss performance etc. District Level Government Officials on the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).
Day 4	Meeting with communities – full day (6 hours) – if required (some countries may engage all communities in Day 3 which would be more appropriate).
Day 5	De-briefing with project partners (govt) and project team, feedback on lessons and discussion about progress in the second half of the project (half day meeting).

Annex 2: MTE agenda and outline

Date	Meeting Times	Meeting	Key questions	Methodology	Location
Sun 29 th July	Start Time: 9am Lunch: 1-2pm End Time: 4pm	IUCN project team, support staff and technical coordinators – IUCN SA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the Mid Term Evaluation Process • Review of documentation • Review of work plan and deliverables • Review of Theory of change and monitoring strategy • Review of impacts monitored to date • Review of partnerships • Sustainability (more for day 5?) • Challenges in delivery (including reporting and financing difficulties) • Challenges in achieving impact • Recommended changes to the project • Lessons that we can learn – learning strategy for the future (day 5?) 	One to one or group meetings led by evaluators	Metcourt Inn Hotel - Gaborone
Mon 30 th July	Start Time: 9am Tea: 11- 11.15am Lunch: 1-2pm Tea: 3-3.15pm End Time: 5pm	IUCN and Key project partners DFRR and DEA– full day (6 hours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall what are we trying to achieve? • What did you plan to do? • Why was this important/relevant? • What did we achieve? What didn't we achieve? • What constrained us? • What will you differently next time? • Lessons for the future • How is the approach going to be sustained beyond the project? <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the value of participatory planning? Is it just about delivering our project or are there bigger ambitions? • What is the technical merit of the different interventions? How are we contributing to reversing desertification etc.? • Sustainability: how is our work helping to change things in the long term? What should be the next steps to maintain continuity and achieve sustainability? <p>Discussion on Project Implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures to increase implementation (DFRR and IUCN). • Work-plan and key activities for the next term of the project. 	<p>Group discussions (see outline below) led by evaluators</p> <p>General discussion and feedback</p> <p>Discussion led by IUCN and DFRR</p>	DFRR offices- Gaborone

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Field Officer. 		
Tue 31 st July	Departure Time: 10am	Travel Day	Travel to Tshabong		
Wed 01 st August	Start Time: 9am Tea: 11- 11.15am Lunch: 1-2pm Tea: 3-3.15pm End Time: 5pm	Meeting with Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)– full day (6 hours)	<p>Anticipate 10 TAC/government members to participate including district Commissioner’s office.</p> <p>Similar to workshop on Monday 30th July, but less formal and with more space for TAC to debate on key questions</p> <p>Will use a simple exercise for performance monitoring, but also need more general opinions on IUCN’s strategy/approach</p>	Group discussions (see outline below) led by evaluators	DFRR offices- Tsabong
Thurs 02 nd August	Start Time: 9am Tea: 11- 11.15am Lunch: 1-2pm Tea: 3-3.15pm End Time: 5pm	Meeting with BORAVAST communities – full day (6 hours)	<p>As above</p> <p>Similar to workshop on Monday 30th July and Wednesday 01st August 2012.</p>	Group discussions (see outline below) led by evaluators	Bokspits Kgotla
Fri 03 rd August	Start Time: 9am Tea: 11- 11.15am Lunch: 1-2pm Tea: 3-3.15pm End Time: 4pm	Wrap-up: De-briefing with project partners and project team (DFRR, DEA, DC’s office), feedback on lessons and discussion about progress in the second half of the project (half day meeting)(4-5 Hours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As Above Review of monitoring strategy and impacts monitored to date Review of partnerships Sustainability – what do we have to do to sustain work moving forward? Recommended changes to the project to improve either delivery or impacts Key questions for global learning that this project can contribute to 	One to one meetings	DFRR offices- Tsabong

Group work activities

Propose to form groups to address the following questions. Groups should be split appropriately – for example by gender/village.

1. Overall what are we trying to achieve?
 - a. We will try to get everybody to articulate exactly what are the higher ambitions of the project – 30 minute discussion

2. Presentation to be made by coordination team (broad components of what the project aims to accomplish and why – discussion centred round the project goals and gaps).
3. Groups to discuss the questions in the grid below (we will discuss these at length first to see if we all agree)
 - a. Group discussion for up to 2 hours followed by feedback to the wider group

ToC Category	What did you plan to do?	Why was this relevant to the overall goal?	What did you achieve?	What didn't you achieve?	What constrained you?	What will you differently next time?	What lessons can you take for the future?	How will actions be sustained beyond the project?
1. Security of natural resource rights 2. Enforceability of NRM rules, regulations and plans 3. Better application of sustainable land management approaches 4. Livelihood security and environmental health								

General discussion

Questions for general discussion after the group work:

1. What is the value of participatory planning? Is it just about delivering our project or are there bigger ambitions?
2. What is the technical merit of the different interventions? How are we contributing to reversing desertification etc.?
3. Sustainability: how is our work helping to change things in the long term? What should be the next steps to maintain continuity and achieve sustainability?

Points to be reinforcing with communities and government:

- Evaluation needs to look more critically and analyse the assumptions. Are they correct?
- Clear distinction needs to be made between projects with short lifespans and the goals and objectives set by communities which should aim to span at least 10-15yrs.
- Emphasis needs to be placed during the evaluation that this is an opportunity to make project improvements and it is a fora for discussions on this subject. It should be said that IUCN is available to support the communities to carry out tasks that they themselves identify and carry out.

Possible additions

1. Most significant change exercise: simple feedback session with partners during the wrap up day to discuss what has been the most significant change to have taken place since the project began.

Low level observations

2. Other deliverables – one to one discussions with experts, publication of community opinions etc. – quality and usefulness of our outputs
3. How well are we identifying the local experts/champions? How does the project mobilise Indigenous Knowledge?