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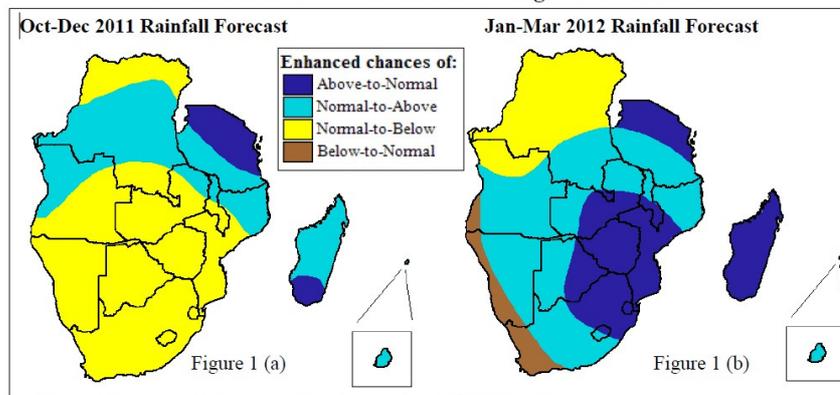
NEWS IN BRIEF

Issue 2 March 2012

Our second newsletter release coincides with the ending of Local Subsidy Contract funding (with effects from March 2012) by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) that has been availed through the Namibia Water Resource Management Project. To this, the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, the country's custodian of water resources would take full responsibility to ensure that the operations of the Basin Management Committee continues. We hope that the newsletter bring you news and updates on various projects taking place in the Okavango-Omatako Basin to keep you informed on latest happenings and developments along with issues related to the management of our basin's water and related land natural resources.

the Minister of Agriculture, Water and Forestry Hon. John Mutorwa pointed out that Namibia's interior faces a challenge of readily available fresh water for development and socio-economic activities and stressed the management of the limited available at basin level. In addition, progress has been made to developing the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Park (KAZA) as well as implementing the 12 Month Okavango Basin Strategic Plan in Namibia which would be reviewed at the upcoming stakeholders' forum. On the other hand, in the beginning of 2012 it was reported and witnessed that local farmers in Kavango faced a dilemma to start working their fields as a result of "erratic" rainfall and sparking fears of food security despite the Southern Africa Climate Outlook Forum (SARCOF) predicting normal to above normal rainfalls for Namibia during the current period.

Climate Forecast for the 2011/2012 Agricultural Season



Source: Forecast graphics derived from forecast issued by SARCOF.

During the 2011 year along, a number of major developments have taken place; such includes the ongoing Cubango-Okavango River Basin Water Auditing by the Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM) with support from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) with results yet to be presented locally; an upcoming major dairy farm in Kavango, Namibia; while due to industrialization and limited water sources Windhoek and the Northern regions (Cuvelai basin) have been experiencing water shortages necessitating thoughts of a feasibility study for an interbasin water transfer from Okavango River through the North Eastern Water Carrier Canal. In fact, at a recently held workshop focusing on water quality and quantity in February 2012;

So, with the interlinkage of varying water needs and competition, isn't it time that we start to think of water resources management, use and competition in a broader perspective (integrated) than only up to regional administrative and political boundaries? Remember, every water user is a downstream receiver from those upstream of them. If you would like to have a copy of the Draft Terms of Reference of the proposed Kavango Link Feasibility study to suggest inputs on the study, please visit the OkBMC office.

Shall you have comments or queries relating to the articles or news that you would like to share with your fellow basin stakeholders, please write to our Support Officer, Reinhold Kambuli, at our Basin Office.

CONTACT DETAILS

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NEW S L E T T E R



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SAREP Southern Africa Regional Environmental Program *Supporting the sustainable management of the Okavango River Basin* **GRANTS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN OKAVANGO RIVER BASIN**

The Southern Africa Regional Environmental Program (SAREP) is seeking applications from Angolan, Botswana, Namibian, or International organizations to implement a multi-faceted program to address community water supply and sanitation issues and Community Integrated Natural Resource Management in Angola, Botswana, and Namibia. Multiple grants may be awarded to eligible applicants.

