

**TULI CONSERVATION TRUST
DONOR REPORT**

For the Year Ended 30th June 2023



www.tulitrust.org

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BACKGROUND



Roger de la Harpe

Tuli Conservation Trust (TCT) was originally established in Botswana in 1993 by the Northern Tuli Game Reserve (Notugre) Landowners Association with the current objectives being updated in 2019. The focus of TCT is the protection of Notugre wildlife, and environment and community enhancement.

The Tuli Conservation Trust UK (TCTUK), TCT's UK 'sister' trust, and a registered charity, was originally established in 2006 and re-invigorated in 2019 with the appointment of new Trustees who have a strong focus on fundraising for activities.

TCT's original mandate sought to raise funds to support its three priority projects - creating an anti-poaching team, fence upgrade and extension and a community outreach, education, and empowerment program. With the fence upgrade completed and the anti-poaching team having been established, going forward the continuing focus of the Trustees is on the third pillar – the community outreach, education, and empowerment program. To this end, a Community Engagement Programme was established in early 2022.

Long-term conservation depends on local communities, government and conservation organisations being united in partnerships and finding solutions to enable viable and sustainable human-wildlife co-existence. This report highlights some of TCT's achievements to the end of the reporting period.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME

As a result of the increased focus by the Trustees on community outreach, education, and empowerment, a pilot Community Engagement Programme ('CEP') was launched in early 2022 under a service level agreement with Safari Ranches (Pty) Ltd ('Safari') and Dopotta Reserve (Pty) Ltd ('Dopotta') whereby Safari and Dopotta kindly allocated, on a cost basis, one day a week each of Annie Peatling and Emmah Ditiso to act as Community Liaison Officers, representing TCT in the communities surrounding Notugre. TCT funded this arrangement from reserves and the Trustees have appointed a Community Engagement Trustee who leads on the project, reporting regularly to the board of Trustees.

The CEP to date has resulted in the delivery of a major community healthcare project, a horticultural project addressing human-elephant conflict, a repeat of the eye-care project and a joint community project to combat livestock rustling and preserve livelihoods. As a result of the activity created by the CEP, grant enquiries have increased and whilst each enquiry and/or application is generally considered on its own merit, the Trustees have agreed in principle that no faith-based or political projects will be supported, and neither will projects that are not scalable (i.e. no one community will be shown significant long-term preference).

The CEP's engagement with the beneficiaries of grants awarded does not cease with the distribution of funds as grantees are required to confirm that certain criteria will be met with regard to the maintenance and long-term care of equipment donated, regular reporting schedules agreed, and inspection rights granted so that TCT may verify the impact of any donation.

Due to the success of the pilot CEP - which concluding in May 2023 - the Trustees have decided to build capacity 'on the ground' by recruiting a permanent resource to the role of CLO. The recruitment process is well under way, and it is hoped that the successful candidate will be in situ by third-quarter 2023. This will allow TCT to broaden its reach within the communities surrounding Notugre and to facilitate further projects for the benefit of people and wildlife alike.

The Trustees wish to formally thank Safari and Dopotta for allowing Annie and Emmah to manage the pilot CEP over the past 15 months - a partnership which was effective and productive. Without this assistance the CEP could not have achieved all that it has.

COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICERS

Annie Peatling (on the left below) and Emmah Ditiso (on the right below) have now completed their roles as Community Liaison Officers ('CLOs'), and we said a fond 'farewell' to both at the end of May 2023. A token of the Trustees' appreciation for all their hard work was presented, and we very much look forward to keeping in touch with both as they start new chapters - Annie with a new job in Malawi and Emmah as a new mother-to-be.



Craig Lord

The new permanent incumbent will again be operating under a formal role description, engaging with the six communities surrounding Notugre to understand the needs of those communities and to assess priorities and sustainability of possible solutions, so to identify where support from TCT may make the most impact. The CLO's role encompasses, amongst other duties:-

- Identifying potential projects for TCT to support and, after due evaluation and if appropriate, assisting applicants in completing a Grant Application Form for submission to TCT.
- Providing oversight on successful projects, evaluating their sustainability, and ensuring comprehensive reporting from grant recipients is received by TCT in a timely manner - quality assuring the reporting prior to submission to TCT Trustees.
- Where required, project-managing TCT funded projects.

