



# Community-Based Adaptation FAST FACTS

## NAMIBIA

### Adjusting community agricultural practices to reduce climate change risk in Omusati region

**Grantee:** Omalundu Imuna Kommitiye Elungameno (OIKE)

**Type of organization:** CBO

**Number of participants:** 4,400

**Location:** Onkani Community Centre, Otamanzi Constituency, Omusati Region

**CBA Contribution:** \$46,000 USD

**Project Partners:** Onkani community; Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry; Desert Research Foundation of Namibia, Namibia National Farmers Union, Ongushu cooperative

**Co-financing:** Government of Japan (\$53,000 USD), in-kind community contribution (\$36,000 USD)

**Project Dates:** April 2009 – April 2011

#### BACKGROUND

The Community-Based Adaptation Programme (CBA) is a five-year United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) global initiative funded by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) within the Small Grants Programme (SGP) delivery mechanism. The UN Volunteers partners with UNDP and GEF/SGP to enhance community mobilization, recognize volunteers' contribution and ensure inclusive participation around the project, as well as to facilitate capacity building of partner NGOs and CBOs. In addition, funding is provided by the Government of Japan, the Government of Switzerland, and AusAID. The CBA's goal is to strengthen the resiliency of communities to address climate change impacts.

This project focuses on four farming communities in the arid Omusati region of northern Namibia, Onkani, Okaankaa, Onakapya and Ondjungulume. Although Namibia is one of the largest counties in southern Africa, it is home to only 2 million people, giving it the second lowest population density on earth. Namibia is also the driest country in sub-Saharan

Africa. Half of its population relies on subsistence agriculture, making it highly vulnerable to climate change and variability. In the project area, 70% of residents are subsistence farmers, growing rain-fed crops such as pearl millet, sorghum, bambara nuts, groundnuts, pumpkins, and indigenous vegetables. Animal husbandry in the region is non-commercial and includes sheep, goats, pigs, donkeys and poultry. Other livelihood activities include non-agricultural employment in nearby towns and the selling of locally-made alcoholic beverages. The Omusati region is the country's most densely populated and has high rates of HIV/AIDS infection. Other challenges include lack of water infrastructure and increased groundwater salinisation. The unsustainable use of pasturelands and native plants is degrading land resources. Reduced soil permeability and decreased water availability are contributing to poverty and environmental degradation in the region.



*Cattle drinking during the rainy season with fields in background. This watering hole will dry up three months after the rainy season, forcing communities to dig wells and rely on expensive piped water.*

#### CLIMATE CHANGE RISKS

With industries strongly dependent on natural resources, such as agriculture, fishing and nature-based tourism, Namibia is likely to be adversely impacted by climate change, which is expected to alter rainfall patterns. Rainfall in the project area is already highly variable from year to year, threatening traditional farming practices. Water availability has declined in recent years and climate change projections forecast increased aridity. Temperatures are projected to increase by 2-4°C and rainfall is expected to decline 10-20% by 2050, when compared to 1961-1990 baseline. The country is projected to face water scarcity by 2020 and is expected to experience more droughts and floods. Increased soil degradation threatens both local livelihoods, by reducing crop, meat and milk production, and the health of residents, through the increased prevalence of cholera and other water related illnesses. The reduction of natural resources in the project area is also leading to the adoption of environmentally damaging practices, such as encroachment into the Etosha National Park by farmers in search of better agricultural land.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND ADAPTATION MEASURES

This project has been prepared and implemented through a participatory process by OIKE, a local farmer's organization working to improve agricultural and forestry practices.

The project seeks to increase the adaptive capacity of communities through the development of resilient farming practices and improved natural resource management. The following results will be achieved:

- Planting drought resistant tree species to increase forest cover and reduce land degradation pressures by improving soil permeability and reducing evapotranspiration. Fruit tree species will be selected during an awareness-raising process with the community and will provide alternative sources of income.
- Demonstration of resilient and integrated soil-conservation methods and training of farmers to monitor local soil, vegetation and livestock initiatives.
- Implementation of small-scale rainwater harvesting and storage methods to improve water conservation and usage while adapting to more erratic and heavy rains. Four local schools have already been equipped with water tanks and will be trained in rainwater harvesting, thereby raising the awareness of younger generations.
- Improved community capacity to maintain hand-made wells to prevent the construction of additional wells that would lower the water table and help local people save time and money.



*Local women participating in project meeting. CBA projects build on women's essential roles in the community, especially in terms of natural resource management.*

Project objectives include both providing the community with practical tools for adaptation and increasing community awareness about climate change risks. The project seeks to integrate all community groups, including younger members, into activities. Lessons learned from project implementation will be shared regionally, nationally and globally, to encourage adaptive solutions at all levels.

### FOCUS ON...

#### Global environmental benefit

*The project will introduce sustainable land management techniques and will increase the forest cover with drought resistant fruit tree species in order to reduce land degradation pressures. These measures will help prevent the encroachment of agricultural lands into the Etosha National park, and will provide farmers with additional income sources.*

#### Community ownership and sustainability

*The community of Omusati has played an important role during project formulation. Women and young people in particular have committed their time, labour, materials and knowledge to implementation. The sustainability of the project will be ensured by building the capacity of all community members. Adaptation strategies learned will be shared amongst communities helping to secure livelihoods.*

#### Policy influence

*Lessons learned from project implementation will inform local and national policies focused on land degradation and climate change-driven scarcity.*

**For more information about CBA or CBA projects visit: [www.undp-adaptation.org/project/cba](http://www.undp-adaptation.org/project/cba)**

Further information, lessons learned, and experiences gathered from climate change adaptation activities globally can be found at the Adaptation Learning Mechanism: [www.adaptationlearning.net](http://www.adaptationlearning.net)