For more information please contact Ms. Dorothy Wamunyima at Namibia Nature Foundation (email dorowams@gmail.com), Reinhold Kambuli at OkBMC office or Mr. Brian App at bapp@sarep.co.bw.

PROGRESS ON WORKING GROUPS ACTIVITIES

The Okavango Basin Management Committee held its second stakeholders forum meeting during 16-17 November 2011 to review and reflect on the progress made with implementing activities of the 2010/2011 Operational Plan. Stakeholders were updated on the progress made with regards to the Biodiversity Monitoring, Waste Management and Pollution Prevention, Support to Regional Disasters Risk Management Committee; Water Quality Monitoring; and Land Livelihoods Working Groups (WG) Activities and other activities that have been conducted during the period in review. Stakeholders also discussed "drivers" for change, and planned developments within their basin based on upcoming planned developments.

WATER QUALITY WG

The Water Quality Monitoring WG overall objective is to develop a consolidated water quality monitoring protocol, for both surface and groundwater for the Okavango-Omatoko River Basin involving all stakeholders. The developed strategy involved Aquatic Environment, Fisheries, Water Supply and Sanitation Coordination, Health, Farmers, Tourism and Traditional Authorities' representatives and would compose of chemical, physical and biological parameters; agreed monitoring sites and monitoring frequencies used in water quality monitoring against development. This move aims to solve concerns that in some communities, drinking water did not seem suitable for human, along with health issues including diseases outbreak such as bilharzias, diarrhea, malaria, skin rashes, and worms especially in standstill, slow flowing and stagnant water sources. MAWF's Water Environment Division has trained these stakeholders on procedures used by the MAWF to monitor surface and groundwater sources'. This protocol would be implemented in 2012 and would monitor aquatic macro invertebrates, fish parasites, chemical, physical and microbial (surface and groundwater). Analyzed data would be available in MAWF Water Quality Information Systems (WAQIS) database and locally at OkBMC and Kamtjonga Inland fisheries Institute (KIFI) Archives.

It is also important to note that water quality monitoring does not necessarily mean water quality sampling, but efforts must also be made to manage and mitigate activities that pose potential risks to water quality. In that view, the Southern Africa Regional Environmental Programme (SAREP)'s Water Supply and Sanitation Key Result Area (KRA) has facilitated and conducted a consolidation workshop on the Integrated Water Quality Management (IWQM) model in the Kavango Region. The workshop aimed to introduce the current Management Units-MUs (organizations that have previously been approached to participate in the process, through the identification of their own water use activities and the risks that they pose to water quality in the river basin) to each other in order to consolidate the management framework and pave a way forward regarding MUs signing up and commence reporting to each other and to the OkBMC; to facilitate the process that leads to participating in the water use governance structure of the river basin by all stakeholders. It is expected that more MUs would be signed up in 2012 while reporting framework and possible data capturing and mapping that could be used to improve water quality management communication among different sectors in the basin would be developed. If you would like to learn more on this, please do contact Mr. Kambuli.



The Divisions of GeoHydrology and Water Environment in MAWF would be offering technical support to the BMC to monitor ground and surface water quality. This would comprise of biological, physical and chemical parameters

WASTE MANAGEMENT AND POLLUTION PREVENTION WG

An information sharing meeting regarding waste management in the urban and major settlements was held earlier in the year in collaboration with the Namibia Recycling Forum (a City of Windhoek recycling project partners) to share the experiences from that project. At that meeting, it was revealed that waste management is a challenge, fueled by illegal dumping, lack of financial and human resources in Local Authorities and most dumping sites were not fenced by then. From the Windhoek project experience, recycling was a challenge since reclaimers were not well compensated; there was a need to establish a basin wide waste management plan which could also include promoting areas "ownership" to be local police, who monitor illegal activities, including formalizing and encouraging waste reclaimers. The WG conducted a basin wide successful cleanup campaign that developed awareness materials although it would not be sustainable in the long run. It has also been discovered that there is a lack of waste management plans in the basin, and this would be considered in 2012/13 operations.

