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Topnaar ~ Richtersveld
Exchange Programme

May 18th ~ 25th 1997

Report on the Topnaar-Richtersveld Exchange Friday May 16th - Sunday May 25th 1997

Written by Rudolph Dausab
Edited by Ruth Jones

Participants:

Topnaar Exchange Group members: Maria Engelbrecht, Jerry /Uirab, Gonzales Dâusab, Esau Kooitjie, Emmanuel Kooitjie, Helmuth Naweb, Irene /Khurisas, Maureen /Khurisas, Irene Engelbrecht, Thusnelde Kham, Engelhard Gariseb, Edward /Gariseb, Josef Tjitekulu, Matheus Cloete, Johannes Bees, Alexander Kooitjie, Lesma !Goramus, and Piet Kasper.

Exchange group leader: Rudolph Dâusab

Project coordinators: Ruth Jones, Francisco van Nooten, , Rudolph Dâusab

Project assistant: Kate Evans

Richtersveld Exchange Group members: Monica Farmer, Debbie Fortuin, J.J. Links, Floors Strauss, Petrus De Klerk, Boetieman, Sophie, Lorraine, Willem Hendrik, and Gerba.

Project coordinators: Jill and Paddy Gordon

Introduction

In June 1996, five members of the Topnaar community visited the Richtersveld People's Park in South Africa following an invitation to join them in celebrations marking their fifth anniversary. Following the success of this visit, a return visit by a group from the Richtersveld community seemed inevitable.

For various reasons beyond their control, the group were not able to set up a feedback meeting on their return last June and as a result, the community learnt little of their experiences. To prevent this process from repeating itself, we decided to enlarge the existing exchange group to include a more representative cross-section of the community. This decision was supported both by the sponsors and the community.

The Topnaar Community Foundation invited interested people to participate in the exchange programme. The names of those who accepted the invitation are listed above as TEG members.

The original proposal was for the exchange groups to spend three days in the lower Kuiseb region following which they would visit Brandberg West community tourist camp and World's End Joint Venture project at Bergsig.

To ensure the success of the exchange programme, we held a series of workshops and preparatory meetings over the weekends leading up to the exchange, during which we discussed the aims and objectives of the tour. It was important to identify the purpose of the exchange and to know what we wanted to achieve from the experience - in particular, what we hoped to learn from the Richtersveld group. Minutes of these meetings are included as an appendix to this report.

The group identified three principle areas of interest, namely *Management, Infrastructure, and Geography & Natural Resources*. These would serve as a framework for information gathering during the tour. A number of important questions were generated during group discussions, such as how people living in areas such as Bergsig and the Richtersveld manage their day to day livelihoods. Taking these issues into consideration and using PRA tools provided by Francisco van Nooten, we then developed a framework to assist us in structuring and analysing the information gathered during the exchange programme. For details please refer to the minutes from the preparatory meetings.

Topnaar Exchange Group using some PRA tools at third predeparture meeting



To follow is a full account of the Topnaar-Richtersveld exchange programme.

Friday 16th May: Walvis Bay: The TEG was gathered and ready to go to Oswater where we were expected that evening. The transport arrived in the early evening and we arrived in Oswater just after sunset. Preparations for supper started immediately. The men collected firewood and lit the fire whilst the ladies braaid the boerwors and prepared dough to make rooster bread. Whilst the food was cooking, people gathered around the fire and sang. Others hunted for space to prepare their beds. Those who had the energy sat around the fire to discuss how they would receive our guests from the Richtersveld.

Saturday 17th May: Day One – day of preparation: Refreshed from a good night's sleep, everybody was up by six O'clock. It was a cool morning with a light breeze from the west. Tea was served and we gathered around the morning fire to discuss the programme for the day. Jerry /Uirab proposed that the group should appoint four people to take up the following responsibilities: campsite leader, religious leader, programme leader and problem-reporter. This was accepted by the group and the following people were assigned to the respective positions: *Campsite leader* - Engelhard Gariseb, *Religious leader* - Edward /Gariseb, *Programme leader* - Emmanuel Kooitjie, *Problem-reporter* - Piet Kasper. After the assignment of responsibilities, the campsite leader called upon the men to set up the tents in the riverbed under the huge anaboom trees. The area was marked off properly and the fire laid in preparation for sunset.

