



Project	Assessment of the potential for tourism and alternative income generating activities (IGAs) in three LISUP resettlement projects in the Omaheke Region
Date	14/08/2010
Activity	Final report - Drimiopsis Section
	DRFN-LISUP-IGA-FinalReport2.odt

LISUP livelihood support program  
implemented by the DRFN and Foundation CEAR (FCEAR)  
in partnership with the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement (MLR)

The assignment should lead to preliminary recommendations for the consultants of LISUP 2 and a final report with recommendations on all four aspects of the assessment:

1. the potential for tourism activities in Donkerbos / Sonneblom
2. the scope to increase leather production and marketing in Skoonheid Resettlement Project
3. the potential for enhanced and joint marketing of fresh produce from the gardens in Drimiopsis and Skoonheid Resettlement Projects
4. the potential for income generating activities other than crafts and leather production in all three resettlement projects

Report compiled for nuevas ideas consulting  
nuevas ideas cc  
Wolfgang Schenck  
July and August of 2010

### 3. Drimiopsis

#### 3.1. Stakeholders

The consultant met with several members of the RDC under the guidance of Michael (chair) and briefly with the MLR on-site project co-ordinator Lennon Uandere.

Even though the community was currently with out water, most RDC and other committee members 'were not available' as they were supposedly busy bringing water to the gardens.

Simon Asser was going on leave that day.

#### 3.2. IGA Tourism

Though situated on a busy tourism route, Drimiopsis has no tourism potential.

##### 3.2.1. Padstal

Being located on the main regional road from the east to the north can be of advantage for a 'padstal', should the community get the permission to utilize a plot close to the current shop at the intersection.



##### 3.2.2. Construction of Padstal

There is no need for a very sophisticated building, to the contrary – the more basic the construction looks, the more it will attract the attention of guests driving through.



##### 3.2.3. Signs for Padstal

Colourful and simple signs could be set up at a distance preparing the driver for what is to come.



 Products that can be offered at this padstal:

- own garden produce
- own processed vegetables (i.e. dried tomatoes etc).
- Refreshments made of own produce (snacks & juices)
- Crafts from the communities involved in LISUP
- artisan products produced in the workshop (solar ovens!)

All above taken randomly from  
Google search – images

### 3.3 IGA Culture

The consultant had to dampen the high flying ideas of the community – the setting up of a 'cultural centre' with regular – daily(!) - performances at the main road.



Yet the vicinity of a few accommodation establishments would allow for a cultural group establishing itself to perform on-site at guest farms in the surrounds and guest houses in Gobabis.

Even a regular event – i.e. on a monthly basis – in Gobabis is a good alternative IF the tourism department of that municipality embarks on a project of offering such events as part of their strive to improve tourism to the town.

Whether such activity eventually develops into a 'cultural centre' at Drimiopsis has to be seen and very much depends on how well the group performs, has a variety of programs to offer and pursues the goal of establishing Drimiopsis as the place for an annual or biannual grass roots cultural festival (as per example of d-Kar in Botswana). Here is a definite task for OST to get involved with.



A Professional Cultural Performance Group ...

- ... means organisation
- ... means several programs
- ... means regular practise
- ... means responsibility
- ... means reliability
- ... means HARD WORK

... means competition that is big and the number of such cultural groups is increasing constantly

### 3.4. IGA Crafts

One definite area for additional income is the production of crafts.

#### 3.4.1. Current Situation

Currently the crafts activities depend totally on a 'cut – make & trim' system where the only input of the participating community members is their handy work.

Aiming at a higher content of own input, cultivating arts skills available amongst some member of the community are the long term goal to achieve.

#### 3.4.2. Future Developments

In order to reduce the dependability on the tourism sector and provide the community members involved with a more sustainable occupation, it would be advisable to develop products that fit more into the field of interior decorations. The typical crafts & curio trade has in the past 2 years taken some severe loss in income as visitor numbers are reducing and those that still do come spend less on 'the not so necessary'.

On the other hand the interior decorating market is growing and changing. As the economic seems not to have hit the Southern African countries as bad as many other parts of the world, more and more money is spent in immovables – and these houses need to be decorated!

On top of that there is a trend to local and natural products with an African look & feel, and this not only in the lodge market but also in the private home market.



This would entail compiling a whole themed collection of interiors for any room in the house, from decorative to useful items such as:

- for the bathroom: towel rack, coat hangers, coat hooks, ceiling lamps, shelves, screens, mirror frames
- for the rooms: different types of lamps, coat hangers, coat hooks, shelves, screens, shelves, screens, blinds and decorations, mirror and picture frames, mobiles, collages



**IMPORTANT:** this is a long-term task which needs a high level of co-operation between all 3 of the LISUP communities.

Not every community will be in the position to produce that whole range of products needed for a lodge contract, nor would they possibly be in the position to do it in time on their own.