LAND AND LIVELIHOODS WG

Land and Livelihoods WG was formed to work with rural communities to sustainably manage their land while developing economic opportunities that would improve the livelihoods of rural communities and membership of the WG is made up of persons representing institutions with a mandate and stake in land management and livelihood issues as well as other individuals with such interest in the basin. In addition, the WG would assist rural communities by facilitating Participatory & Integrated Land Use Management Plan (PILUMPs) which operates at the lowest level and recognises the



Participants at the SAREP Land and Livelihoods training busy with the visioning exercise.

Photo credits: Mr Reinhold Kambuli

multiple transient and fluid members in Principles of interaction of land use activities in Community Engagement, situation a given geographical area. To analysis and community Visioning, date, SAREP has trained WG how to form management bodies

to implement the PILUMPs, developing management plans, developing target conditions, developing Actions to respond to threats associated with targets, developing a monitoring plan to reach the vision. A consensus have been reduced to absorb former Kavango Basin Wide Forum member in implementing the WG activities. This WG would draft proposals and budgets for planned activities of which a lot of interests have been shown in conservancies and community forest programmes, of which SAREP would fund and coordinated by SAREP Activity Manager and Field Facilitators in Namibia.

BIODIVERSITY MONITORING WG



Certain birds, such as the African Fishing Eagle and amphibians are good indicators of ecological status.

Photo credits: Mr. Mark Paxton, Shamvura Camp

This WG took extensive photographs during an aerial survey of the entire Okavango River within Namibia which were then georeferenced by geography experts to compare with Google images; and assessed using the Land Use Conflicting Information System (LUCIS) Model. This model was used to determine hotspots by applying various criteria and a huge diversity of data.

The process was recommended by

Dr. Chris Brooks, a biodiversity expert currently heading biodiversity management in the broader Cubango-Okavango basin. The first Hot spot, the Cuito/Okavango river confluence, was chosen as a starting point. This was a continuation from the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) and would be put into the mapping system. The WG included the LUCIS model as an essential assessment tool which was established after several meetings while working with it. During this period the model was consequently re-designed and will now be called the BIODIVHA MODEL.

This was developed as a new working tool more specifically suited to Biodiversity assessment and monitoring as compared to the LUCIS Model which was more suited towards monitoring biodiversity in relation to Land use.

The focus for 2012 will be carrying out another comparative aerial survey of the entire river system during high-water, but focusing more on the now established 8

hotspots. They will also be focusing on monitoring procedures and data collection, after a further two meetings to finalize the information for this model. A number of specialists will again be involved in some of the aspects at these meetings. From the several meetings that were held, a huge amount of data was generated, with the assistance of experts to verify proposed areas as legitimate hotspots. A lot of the information still needs to be verified before actual monitoring can be started. This includes getting stakeholders on board as well as working with the local Biodiversity Task Force for Namibia under the Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission. Nevertheless the WG has formulated an extensive preliminary "action plan" with designated people responsible for monitoring specific aspects that have already been identified and confirmed. This Action Plan is however a starting point and will also require some ongoing refinement before implementation can take place. Even then it will be adjusted as the monitoring process evolves.

OTHER OKBMC ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED IN 2011

The committee also drew Terms of Reference (ToRs) for feasibility study on Ndonga Linena on request of Kavango Regional Farmers Union who wanted access to water especially from the flooding river.

These ToRs have been submitted to Hydrology Division which would then fund and appoint a hydrological consultant on behalf of the OkBMC. The study in question has been recommended to also consider Kansukwa/Mavanze through Ncaute ephemeral rivers. OkBMC in collaboration with Hydrology would setup rain gauges and gauge plates in the basin to be involved in rainfall and river levels monitoring to assist early warnings.

