



DUNE WALK

Learners identify living things big and small

Over the Namibian Independence Day weekend (21. March), a group of fourteen boy and girl scouts visited NaDEET Centre.

It was the first "small" group of participants at the Centre (all other groups had 30-40 participants) which allowed us to try out some different activities.

Visiting groups usually go on a dune walk to investigate and explore the Namib however this time I wanted to also conduct more intensive investigations with the group. I had anticipated that the scouts would have previous experience in nature walks and identifying different plants and animals. The scouts did not prove me wrong as they applied concepts (food chain, obtainment of water etc) to what we



A "hairy" caterpillar

found the walk.

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CAPACITY BUILDING @ NaDEET: Training for Nature Conservation Student



I am Michaella Phemelo a second year student at the Polytechnic of Namibia studying a three-year National Diploma Course in Nature Conservation. The course prepares me to have a better understanding about nature and Namibia's biodiversity so that I can apply this knowledge in real life. It also aims for me to become a good decision maker when it comes to solving critical conservation problems that I may come across in my studies and hopefully in my future work.

During my school years I always had a love for nature and it hurt me so much when people at my village were killing so many wild animals without them even realising what negative impact they have on the animals survival. The situation really bothered me so much and I knew that studying Nature Conservation was the best choice because in that way I can help save the wild fauna and flora. From my experience I have seen that people are better influenced when they see their own people taking action.

The Nature Conservation curriculum requires students to complete an In-Service Training in their second year for the first six months from January-June. I benefit a lot from the In-Service Training because I get to know and become exposed to the real situations I will be facing one day after my studies. In-service prepares students for the job market and it serves as a tool to market ourselves to the employers before we are done with the studies. Students also get to know the different environments of Namibia. I am currently doing my In-Service Training at NaDEET.

When doing In-Service the students are required to do a project at their duty station that we decide upon with our supervisors. At the end of the In-Service I will submit my final findings to the Polytechnic and give a presentation of the findings to other students. My project is "The Perception and Acceptance of Alternative Energy Sources for Cooking of Visiting Groups to NaDEET Centre" (ie. using solar cookers, solar ovens and fuel efficient stoves for preparing meals).

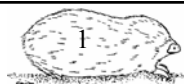
My project is primarily based on face-to face interviews conducted at NaDEET Centre. I do a Pre- and Post- Visit interviews with four learners and two adults on their first and last day at NaDEET Centre using a questionnaire. The aim of my project is to find out why or why not Namibians are using alternative energy sources for cooking. This is important because by using alternative energy sources it can reduce the negative impact we have on our environment (deforestation and our natural resources). When we chop down trees we are not only causing deforestation we are destroying the habitats and food source of many animals which are mainly the small animals that we sometimes do not even consider to be important at all.

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The Golden Mole is produced by

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Trust Certificate #: T168/ 2003



ALTERNATIVE ENERGY ACTIVITIES



One of the focal points of the NaDEET Programme is using alternative energy for cooking. In Namibia, energy used for cooking comes from a variety of sources including firewood, gas and electricity. At NaDEET Centre, participants explore domestic energy needs through a variety of hands-on activities. The activities aim to heighten the participants awareness and understanding of current energy consumption practices and viable alternatives that are sustainable.



Solar Cooking

Solar Cookers and ovens have been available for several years worldwide; however their acceptance and implementation are limited here in Namibia. (See Michaella's article) Through actually using a solar cooker/ oven to prepare their food at the Centre, it is hoped that young Namibians will become familiar and comfortable with them.



Fuel-efficient Stoves

Although these stoves are also readily available in Namibia, they are not frequently used in most communities. At NaDEET Centre, not only is usage of the stove discussed but the fuel that is used in these stoves is emphasized. Each group collects waste paper, which is currently not recycled in Namibia, recycles it by hand into "Fire Bricks". These bricks are then burned in the fuel-efficient stoves to boil hot water for coffee and tea in the mornings when sunlight is not available.



Making it financially viable

For many participants, many of whom live in rural areas, cost is the most important factor involved in determining their energy decisions. Through activities where participants learn how to build their own solar oven and fuel-efficient stove, it is desired that these alternative energy choices are available to all.



Viktoria Keding

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At the end of my In-Service Training I will have a better understanding of why the people do not use alternative energy or do use it and I will also have a better understanding of Environmental Education and how to run an Environmental Education Centre. I believe that I will have a successful In-Service Training and a good final report from which I can make good conclusions and recommendations. This report will not only benefit me at the end of six months but the NaDEET programme will use my findings to see how visiting groups perceive alternative energy sources for cooking which will allow them to be able to bring in some changes if any is needed to improve the impact of the programme.