The CLO will continue to have regular update meetings with the TCT Community Engagement Trustee whereby they provide a summary of activities, undertake an initial review of any grant enquiries received, and propose possible projects for TCT to support.

When out and about on TCT activities, the CLO will proudly display the TCT branding so they are visible to the communities in which they work.

Amount granted to May 2023: BWP6,500.00 per month + expenses

ONGOING COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Gobojango Horticulture Project

A major project undertaken during the year under review was dedicated towards the village of Gobojango where the electrification of a fence has been sponsored by TCT.

Gobojango already had an existing water reservoir and small irrigation system in place, however the water infrastructure and the crops the community wished to grow faced the constant threat of roaming elephants. Although the field was fenced, and the community did everything they could to deter these imposing creatures, the need for further protection of their village horticulture project was evident.

TCT agreed to electrify the 1.5ha plot with a set of quality, solar-based, elephant protection wires to try and mitigate the risk of human-elephant conflict occurring at this horticulture plot in the future. Human-elephant conflict is a common problem in villages that surround Notugre; community members can spend days and months ploughing and planting their crops for them to be destroyed in just a few short hours by a group of passing elephants. By developing ways to protect these horticultural areas we not only provide a safe place for community members to grow their crops, but we also protect our elephants living within this unique open system.

Firstly, the current fence line had to be inspected to ensure it was in perfect condition for implementation of the planned electrified offset brackets. To do this, members of the Gobojango community came out in their numbers to clear the bush off the fence line. They cleared a 2m width along each side of the fence and will continue to do this when needed to make sure the fence remains in great conditions going forward.

Once the initial clear up had been completed we welcomed the fencing provider, Stafix, to the site. The team worked quickly as they put up a high-quality, 4 strand, dual energizer solar elephant wire system for the community. This fence is designed to be extremely low maintenance and function optimally at all times. Not only did Stafix commit to carrying out the job, but they also offered some free welding work on the broken gate to ensure the property was secured correctly, a donation in kind for which we are very grateful. Stafix and TCT also provided a basic maintenance kit and general supplies to be left on site and to be used for day-to-day fence maintenance work.

Once the fence electrification was complete, it was important to ensure that the community knew how to look after it. Lawrence from Stafix and Michael from the Village Development Committee selected 12 individuals to receive basic training on how to identify a problem and carry out basic maintenance. The daytime and night-time watchmen, as well as those involved in tending to the crops, were given detailed step-by-step instructions on how to use the supplied maintenance kit to keep their fence in top condition. Members of the Village Development Committee also attended to make sure that the information is transferable at any time.

After a few days the hard work was completed and TCT was thrilled to be at the point to hand over this project to the Gobojango Community. After a full fence inspection by the TCT CLOs together with the Stafix team, a small ceremony to celebrate the handover was held. We welcomed the Kgosi of Gobojango, members of the Village Development Committee, members of the agriculture department, social/development workers, counsellors, and general members of the community to be part of the handover.

This project has brought a lot of pride to the people of Gobojango, and TCT. By alleviating the threat that elephants pose, protecting a precious water resource, and allowing a safe place to plant crops we have moved one step closer to establishing coexistence between communities and wildlife areas. This plot was always earmarked to provide food for schools, clinics and for people who are less fortunate in the village. We hope that by securing its presence, the Gobojango community can maximize its efforts and achieve what is set out to do – a project for the community, owned by the community.

The next phase of the project is the provision of horticultural training, to increase the crop yield, followed by a feasibility study to be undertaken to evaluate the scalability of the project across the other communities neighbouring Notugre.



Clearance of area



Electrification



Signage



Training



Success!!