A support letter from the Ministry of Education has already been received indicating schools where rain gauges could be put up, which would be followed by training of such recording.



Although no flow records from Omatako into the Okavango River exist. The ephemeral Ndonga Linena / Omatako River does receive backwash water from the perennial Okavango River during good rain seasons.

Photo Credits: Mr Reinhold Kambuli

OKBMC 2012 / 2013 IN PERSPECTIVE



Urban Water Demand studies would look into issues of water wastage and water use efficiency.

Photo Credits: Mr Reinhold Kambuli

At the recently concluded annual Okavango Basin stakeholders' forum, participants developed the 2012/13 Work Plan; which can be summarized as follows. A study to assess and develop waste management plans for urban and key settlement areas would be sourced out to private consultants, based on

stakeholders' recommendations and needs.

The Hydrology Division in MAWF would appoint a qualified hydrologist to conduct hydrological studies on ephemeral rivers of Ndonga Linena and Ncaute to assess the request of farmers.

It has also come to the attention of stakeholders that with varying rainfalls and populations growth, urban water demand is on the increase, resulting in water supplying and Local Authorities finding it a challenge to meet and cope with these increasing needs; hence necessitating a need for

urban water demand and water demand management strategies studies.

For committee members to successfully implement activities; there is a need to build Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) awareness and IWRM capacity building for committee members and this would be considered.

Waste management plans development are essential to protect water resources, while urban water demand management studies are essential to improve water use while hydrological studies are aimed at improving livelihoods by improving access to water.

The custodian of the country's water resources, Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF) would fund the BMC activities and provide technical support to the committee to implement these activities', totaling N\$ 350,000.00. Any budget deficit the BMC would apply for SAREP Grants.

NEW AUTOMATIC RAINFALL STATIONS FOR OKAVANGO BASIN



Mr. Edgar Muyumbano, Mr Reinhold Kambuli and Mr. Larry setting up ARS at Rundu.

Photo Credits: R. Kambuli

(3) Automatic Rainfall Stations (ARS) at Nkurenkuru, Rundu and Mukwe during December 2011.

This was in combination with the Division's regular Hydrological stations servicing and flow gauging exercises along the Kavango River in Namibia. ARS are electronic and provide real time rainfall records at the moment of happening just by logging onto the internet.

stakeholders, general public and aid in raising awareness on water education.

It is also anticipated that the basin office would provide daily updates to local stakeholders on rainfall and hydrological flows for stakeholders' to be aware on latest riverflows developments.

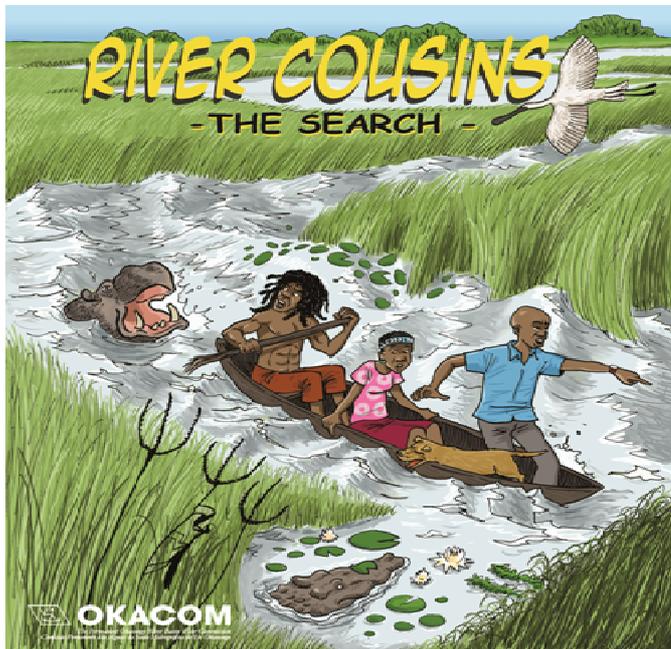
In the nearer future, manual raingauges and riverflow gauge plates would be installed at local schools and interested lodges; if you would like to receive one, please contact Reinhold Kambuli.