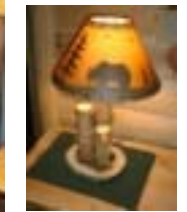
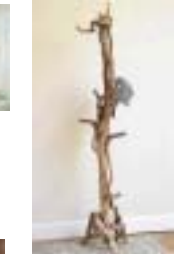
Aim of the output of all crafts workmanship in the communities is to have the products or skills and strengths of one community be combined with that of an other to in the end come up with a full line of products which will find their market locally and regionally outside of the souvenir section of tourism.

Furthermore there is a need for a central 'coordination and distribution' point, which leads to an idea for the utilisation of the new workshop building in Drimiopsis:

- Here the assembling, packaging and dissemination of crafts and interior decoration items produced by the other two communities could be situated.
  - It has to be mentioned that Mrs. Karin le Roux is not convinced of this idea, as she believes that it will be difficult to get the



Ideas for painting on leather



All above taken randomly from Google search – images All below courtesy Fish River Lodge



*three communities to co-operate on this and keep personal and envy issues out. This is a valid argument in many cases.*

- *This consultant though is of the opinion that existing success stories in our country in this regard prove that only such co-operation will eventually lead to success, the individual communities are too small to achieve the same.*

The aim has to be the setting up of a SME company, owned, managed and run by the 3 communities as per example of several such SME businesses in the crafts and agricultural sectors in the north.

### 3.4.3. Omba Arts Trust

The Omba Arts Trust has already made first steps into this direction. This consultant therefore sees it as advisable to intensify the co-operation with the additional focus on this market segment.

Furthermore it is a great advantage that the Omba Arts Trust is a certified Fair Trade operation, a fact that should be stressed specifically when targeting the local lodge market – lodge owners can use this argument for their 'eco' marketing!

### 3.4.4. OST Crafts Project

On a brief meeting with Kathryn Blakemore at OST the consultants heard that they are embarking on a crafts production and marketing project facilitated through an overseas donor agency and the help of a volunteer (which is supposed to come soon for a period of two years).

More details on this project were not available at this stage.



### 3.5. IGA Gardens, Plants & Natural Products

During the course of the research it became clear that there are a range of issues where the communities to date have not succeeded in tackling them to the satisfaction of themselves or the donor agency. Thus approaching the communities with yet new projects might distract their focus from the current projects.

#### 3.5.1. Supply to Accommodation Sector

The task to be investigated in this regard was whether there is the possibility to set up a system to supply accommodation operations in the area with organically grown fruits and vegetables.

The existing set up of the irrigation gardens would be suitable for such a activity, as well as the range of vegetables planted would be sufficient for a starter.



There is though one very important factor for the success of such an project missing: the planning and organisation capacity of the community.

*The sustainability of such an operation relies to a high extent on the reliability of the supply. Late or non-delivery might be accepted once or twice, but then the businesses will again go back to their original sources of supply.*

#### 3.5.2. Getting Prepared

To prepare for the time when the community will be in the situation of providing the accommodation sector with organically grown fruit and vegetables, a few measures can be suggested.



As a measure to reduce evaporation as well as creating additional income, the growing of bushes around each irrigation segment is advisable.

*The most suitable bush for this would be roselle (hibiscus sabdariffa) as it grows quickly and the flowers, the bark and the seeds can be harvested.*

**Some facts about Roselle** (adapted from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roselle>)

- *The plant is considered to have anti-hypertensive properties.*
- The plant is cultivated for the production for bast fibre from the stem of the plant.
- The fibre may be used as a substitute for jute in making burlap.
- Hibiscus, specifically Roselle, has been used in folk medicine as a diuretic, mild laxative.
- The red calyxes of the plant are used as food colourings.
- The green leaves are used like a spicy version of spinach.
- The calyx infusion is taken to relieve coughs.
- Roselle juice, with salt, pepper, asafetida and molasses, is taken as a remedy for biliousness.
- The heated leaves are applied to cracks in the feet and on boils and ulcers to speed maturation.
- A lotion made from leaves is used on sores and wounds.
- Roselle is commonly used to make a sugary herbal tea, often mixed with mint leaves, dissolved menthol candy, and/or various fruit flavors.
- Roselle calyxes are harvested fresh to produce pro-health drink with high contents of vitamin C and anthocyanins, contributing to taste as a moderately astringent sensation.
- calyxes are used to prepare cold, sweet drinks popular in social events,
- The fresh calyxes are very perishable, rapidly developing fungal rot, and need to be used soon after purchase – unlike the dried product, which has a long shelf-life.
- Rosella jam has been made since Colonial times and is regularly found on bio markets. It is similar in flavour to plum jam, although more acidic.

With the presence of Roselle bushes the possibility arises to start with bee keeping.

