



WE ARE ODIG - IMPACT BRIEF

For more conservation & development impact: How WWF Namibia uses «Organisational Development for Income Generation» to strengthen local civil society partners

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Background: Namibia - a pioneer for inclusive natural resource management

Namibia, one of the last countries in Africa to gain Independence (1990), was the first African country to incorporate protection of the environment into its constitution. The «Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) programme» - a combination of policy and legal reforms - gave local members of communal conservancies meaningful and recognized rights to manage and benefit from their natural resources. Today the programme reaches across the entire country and is a significant example of state-supported empowerment of local communities, decentralized natural resource management and related poverty reduction. It is fair to say that there is nothing like it anywhere else in the world!



A system like the one in Namibia needs strong civil society actors and this is where WWF Namibia comes into play: WWF has a 30-year history of helping to build and collaborating with civil society leaders in the national CBNRM programme. Specifically in the last years, WWF Namibia has been advocating for a landscape approach that would link these leaders together more strongly with government actors and the private sector. As authorities sometimes struggle to identify relevant political measures when it comes to different sectors, such as agriculture, food security, rural development, education and health, WWF may help tie these all together. Providing technical and financial support to civil society partners and building the enabling environment for vibrant partnerships between civil society organisations, government, and private actors are key pillars of WWF's strategy in Namibia.

Building strong civil society actors through Organisational Development for Income Generation (ODIG)

Since 2022, WWF Namibia is participating in WWF Switzerland's Organisational Development for Income Generation (ODIG) Programme to further strengthen the resilience of the organisation and its partner organisations. Since then, WWF Namibia was able to:

- **Provide financial support:** WWF Namibia established a dedicated Communications & Fundraising Director position to drive the dialogue with partners on joint resource mobilization and to explore corporate and innovative fundraising solutions. This led to the diversification of funding sources, the stabilisation of an income pipeline and ultimately to a stronger WWF office, better able to support its local partners. Sixty percent of the funding that WWF Namibia receives goes to its partners.
- **Establish new civil society networks:** WWF Namibia commissioned a study on sustainable financing, which suggested a working group on fundraising with civil

society partners. The group with members of four organisations forms a promising starting point to develop local financial resource streams, enhance partners financial independence, sustainability, and local ownership.

- **Build a center for mutual capacity strengthening and income generation:** WWF Namibia also supported local partners on their organisational development journey. A newly established co-working space, the Community Conservation Inspiration (CCI) Hub, hosts a center and upskilling facility for certified training to communal conservancy members, NGOs, government partners and any professional in the area of interest. The move to the Hub is a milestone for community conservation in Namibia, with NGO partners now owners of the property. WWF's rent is now paid to conservation partners, helping to ensure their future and strengthening the partnerships, while sharing an inspiring space to grow, learn and share with one another.
- **Build private sector engagement with civil society partners:** WWF Namibia was able to leverage funding support from a Namibian-based foundation for solar power compatible aircons and heaters at the CCI Hub. The CCI Hub also serves as a new impetus for visibility and relationship building: several important business leaders attended the launch, including CEOs of two major banks and of three philanthropic organizations - potential partners to raise programmatic funding for implementation by, and benefit of, civil society partners.
- **Identify new approaches to solving development challenges:** WWF Namibia invested in product and marketing development for **Wildlife Credits**, a concept for payment for eco-system services developed for and with local communities. Several products have been piloted at a local level, also together with a corporate partner (Amarula). The goal is to launch this product at the international market, thus expanding the outreach and impact of Wildlife Credits for the benefit of rural communities. WWF Namibia also established a new Conservation Finance unit. Through a strategic partnership with the **Sustainable Finance Coalition** they are working on green finance solutions in Namibia, aiming to unlock sustainable financing for people and nature from domestic sources and instruments.

Between November 2022 and June 2024, WWF Namibia received a grant from WWF Switzerland of 216'000 Swiss Francs and generated 2.1 million Swiss Francs in return (ROI: 10) after two years of strategic investment in capacity development for income generation. These generated funds directly benefit field work for conservation and development impact and support the work with partners on capacity development and financial sustainability, in turn leading to a stronger civil society.



«NACSO – the Namibian Association of Community-Based Natural Resources Management Support Organisations – plays a strong civil society coordination role, ensuring the various NGOs are working in tandem with one-another. We promote programmatic monitoring efforts through the collection of data, and act as the conduit for innovation, bringing new ideas and approaches to the Community-Based Natural Resources Management programme. Together with WWF Namibia, we established the **Community Conservation and Inspiration Hub**, a common space, where we can come together, build capacities with learning and sharing, and strengthen our financial independence in the long term. When we all work together towards our goals, we ensure a strong civil society and a future for Namibia's people and nature». **Maxi Pia Louis, Director, NACSO**

«WWF Namibia got this wonderful support called ODIG which is focusing on organizational development and it's a bit different than the usual support we're getting for conservation. It's funding that we can use to fund our own institution and our partners, which had a massive impact».

Dr Juliane Zeidler, Country Director, WWF Namibia



WWF Switzerland's Organisational Development for Income Generation (ODIG) Programme enhances the income generation capacities of WWF offices, thereby leveraging its experience in private sector collaboration and public engagement. The goal is WWF, and partners achieve greater conservation impact thanks to more resilient, more resourceful, and more result-oriented offices, increasingly generating their own funds. Between 2023-2025, eight offices participated in the programme and received a total of 1.1 million Swiss Francs in grants and loans per year. For every Swiss Franc invested, partner offices generated 5.40 Swiss Francs in return (in 2024).

Sources:

- WWF Namibia Strategic Plan 2022-2026
- www.sdg.un.org/partnerships/community-based-natural-resource-management-programme#description, 9.12.2024
- www.nacso.org.na, 9.12.2024
- Interview with Dr Juliane Zeidler, WWF Namibia Country Director, August 2024
- Technical Progress Reports WWF Namibia, July 2024



Our Mission

Together, we protect the environment and create a future worth living for generations to come.

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