Do not temper, steal or vandalize these equipment. Report anyone doing such at 066-256446 or 0812052285 or the nearest

The Hydrology Division, in collaboration with the Okavango Basin Management Committee Support Officer, Mr. Reinhold Kambuli, completed the installations of three

It is anticipated that the setup of such equipments would provide real time rainfall information to locally based disasters coordinators, interested farmers',

COMING SOON.... A STORY FOR THE RIVER



challenges together, they forge what promises to be a lasting bond.

In December 2011 the OkBMC supported a focus group review of the draft comic book, bringing together a total number of 15 learners from Rundu, Elia Neromba and Noordgrens Secondary Schools accompanied by a Geography teacher to read

and discuss the story.

The students' comments will be incorporated in the final review of the publication, which is expected to be released in the basin by mid-2012.

*Ms Monica Morrison,
Communication and Information
Specialist*

Young people in the Cubango-Okavango river basin will be learning about cooperation of Angola, Botswana and Namibia in management of the basin's resources through a new Permanent Okavango River basin Water Commission (OKACOM) publication created just for them.

River Cousins, an illustrated colour comic book, tells the story of three youths from OKACOM's member states who meet on the river to find they have much in common.

The characters in the story start out by pursuing solutions to their own individual problems but, after meeting and facing



School participants at one of the three River Cousins reviews in the three countries.

Photo Credits: OKACOM

INTRODUCING THE KAVANGO OPEN AFRICA ROUTE (KOAR)

Open Africa is a Tourism Initiative and an organization funded by the World Bank and other donors, based in South Africa (SA) and Zambia, from where they have established almost 70 Tourist routes in SA, three (3) in Zambia and only Four (4) in Namibia.

One of these routes, the Kavango Open Africa Route, was officially launched in Namibia, at the Windhoek Tourism Expo in May 2011, seven years since it was first introduced in 2004. With television and other media coverage and in close association with Hospitality Association of Namibia (HAN) and Mr. Ricky Kalaluka (Open Africa). The guest speakers included Mr. Sem Shikongo (Director of Tourism), Mrs. Gitta Paetzold (CEO of HAN) and Mr. Mark Paxton (Chairman of KOAR).

The principal aim of KOAR is to promote the Kavango Region, as an attractive and worthwhile tourism destination rather than a region merely traveled through en-route to other more well-known areas in Northern Namibia and neighbouring countries. In this way KOAR hopes to improve and diversify income generation opportunities for the residents of the Kavango region.



The hippopotamus and the Africa Skimmer are some of the flagship species forming the KOAR monitoring.

Photo Credits: Mr. Mark Paxton

placed signboards at specific locations along the route, coupled with posters and T-shirt distribution.

Community members and Schools have been directly involved in this campaign. KOAR is also placing demarcation and direction road-signs at strategic points along the route on the district roads and throughout Rundu.

To date, KOAR has established the route to be from Mohembo Gate, on the Botswana border in the South-east, to Katwitwi on the Angolan border to the North-west. The route then emphasizes the older and original gravel road between Rundu and Divundu along the river, and not the more well-known B8 tarred road.

This route gives the visitor more access to the attractive river scenery as well as the diverse cultural activities of the people living alongside it. Participants along this route include any legitimate individuals or organizations that have anything of interest to offer to the travelling Tourist. These involve Tourism Accommodation Establishments (Lodges, Camps and Campsites whether private or Community-based), Government organizations, Community-based NGO's, Schools, Missions and Churches, Conservancies, Community Forests, Craft producers, Historical points and a variety of Private Entrepreneurs.

