

# Community Engagement on Joint Venture Models for the Sikerete Tourism Concession



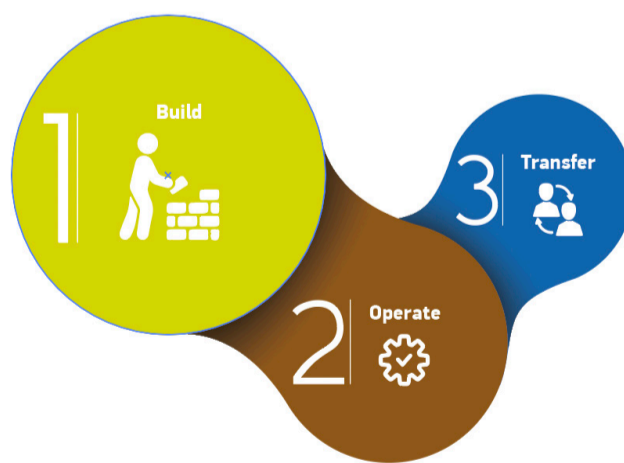
The George Mukoya and Muduva Nyanagana conservancies make up the Khaudom North Complex in the Kavango-East region of Namibia. Currently these conservancies main source of income is the seasonal trophy hunting game and indigenous natural products harvesting including thatching grass and Devil's Claw. Trophy hunting is operated through a joint quota allocated by the Ministry of Environment Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) and income is distributed among registered conservancy members through a Benefit Distribution Plan. In 2008, MEFT awarded the Sikerete tourism concession to the Gciriku community, comprising of Muduva Nyangana Conservancy, George Mukoya Conservancy and Gciriku Traditional Authority. The Sikerete tourism concession is located inside the Khaudom National Park, which is in the Kavango East region of Namibia. The concession offers an opportunity to demonstrate a model that strengthens conservation and socio-economic development objectives through a partnership approach which involves national park, conservancies, communities and the private sector.

through Strengthened Partnerships Demonstration Project in partnership with MEFT. Through this project, OKACOM is supporting the concessionaires with the construction of accommodation facilities for the Sikerete tented campsite. Due to limited capacity for the concessionaires to operate a tourism facility, OKACOM is supporting MEFT to facilitate the concessionaires to establish agreements with a private Joint Management Partner to jointly operate Sikerete Tourism Concession. The long-term goal is to demonstrate how local communities can be capacitated to actively participate in tourism development in the CORB for socio-economic development.

In August 2021, MEFT organised the first consultative engagements with the Sikerete Concessionaires on Joint Management Partnerships with a view to accord communities an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the concept of tourism joint ventures. The consultations further deliberated on different joint venture models that the Concessionaires could choose, and most importantly offer inputs in the model they prefer. Participants included conservancy management committees, conservancy managers and senior traditional authority representative. The community was introduced to the concept of joint management partnerships, how each model operates, the advantages and disadvantages of each model.

In 2018 the Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM), with technical support from the United Nations Development Programme and funding from the Global Environment Facility, initiated the Conservation Tourism

## Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) Model



A private partner finances all costs associated with construction and operations of the tourism facility within a concession belonging to the community. The private partner operates and maintains the tourism facility for a specified period and transfer the facility after an agreed period. Partners can renegotiate contract agreement after the initial contract. Based on the agreement, staffing and procurement of goods and services to operate the facility can be sourced from the local community where capacity may be available. The agreement also stipulates the financial commitment between parties over a period of time. The private partner gradually transfers shares to the concessionaire until they recovered their investment.

## Maintain, Operate and Transfer Model



The community fully finances the construction of the tourism facilities within its concession and invites a private partner to enter into a joint venture agreement to operate the facility for a specified period. The private partner may finance the operational costs and is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the facilities during the contract period. Staffing, procurement of goods and services to operate the facility is sourced from the local community and there is a commitment of payment of royalties to the concessionaire. These royalties are used for local community socio-economic development. The contract is reviewed over time to assess performance and a decision can be made to continue or terminate.