Michaella Phemelo

Namibian Networking

A formal networking opportunity for environmental educators was held at the beginning of February. The Namibian Environmental Education Network (NEEN) held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Windhoek with a primary aim of establishing a strategic and sustainability plan for the future. NaDEET was actively involved in the AGM as we feel strongly about the role a networking body should and can play in Namibian EE.

NEEN is currently working on an updated version of the Namibian EE Directory as well as a Youth Officer Training programme. NaDEET is involved with both of these activities.

Informal networking between NaDEET and other EE stakeholders continues on a daily basis as many new and fruitful relationships are forged.

Viktoria Keding



De STEEN– Supporting Environmental Education in Namibia

For many tourists, Namibia is one of the most impressive countries in Africa. The beauty of the deserts, dunes, wildlife and its people leave an indelible mark in their memory. It is therefore that many of these nature-loving visitors wish to help in some way with nature conservation and environmental education for young Namibians. In this time of globalisation, more and more people feel responsibility for the earth as a whole.

Knowing that only with good environmental education a sustainable future can be achieved, a trust was founded in the Netherlands to support NaDEET. The StEEN (Stichting Environmental Education Namibia) was founded in August 2003. The initiative taker, Suzanne van Vliet, had met Viktoria two years before, right in the period that the plan for an education centre on NamibRand Nature Reserve was set in progress. After a meeting with Viktoria, as well as with Elinor Dürr and Chris Berker, trustees of NaDEET, Suzanne was very enthusiastic about their plans. Realising that these implied a lot of money, she decided to start fundraising in the Netherlands.

Since that initial meeting a lot has happened: NaDEET Centre was constructed, it was officially opened by Dr. Claudia Harvey, Director of UNESCO-Windhoek (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) and several school classes have already visited. In the Netherlands, Suzanne found two other enthusiastic frequent Namibian visitors; Caia Peterson - van Vollenhoven and Jan Voskuilen who wanted to become board members of the new foundation, de StEEN.

Fundraising is a lot of work, but also fun! One has to network, be creative and courageous. It brings one in contact with previously unknown institutions and people. It is a challenge to try to interest people in a country at the other side of the earth. Luckily there are many beautiful photos made of the Namib Desert and NaDEET Centre.

The most important issue however is environmental education. Also being a part of UNESCO's mandate helps to convey to people that a gift to NaDEET is not only for a sustainable future for Namibia's children, but also for the whole world's interest.

To contact de StEEN: Bovenover 12, 3062 CC Rotterdam, The Netherlands.

e-mail: desteen@wanadoo.fr Website: www.de_steen.org

Suzanne van Vliet

(Continued from page 1)

The Namib is full of living creatures, some big but mostly small, that all have remarkable adaptations to survive in this harsh climate. Using a digital camera, we photographed many of the insects, reptiles and plants or tracks thereof that we found. That evening we also put out "pit traps" to catch nocturnal animals. We photographed and released them the next morning.



Back at the main building of NaDEET Centre, the scouts used books and ID guides to try to identify the various creatures. Working in pairs, they made ID posters that included the name of the animal or plant, its picture and a few basic facts including:

- What it eats
- Where it lives
- Its desert adaptations

Future groups will be able to learn from and add to NaDEET's own ID booklet.

The NaDEET Centre Holiday Camp

Namibian parents would you like to send your children to NaDEET for the school holiday?

Dates: 2- 8. May 2004

Location: NaDEET Centre on NamibRand Nature Reserve

Participants: The NaDEET Holiday Camp is open to 12-16 children between the ages of 12-15 years.

Food: The group will prepare all of its own food using solar cookers and ovens. The food is supplied by NaDEET and is included in the cost.

Programme: Focuses on sustainable living, the environment and the Namib Desert through hands-on activities.

Cost: N\$650 per person (not including transport)

THE MOLE FILE

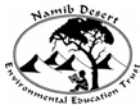
Fact No. 6



“Mammal or reptile?”

Unlike other mammals, the Golden Mole does not have a constant body temperature. To waste energy on keeping warm or cooling off in the harsh desert climate, the Golden Mole's body temperature is always only a few degrees different than the sand's temperature.





NADEET thanks all of our supporters!

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A special thank you to:

Chris Berker
 Marianne Berker
 Ian Gallagher

Jürgen & Dorothe Klein
 NamibRand Nature Reserve
 Wulf & Renate Paulick

Bernard Pinon
 Suzanne van Vliet
 Bernard & Mayda de Winter

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Thank you very much! Your help is greatly appreciated!

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