All route participants are required to have a Conservation-based ethic as well as a commitment to the protection of the natural resources

and wildlife along the Okavango River.

To this end KOAR has designated Five (5) flagship species covering Mammals, Birds, Fish and Trees, which they feel are most representative of the Kavango Region, and require some form of protection and monitoring. These are **African Skimmer, Grey-headed Parrot, Tiger-fish, Hippopotamus and Kiaat**, and the active participants are required to monitor at least one of these species in their area.

Open Africa in turn offers long-term website exposure, with marketing details on their extensive website (www.openafrica.org) and in a comprehensive brochure of the route at selected distribution outlets within Namibia and in neighbouring countries.

Since the official launch, KOAR has established itself as a formally recognized Association with an elected committee and Constitution. As such it has embarked on an extensive awareness campaign throughout the region, involving permanently

At the moment KOAR is still largely supported by Open Africa funding, but will shortly be a self-sufficient body in its own right.

KOAR have met with, and enjoy the enthusiastic support of the Minister of Environment and Tourism, the Minister of Agriculture, Water and Forestry and the Ministry of Fisheries and

Marine Resources with whom they will be working hand-in-hand with in this on-going monitoring process.

KOAR intends to form a secure, co-operative and productive working relationship with these and many other similar-minded organizations that have the interests of this region and the residents thereof at heart.

*Mr. Mark Paxton
(KOAR Chairman)*



Mr. Mark Paxton (KOAR Chairman) with school children on a bird counting trip.

Photo Credits: Mr. Mark Paxton



Community members of the Muduvha Nyngana conservancy participating in a meeting.

Photo Credits: Mr. Mark Paxton

CONSERVATION AGRICULTURE: MANAGING SOILS TO TACKLE RURAL POVERTY IN THE KAVANGO

Although the Kavango region receives an average annual rainfall of well above 500mm/year with much of that falling between November-March resulting in seasonal floods; much of the Kavango soils are generally poor for crop production with most of the fertile soil restricted along the Kavango river strip. Worse, much of the soil water is lost through evaporation with daily maximum temperatures averaging up to 30.9 degrees Centigrade, with an annual evaporation of 1950mm/year.

Traditionally, the Kavango people practice shifting slash and burn agriculture and in many cases livestock are kept far away from home depriving soils of possible organic matter and microbial application to improve soils. Over the years the population has grown, increasing the need for food to feed families and earn an income; this means that the narrow fertile strips along the river have endured deforestation and soil erosion possibly resulting in sediment loads into the river. Such practices of unsustainable cropping techniques, overgrazing and human induced fires do not only affect livelihoods, but also Ecosystems Functioning and Services (ESF&S) including soil water availability, groundwater recharge, soil protection and sediment transport that in the end could affect aquatic



Dr. Zimmerman and Mr. Kudumo from Polytechnic of Namibia demonstrating how to feed wood into the stove for making biochar for soil application.

Photo Credits: Mr Reinhold Kambuli

organisms such as fish which makes an important component of the Kavango people's diets.

This just demonstrates that water and land resources management should be done in an integrated manner. A practical example that the world focuses on is the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) approach, a process that involves all resources users and other stakeholders and promotes the coordinated development and management of water, land and related natural resources in order to optimize the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems.

Through The Future Okavango (TFO) Sub-Project 03, Project 5-Interactions of soil related ESF&S with land use practice under climate change; communities at Mupapama in the Mashare Constituency have been taking part in hands on Conservation Agriculture (CA) training being facilitated by the Community Economics Development Project (CEDP) led by Mr. Maxon Simfukwe and Dr. Ibo Zimmermann of the Department of Agriculture at the Polytechnic of Namibia.

TFO trials aim at demonstrating to communities how sustainable land management can improve livelihoods and Ecosystems Functioning and Services and basin resources in general. Through this, communities not only learned that CA is less rain dependent, does not plough, burn or shift around the land as compared to traditional farming (TF); but also that it aims to retain soil organic matter, harvest water and reduce chemical inputs and eventually labour.

