



## EEASA Conference

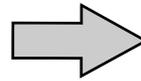
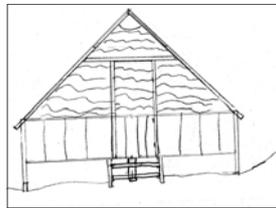
In June NaDEET participated in the 21st Environmental Education Association of Southern Africa (EEASA) annual conference for three days. This conference is hosted by a different southern African country every year and was now held for only the second time in EEASA history in Windhoek, Namibia. The EEASA conference is an opportune time for environmental education practitioners to gather to share ideas and activities, collaborate efforts and of course network.

This year's conference was organised by the Namibian Environmental Education Network (NEEN) with the theme: "Marking 21 years of EEASA; EE's past, present and future". Although NaDEET is a new EE endeavour in southern Africa, many at the conference quickly knew about NaDEET Centre, its programmes and activities.

On the first day of the conference, I gave a presentation to interested participants entitled "Programme Evaluation *informing* Environmental Education". The presentation proved to be much more interesting than the title as I explored what I felt EE Centres could do to improve their approach and content. The presentation was based on an evaluation I had conducted of the AfriCat EE programme, which, had initially been done to improve upon the programme and to inform stakeholders of its impact over

*(Continued on page 2)*

## NaDEET Centre FROM DESIGNS to BUILDINGS



Accommodation unit

The building of NaDEET Centre commenced on the 3rd of March. Although it only seems like yesterday, the past four months have been filled with considerable developments in the small NaDEET dune valley.

NaDEET's building team has been working very hard to construct educational facilities from the original design drawings on a piece of paper. To date the main building (classroom/ dining hall + kitchen), one and half accommodation units, two ablution facilities and four toilets are (or are very close to) completed.



Bucket shower

According to an updated building time plan, the majority of NaDEET Centre should be completed by the end of August. Several weeks thereafter will however still be needed to put in all the finishing touches. These include many of the "sustainable living" facilities including solar electricity and water re-use and recycling systems. A small staff accommodation unit is also planned to provide housing for tertiary level students who are to come for six month training programmes.

The UK-based organisation, Raleigh International, will be assisting us with the building for the next three months. The volunteer group consists of a diverse group of young people including several Namibians. We are grateful that they will be helping make NaDEET Centre a reality.

## Teaching Life Skills in EE

Capacity-building, or developing people's potential, is an essential task, specifically in post-apartheid Namibia. The systematic, legalised disempowerment of the majority of the people by a minority regime in the past has been counter-productive to life skills acquisition both at school and in the informal sector. Remedying the effects of the past will require massive educational input by all.

Life skills are the abilities necessary for successful living and learning. A life skill is one, which enables a person to interact meaningfully and successfully with the environment and with other people. The greater the range of skills that we possess, the more alternatives and opportunities are available to us.

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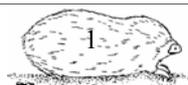
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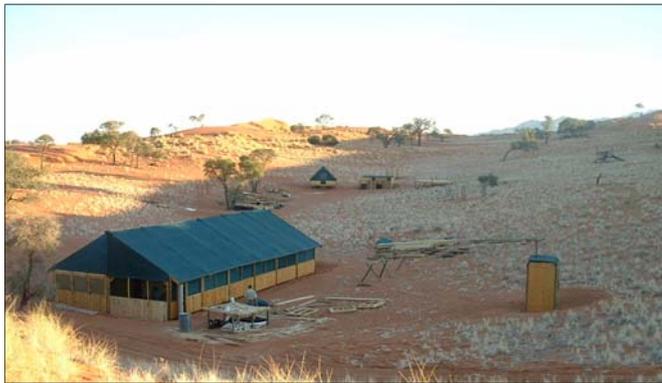
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## The Namibian Community Shines with Social Responsibility

NaDEET has been extremely fortunate and pleasantly surprised to have received generous support from the Namibian business community since the beginning of this year. Fundraising is never easy and I think few would call it enjoyable. For NaDEET and any other non-profit organisation however it is a fundamental activity necessary for survival.



With the generous assistance of many, NaDEET Centre will be prepared for its first group of schoolchildren in the middle of July. We will be able to provide them with a classroom/dining room that has wooden walls, a shade cloth roof and fish net floors. The kitchen has window shutters made from re-usable building materials and a storeroom with “recycled” shelves containing plates, saucers, cups, pots and cutlery. Having prepared their meals on two solar cookers, the schoolchildren will be able to eat sitting on camping chairs at metal folding tables. A transportable solar system will provide the basic lighting for the main building on a temporary basis.

At the other end of the NaDEET valley, the schoolchildren will be able to sleep on wooden platforms protected with shade cloth roofs. The schoolchildren will have “recycled” hot water geysers to store their limited water supply. Bathing will be an adventure combined with the comforts of home as the ablution is equipped with bucket showers, real shower floors and washbasins. Even the long-drop toilets are pleasant and have been constructed with “recycled” petrol tanks. Of course all of these materials can only be converted into an educational facility with the help of numerous tools, machinery and a vehicle for transport.

Behind the scenes, the NaDEET office has also been equipped with furniture, computer, printer and satellite telephone for communication with schools. It is important to mention the support we have also received from private individuals within the country. It has been wonderful for NaDEET to be welcomed and so whole-heartedly cared for by everyone.