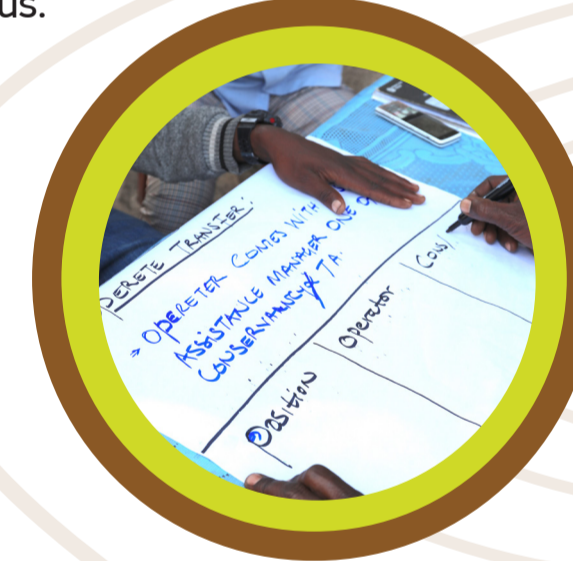
## Management Company Model



The concessionaire finances the construction, the operational costs and maintains the tourism infrastructures during the business agreement. The management company's role is to operate the business, generate income and take a percentage of the business proceedings at the end of a stipulated period. The management Company is accountable to provide information to a board and contract agreements are reviewed occasionally. Business decision making are defined between the two parties.

## Group Work and Discussions

Participants were divided in groups to discuss their preferred model. This afforded them the opportunity to discuss and contextualise the information, record their inputs and gain a general consensus.



## Presentations and Reporting Back

Each group reported back on their views regarding the pros and cons of each of the JV models including a recommendation of their preferred model.



## Community Voices

**Susana Muranda**  
Senior Council and Headwoman of Rurujarara Village, Gciriku Traditional Authority

"If we get the right operator, it will bring change and benefit the community greatly. This initiative will build capacity amongst community members, specifically the business enterprise side of things and with regards to sustainable management of the resources. Whatever they do must be a positive impact. Right now, we must work together with the Ministry and OKACOM to get a reputable company which can deliver, as we need continuity until we are able to run the establishment ourselves. The Operate and Transfer Model is good as the establishment will be operational while we are learning. If there is anything to be done on the infrastructure, such as renovations the operator can still be involved. The 2nd one holds too much risk for us as a community. We look forward on learning how to run a tourism facility, gain sound financial management skills as well as how to use resources sustainably, possibly how to invest funds to get bigger returns. We want cooperation between the two conservancies and the ministry. I thank OKACOM for making it possible that we have full explanation of these models."

**Violeta Matamu**  
Chairperson of George Mukoya Conservancy

"In today's meeting, we focused on what we want the contractor to do, specifically the time period of ownership and how the community will be involved in the decision making. We also discussed the percentage of income which will be received by the community. As youth we will be able to get jobs, training and knowledge, which is a huge benefit. We really are proud of this project. I will continue to participate in all the meetings and represent our conservancy, today after this meeting I will be briefing the community on what was discussed. They must know about what to expect and what the process will be from here, we will be waiting for everything to take off."

**Lawrence Lirumba**  
Manager of Muduva Nyangana Conservancies

"I feel honoured and proud being part of this project. In the long term our communities will benefit from the tourist campsite. This meeting was a way of explaining to people how they will operate this facility once it is handed over to them. I learned that there are a number of processes which need to be followed, there are risks, which we have to be aware of before going forward. Our constitution states that the main objective of such ventures is for communities to benefit, which is more in line with the OKACOM demonstration project objective. It is helpful that we are learning about these models early on, so that we have the correct expectations of the Joint Venture. When we do enter into an agreement, we will know how it will be handled."

**Clemens Likoro Kashera**  
Headman of Livayi Village, Muduva Nyangana Conservancy

"The development which is coming is welcomed, we really look forward to the benefits which come with these types of projects when it is implemented by the right operator. Training should be one of the things to focus on so that we are fully capacitated. There has not been any such initiative before and it is an eye opener, we do not have any tourism project which is operational. This is the first of this kind of meeting and consultation and it was very informative. We should continue this way of involving community at all stages."

Conservation Tourism • Joint Management • Benefits Sharing

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