**Hibiscus sabdariffa**



**Roselle plant**  
**Binomial name**  
*Hibiscus sabdariffa*

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roselle>

**Hibiscus sabdariffa**



**A roselle drink**

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roselle>



It should be considered to contact the NBRI & Steve Carr which has the publication of a report / publication on indigenous plants that can be utilized in agricultural farming.

- i.e. the consultant learned that there are 5 types of indigenous spinaches as well as two types of aloe which can be easily cultivated and deliver valuable food source and as such of importance to LISUP basic ideas.
- The possibility to plant fruit bushes should also be investigated with the support of the NBRI, for instance



The range of crops grown can be extended to:

- herbs (*ideal as they can be dried!*),
  - *paprika and peppers, which in the type chili pepper can again be dried*
  - *Cucumbers and squash as well as brinjals and zucchini*
  - *indigenous spinaches, specifically for livelihood support, including indigenous aloe types where either the leaves or the stem and blossom are edible*
- ... just to name a few examples.



As for the market for the current production at this point and time it will be considerably more feasible to sell the surplus produce at a stall next to the main road, including the preparation of cooked meals.

Specifically for the herbs, but also for many other products (i.e. tomatoes!) a drying oven will allow to produce a higher value product and at the same time eliminating the logistical problems arising with fresh produce.



The necessary dry oven needed for such project can be easily built locally and a solar driven. Materials needed to build such an oven are:

- *wood for a frame*
- *a 100ltr to 200ltr metal drum*
- *a piece of corrugated iron*
- *a piece of iron mesh*
- *a glass pane*

How does it work: the air, heated over the black corrugated iron panel, rises into the drum above where the produce to be dried is laid out on racks of mesh iron. The air escapes through small holes in the drum and replaced by fresh hot air from the panel. In this system the air does not exceed 60°C, which is ideal for the drying purpose.



**National Botanical  
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Plant Product Development  
Section (PPD)

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<http://www.nbri.org.na/ppd.html>

The PPD's main objective is to improve the exploitation of indigenous plant resources and the socio-economic role of plants harvested by local communities to benefit the rural poor.



Courtesy of ADCO

### 3.6. Artisan-ship & the new Workshop Building

#### 3.6.1. Feasibility and Usage

The community did understand that for the products they had envisaged in the new workshop building, being metal cupboards and wrought iron garden furniture as well as wooden shelves, the competition from the Gobabis market will be just to big to ever be able to make those businesses financially viable.



Possible ideas for the utilisation of the new workshop building are:

- As a longer term project the assembling, packaging and dissemination of crafts and interior decoration items produced by the other two communities .
  - It has to be mentioned that Mrs. Karin le Roux is not convinced of this idea, as she believes that it will be difficult to get the three communities to co-operate on this and keep personal and envy issues out. This is a valid argument in many cases.
  - This consultant though is of the opinion that existing success stories in our country in this regard prove that only such co-operation will eventually lead to success, the individual communities are too small to achieve the same.
- Packaging and labelling of the own dried products in cellophane bags
- *Artisan production of products that the local and regional communities can really use, actually really need, such as*
  - the fuel efficient Tso Tso oven
  - the solar box oven – as a DIY kit
  - the solar drying oven – as described above
- *Picnic benches and simple wooden racks for the padstal and local market*
  - *these could be made of old transport palettes collected from businesses in Gobabis (before they are just used for firewood!).*



Bench from Google search – images  
TsoTso oven courtesy HRDC  
Solar Box oven courtesy ADCC

#### 3.6.2. Option SME's Compete

An option that should definitely be explored for the artisan activities is to seek the support of SME's Compete.

Not only does SME's Compete have (or will soon have) an office in Gobabis, it offers mentor programs, supports its in the mean time over 1200 members with training in both skills and business training, marketing their products and skills.

Contacts:

- ⊙ *SME's Compete: Director Danny Meyer*
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- ⊙ *SMEs Competitiveness Consultancy (Pty) Ltd is a consultancy firm known by the acronym SMEs Compete that helps Namibian small and medium*



*enterprises (SMEs) grow business, create wealth and generate employment.*

- ⊙ *SMEs Compete's primary objective is to improve entrepreneurial, management, marketing and information technology skills of SMEs. For small firms in Namibia to grow, they must improve their business performance and competitiveness at home and abroad.*
- ⊙ *To help clients overcome challenges typically encountered during the course of conducting business, SMEs Compete has developed an array of services focused on capacity building, skills enhancement and growing business. The approach is to cater to the SME sector in general and to suit specific requirements of individual clients.*
- ⊙ *In addition to direct business capacity building, SMEs Compete also facilitates business linkages in the domestic market as well as regionally and internationally, through a wide array of ongoing services and events.*
- ⊙ *More than 700 SMEs around Namibia have already benefited from SMEs Compete's capacity building activities and mentoring services and the number continues to grow. Most clients routinely return and consequently benefit from follow-up training and ongoing business mentorship.*