In many cases, households have little income to improve soils or rarely own livestock to plough the fields hence soil and apply livestock manure during the dry season so that they can plant early in the rainy season.

In the trials, participating farmers were taught on soil amendment techniques comprising fertilizers (based on one tenth of recommendations determined from analysis of soil samples collected earlier) and/or bokashi (mahangu husks fermented with Effective Microorganisms (EM)). The trials under both CA and TF practices took place on plots measuring 21.6m x 20m each.

The project recently held a field day at one of the trial plots to share progress and lessons learnt with communities, farmers and students involved in the project. Under CA, amendments were only applied within sowing basins in the relevant subplots, while under TF they were spread all over the relevant subplots. In addition, sun hemp was planted between intercropped rows to smother weeds, fix Nitrogen and later be cut and left on the surface as mulch.



Double benefits: a participant testing the stove's effectiveness to heat water before the fire is put off to retrieve biochar. The stove was designed by a Polytechnic of Namibia Masters student, Tuhafeni Hilukiluah.

Photo Credits: Mr Reinhold Kambuli



Left, Ms Rukunde demonstrating the layout for CA trials, while on the right, Mr. Ndumba Paulus demonstrates how the basins rows should be staggered.

Photo Credits: Mr Reinhold Kambuli

Ms Magdalena Rukunde was owner of the trial plot that hosted the field visit to demonstrate her progress and share lessons learnt with her fellows.

Continued on page 8

Continued from page 7

Ms Rukunde first demonstrated the CA skills she learnt before, clearly indicating how she took her basin measurements along a marked rope using her sticks; how to add and mix soil amendments before sowing seeds.

“It is important that the rope is straight and the basins are correctly dug and filled; the next row must be in a staggered way to capitalize on water harvesting and minimize water erosion. You should also not fill the holes completely because this is where you would plant for the rest of your farming life”, she explains.

Preliminary results showed that CA has a vigorous high plant population density (with more

under the fertilizer and EM treatment) and less weeds due to intercropping smothering weeds. Ms Rukunde has also already tasted her cowpeas and maize harvest under CA despite having planted only on the 1st of December while there is poor fruit setting under TF, which was planted a few weeks later.

Although harvest records at end of trials would be conclusive, Dr. Zimmermann added that preliminary scientific results showed improved stem thickness under CA that was treated with fertilizer and EM treatment; while cowpea leaf sap sugar content that acts as a natural insect deterrent if high enough, was slightly but significantly higher under the

same treatments.

Although it was not easy to experiment something new for the first time, Ms Rukunde indicated that her motivation and determination to search for knowledge rather than for bumper harvests were key to overcoming negative perceptions of exhausting work in conservation agriculture. She concluded that she does not always have to wait for rains; she can start preparing her basins immediately after harvesting and spread her work across the year, taking breaks whenever she is tired.

At least she does not have to rely on those owning livestock or government tractors to come

work her field when the season starts. Participants were also given a demonstration of making biochar for soil application to increase the ability of the poor sandy soil to hold onto water and nutrients. The project runs in phases until 2015.

About the author:

Mr. Reinhold Kambuli is a Basin Support Officer for the Okavango Basin Management Committee in Rundu; collaboratively established by the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) to implement the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) concept at basin level in Okavango River Basin.

WIN!!!
1 of 5 OkBMC T-shirts
By answering any of
the questions below!!



Competition Questions and Rules

- 1. By Law, which Ministry is the legal custodian of Namibian Water Resources and who is the current Minister of such?**
- 2. What does OkBMC stand for?**
- 3. When was OkBMC established?**
- 4. What is IWRM?**
- 5. Name any of the functions of the OkBMC as specified by the Namibia Water Resources Management Bill No. 24 of 2004?**

Competition is open to any Namibian except Committee Members of the OkBMC.

Answers should be sent before 30 April 2012 either by email or telephone.