Amount granted: BWP90,385.20

Notugre Independence Day Soccer Tournament

This is a long-standing tournament, which brought together in September 2022 eight football teams from communities neighbouring Notugre. Each team put forward a member to be part of the organising committee and a chairman was chosen by its members. The committee worked with the CLOs to organise the items needed to stage the tournament, and the grant given was applied towards the prize money, trophies, medals, referee and game coordinator fees and some small miscellaneous items. Some very competitive games took place, and the event was enjoyed by players and supporters alike.

The overall winners of the tournament were Mathathane FC.

Amount granted: BWP30,000



Greater Madiupe Farmers Association

As a response to the uncontrollable livestock theft that plagued Notugre and neighbouring villages in 2020, the communities formed the Greater Madiupe Farmers Association (GMFA). This association was formed to create community patrol units that generated a presence in the community lands to combat the major theft of Motswana livestock. Motswana livestock was, and still is, being stolen and driven into Zimbabwe where it is then kraaled and sold within the country. The government has no compensation scheme for stolen livestock so the community came together to protect their animals and their livelihoods.

On this initiative the GMFA works with Mephato, a citizen manned and run project under the guidance of the Botswana Police. The Mephato men working for the project are paid through a poverty eradication program called Ipelegeng under the ministry of local government and each represent their home villages. The Mephato have grown from three units to 13 units, covering thousands of hectares of land all the way from Mothlabaneng to Lepokole hills. These men are anti-poaching and anti-livestock theft rangers and work under the GMFA (but are paid by the government poverty relief fund). TCT was approached by the GMFA with a request for a donation for patrol equipment in the form of tents to secure bases in their patrol areas, shelter from the elements and to ensure mobility so the patrols can be quickly relocated to rustling hot spots when needed. The Trustees approved the donation of 13 large tents and five smaller tents, but on ordering the tents with the supplier of choice, Jolly Bushman, it very generously donated the five smaller tents.

The handover ceremony took place on 26 May 2023 and already the Mephato men have operated as a great support to Notugre through reporting poaching activity, incursions to the back line fence and assisting with human-wildlife conflict issues particularly regarding the lions of Tuli.

Regular reports are to be made by the GMFA and TCT is welcome to inspect the donated tents and check their conditions at any time. TCT are also entitled to visit sites where the tents will be erected.



On route to destination



Working together with co-donor



Annie and Emmah with representatives



Large donation!

Amount granted: BWP386,509.19

Bobirwa Eye Project

Back in July 2021 TCT co-funded a project whereby eye tests and glasses were provided to the children of Bobirwa schools. Following the success of this, and in wanting to ensure ongoing support, our CLOs Annie and Emmah revisited three of the six schools for further testing and general support to the community during the last reporting period, using the glasses and frames remaining from the 2021 project. The remaining three schools were re-visited during the current period under review.

In addition to testing the sight of the new school-intake of standard four learners, a review was undertaken of pupils who had received glasses last year and any that had lost/broken their glasses were dispensed new ones.



We have several stories of the impact the glasses have made to the lives of the receiving children, and these can be found on our website via this link: - [Tuli Conservation Trust \(tulitrust.org\)](https://tulitrust.org)

A stocktake after the second year of eye testing confirmed that very little, if any, new 'kit' will be required to enable a third year of testing and dispensing.

Amount granted: USD2,835

Clinic Project

In April 2022 significant donations of medical equipment and sanitation facilities were made to clinics in the six communities neighbouring Notugre, and the detail of these donations was reported in the previous Donor's Report.

During the year under review, the CLOs undertook inspections of the equipment and facilities to ensure all were still in working order. Whilst there has been some difficulty experienced by a few clinics in sourcing consumables for the glucometers, all donated items were present and in good working order. Below shows Emmah having her blood pressure monitored during one such inspection visit.