NaDEET is extremely grateful for all who have donated time, energy, advice, materials and/ or financial assistance. Follow the Namibian media and/ or look on the last page of the *Golden Mole* for specific recognition of our sponsors.

*Thank you!*

*Viktoria Paulick*

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four years of operation. My presentation however focussed on the overall questions raised by the evaluation including: “What can be expected from an EE Centre?” “What and how are we teaching EE?” and “Where should EE be heading in Namibia?” I highlighted how NaDEET is now trying to respond to these questions through its content and approach. (Please contact us if you are interested in receiving a copy of the presentation.)

The annual EEASA Market Place was a huge success with numerous organisations advertising their activities and educational materials.



Elsita, a NaDEET volunteer, explains the NaDEET Centre sustainable living philosophy to an interested Namibian educator

NaDEET had a well-visited stand with a large display board which included a site map of the Centre. We look forward to next year’s EEASA conference which is to be held in Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa, in March to give an update of our activities and implementation of the NaDEET Centre.

*Viktoria Paulick*

### New Name for Youth Mini-Magazine



One of NaDEET’s objectives is the development and distribution of environmental educational materials.

Since the beginning of this year, NaDEET has been home to an existing youth publication, formerly named the *Carnivore Times*. This 8-page, A5 colour mini-magazine has expanded its subject matter (previously large carnivores) to include the whole Namibian environment. During April and May a contest was held to receive name suggestions which resulted in the name *Bush Telegraph*.

There are currently approximately 4 500 learners and educators who subscribe. We are grateful to the British High Commission for their continued support of this project.

*Viktoria Paulick*



**1st  
school  
group**

**18– 21. July**  
*Mokaleng JSS, Aminuis*  
*30 grade 6 learners*  
*(10-12 years old)*  
*3 teachers*

**August and onwards...**

*Johannes Dohren SS, Gobabis*  
*Aris Primary School, near Windhoek*  
*Wilderness Course*

**Upcoming Events**  
 @  
**NaDEET Centre**

*(Continued from page 1)*

At NaDEET we use a facilitation approach when “teaching” people life skills. In this context it is a belief that knowledge is gained through participation; knowledge is not a product presented by an expert to the unknowing. Facilitation refers to the non-directive art of providing the right stimulus for a group to participate fully in their own growth and move towards greater involvement in their communities.

In life skills facilitation, the emphasis is on activities that would best generate learning and involve participants directly in their own growth. Facilitation is **not** teaching, **not** telling and **not** preaching. It is providing the resources and structures for participants to explore, learn and develop.

To achieve this, the method of experiential learning is used, which literally means “learning from experience” and reflecting on what has been learned. It is a participatory activity where everyone has something to teach and something to learn. The focus in experiential learning is on building upon existing strengths and life experiences of the participants. This type of learning acknowledges, values and uses the prior knowledge and competence of everyone.

In conventional schooling, the focus is primarily on the development of the mind. However, in experiential learning the whole person becomes the focus: body, mind, thoughts, feelings, actions and the totality of being. Knowledge is socially-constructed by all through the learning process.

Life skills learning needs to be experiential, as what is being learned is not just information, but ways of dealing with life’s challenges and problems. Within the context of life skills facilitation, experiential learning links the school experience, socialisation and the individual’s experience. Experience is the foundation of learning, but can be truly successful only with involvement, active participation and reflection.

(Parts of this article have been taken from the book “Lifeskills: A Resource Book for Facilitators” by Edna Rooth)

*Chris Berker*



## The WorldTeach Visit

I spent the whole of Wednesday afternoon alternately lounging under a camel-thorn tree and running down steep dunes, waiting for the arrival of two carloads of WorldTeach volunteers. When they finally arrived it was nearly dark.

WorldTeach is an organisation that sends volunteers to a variety of countries throughout the world, of which Namibia is one. They came to the NaDEET Centre for their In-Service Conference from the 28-31 May. After introductions, we set up camp and ate dinner, which had been solar-cooked in our two new parabolic solar cookers that afternoon.

The next day was “Building Day” at the Centre. WorldTeach offered to donate a day of their conference to help NaDEET construct the Centre. For the whole morning, all I remember doing was sanding every piece of wood within a 5 m radius of the showers. Andreas organised



everyone into 4 groups – storeroom constructors, varnishers, pole diggers, and toilet builders. The last task involved digging, levering a huge metal tank into the ground and standing around debating how to do this.

On the last day we tested out the dune boards and then continued onwards for a long walk. Along the way Viktoria explained about the desert environment.

The WorldTeach visit was a great success. The volunteers were now also aware of our programme and the Centre. As most of the volunteers are located in remote places throughout the country, teachers which would otherwise not have been able to hear about the Centre very easily, now were able to. Indeed, within a few weeks after their visit, two volunteers had already booked to visit with a class of schoolchildren.

*Elsita Kiekebusch-Steinitz*

### THE MOLE FILE

#### Fact No. 1

#### “The Basics”



Grant’s Golden Mole (*Eremitalpa granti*) is endemic to the Namib Desert. It only weighs about 20 grams, is light brown in colour and fits in the palm of your hand. It eats mainly insects and is active primarily at night time.



# NADEET thanks all of our supporters!

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