



Komeho Namibia Development Agency



**WIMSA**

## The Kalahari Garden Project Newsletter January 2008



***Garden in Corridor 17***

We are happy to report that the planting of the gardens between September and December 2007 has been extremely successful. Despite adversities that arose concerning the water delivery in two of the villages, the seeds sown have germinated and several families harvested pumpkin, squash, carrots, onions and watermelons for Christmas. Twelve gardens have been built, and we expect all to be harvesting by March 2008.

The gardens are 10 x 14 meters and have strong, livestock proof fencing and eight rows of tilled sand improved with dung and ash. Vegetables sown include tomatoes, kale, chilli pepper, pumpkin, butternut squash, beetroot, carrots, watermelon, onions and Swiss chard. Clementine, pomegranate and fig trees were also planted. The beneficiaries are extremely enthusiastic about the project and are keeping their gardens well maintained.

These gardens were collaboratively designed by our horticultural technician Ian Martin (Curator of the Dry Tropics Biome at the UK Eden Project), the project team and San beneficiaries. Ian provided training in building gardens and sowing seeds during a three week visit in September 2007. Additional training was provided in December on sowing seeds, transplanting seedlings, natural pest control and harvesting. This was coordinated by Komeho staff from the Ben Hur Rural Development Centre.

In addition to garden construction we have significantly improved the water delivery system in Corridor 17 (an exclusively San village) by installing a new solar water pump, two additional solar panels and a generator (for cloudy days). This has resulted in doubling the daily water yield in the village and has ensured a reliable water supply for both household and garden consumption.

We have completed livelihood assessments, food security surveys and community mapping in two villages and are now moving into the third village to do the same and begin developing a plan for garden construction. We have also recently received our plant collecting permit from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, allowing us to begin the ethnobotanical data collection on San knowledge of wild food plants.

The field team managing the project currently includes Hattie Wells (Project coordinator), Abraham Motlhaping (Assistant Coordinator), Joseph Bessa (a local San trainee) and volunteer Megan Glore (horticultural assistant).

**Our plans for the first six months of 2008 include the following:**

- Improve the water delivery system in Corridor 18
- Build seven more gardens in Corridor 18
- Build two more gardens in Corridor 17
- Plan and build three gardens in Corridor 15
- Plan and create a local primary school garden
- Begin the documentation of San knowledge of wild edible plants
- Incorporate some of wild edible plants into the garden design
- Develop an indigenous vegetation demonstration garden
- Continue monitoring and evaluation of the project (e.g. household and food security surveys)

**Until the next newsletter we would like to thank you all for your support of this project and wish you a very happy new year!**