Amount granted: BWP273,000.00

ANTI-POACHING TEAM (AP team)

As the frontline defence and deterrent in efforts to combat poaching, well-trained and highly mobile teams of armed rangers act throughout Notugre and the neighbouring areas. Although no funds were requested or granted to the AP Team during the year under review, we can report that the funding previously granted (capital expenditure BWP2,034,086.43, operational expenditure BWP4,955,771.00) has co-enabled the firm establishment and operation of the AP Team which now stands at:-

- 14 x AP team members (based at the two AP camps)
- 2 x AP camps (Central and East)
- 1 x Mobile camp used as and when required to stay and patrol less accessible areas
- Vehicle and mobile radios with AP and Notugre channels

The AP team engages in gathering intelligence, conducting surveillance, and patrolling in both targeted and random operations. In addition to their anti-poaching responsibilities, the AP team also responds to reports of human-induced wildlife injuries or deaths in close collaboration with the Department of Wildlife and National Parks.



FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

TCT and TCTUK have constituted a joint Fundraising Committee to seek external funding and to market the Trusts. This committee has been formed to provide the Trusts with insight, fulfil the necessary governance requirements and undertake the raising of charitable funds from Grant Making Trusts, Corporations, and Individuals to support the Objects of TCTUK and TCT. Details of the Fundraising Committee can be found on the website. As a result of the fall-out from the Covid-19 situation all events have been postponed until late 2023/2024 and will be re-arranged accordingly. This moratorium on fundraising activities has naturally impacted the funding program, but reserves built to date fortunately allow all committed grants to continue.

One fundraising event that did proceed in 2022, in conjunction with Afzelia's¹ entry into the Tusk Wildlife Ranger Challenge, was a sponsored walk undertaken in Guernsey, Channel Islands, with funds raised topping the Notugre AP team's target of USD10,000. Over 100 ranger teams competed in the challenge and the Afzelia team did incredibly well to complete the 21kms race in a very credible time of 03:57:55, all whilst carrying a 22kg backpack.

Afzelia has again entered a team into the 2023 Tusk Wildlife Ranger Challenge <https://www.tusk.org/our-events/wildlife-ranger-challenge/> so keep an eye on our website for updates on their training progress and in the event itself on Saturday 16 September 2023. We would like to thank Tusk for giving the AP team this opportunity to participate in another very successful, and very necessary, fundraiser.

¹ The Botswana company set up to establish and manage a reserve-wide Anti-Poaching team.



Francois du Toit

OTHER SUPPORT

The TCT Trustees are assisted by two individuals, part-time, who donate their skills to TCT – an administrator, who acts as Trust Secretary and writes TCT funding applications and a social media officer who updates the TCT website and other social media accounts with the aim of a) attracting further donors and b) highlighting community and conservation issues. Both these individuals are employed by a donor who generously donates their time to TCT activities.

FUTURE PLANS

TCT'S future plans include, as mentioned above, the recruitment of a permanent CLO and resulting expansion of the Community Engagement Programme.

In addition, the Trustees have approached the Ministry of Education and Skills Development in Gaborone regarding facilitating the creation of a Higher Education Facility offering conservation-focused vocational courses that provide the best opportunity for future employment, thereby providing economic uplift to those communities in need. The Trustees are currently awaiting a response from the Ministry before being able to progress this initiative.

Alongside looking to work with the Ministry of Education and Skills, the Trustees aim to develop mutually beneficial partnerships with organisations that align closely with TCT's values and objectives.

Through education and empowerment, the local community will not only be able to value pristine wilderness but also share fairly in its benefits.

THANK YOU

TCT has a long-term vision beyond the initial three-year programme and priority projects and the Trustees (whose details can be found on the website) are very grateful for your generous and continued support. Positive impact can only be achieved when we have the right people in the right roles, from having excellent partners to passionate stakeholders to improve the reach and output of our work. The generosity of donors continues to be invaluable in funding our conservation efforts on the ground and has to date created several jobs in the local communities. This, TCT can achieve only with your donations, so **we thank you**, and hope that you will choose to continue to support us as we strive to achieve more.

We would also like to thank Lawrence Arden of Stafix and Donald Boxshall-Smith of The Jolly Bushman for generously supporting the Gobojango Horticultural and Greater Madioppe Farmers' Association projects respectively.



Pat de la Harpe

Unless otherwise stated all photos by Annie Peatling

Please visit www.tulitrust.org for further information.