We had a meeting during which we discussed the reception and welcoming ceremony. Suggestions were made to keep the ceremony as traditional as possible. The following ideas were put forward: for a dancing group to meet the exchange group from the Richtersveld; to spray the visitors with a mouthful of water as was done by our elders in the past and even today in some traditional ceremonies; to mark the stomach of the visitors with extracts of various traditional foods; or to mark the forehead of each person with soot from the bottom of a cooking pot. We were uncertain as to the ages of the Richtersveld group, and in order not to embarrass our guests, we decided to go for the much more acceptable process of welcoming our guests with water!.

While the group was in the meeting, some men slaughtered a goat and the ladies prepared lunch. A tasty meal was prepared and everybody enjoyed a well-deserved lunch. After lunch everyone had time to relax and some took a stroll in the riverbed.

While the group continued with their various activities, I left for Walvis Bay to wait for a call from the Richtersveld group. According to our arrangements, the group would ring us as soon as they were ready to leave for the Kuiseb.

Sunday 18th May: The day we were all waiting for! Whilst I was in Walvis Bay waiting for Jill's eleven O'clock call from Keetmanshoop, the TEG were getting ready to meet their counterparts from South Africa who were due to arrive in Oswater that evening.

After a church service in the morning, I met with Pastor Moritz, a retired German missionary who worked along the Kuiseb in his days with the mission and who was revisiting Namibia. We hoped that he would be able to take a service for us the following weekend when we returned from the tour, however his programme was already full and the best he could do was to meet us on Tuesday 20th May at Lauberville, Sheppmannsdorph – the site of the first mission station along the Kuiseb.

At 11:00am we received the first call confirming the safe arrival of the exchange group in Keetmanshoop. The second call came through between two and three in the afternoon. I immediately left for Oswater where I picked up Ruth and Kate before heading out to meet the exchange group along the Solitaire road before the turn-off to Homeb.

We waited for nearly one hour before the Richtersveld group's vehicles appeared on the horizon. After a quick introduction, we led the way to Oswater. It took us nearly an hour to reach Oswater where the TEG greeted us with songs of praise as we arrived.

The reception was conducted next to the water reservoir by Emmanuel Kooitjie, the appointed programme leader. He welcomed the guests by offering each of them water to drink. Whilst they were drinking, he welcomed them in Nama with the following words: "*Sida Aonita ti /ons !na da ge ra tawete*

du, ne //gam e du a re e //khore //hare he h se ts re. Neb ge /gaub sida En ge !hao khoena ge re //khore-//areba" which means, "Please drink this water and feel at home in the Kuiseb. This is the way our ancestors welcomed and accepted other people into the territory of the Topnaar community".

Water symbolizes life and no one has the right to deny any person – even an enemy – water to drink in the Kuiseb. As water was a gift from God, our ancestors believed that the water god was watching over the Topnaar people and would punish in the worst possible manner, any person who denies another human being water.

The Topnaar exchange group continued to sing as we moved over to the house of our late chief – Esau Kooitjie - where the cooks were preparing supper. It was a cool evening and tea and coffee was served while we waited for dinner. After every one had enjoyed a hot drink, the campsite leader took our guests to the campsite and showed them their tents.

When supper was served we sat around the fire and enjoyed our meal while sharing information. The group leader told the Richtersveld group to sleep a little late the next morning if they wanted to.

Monday 19th May: Despite the opportunity to sleep late, we were all up by seven O'clock and enjoyed breakfast soon after. Ruth suggested that the exchange groups go to the campsite at Homeb and share information on their respective areas and also use the opportunity to get to know each other better.

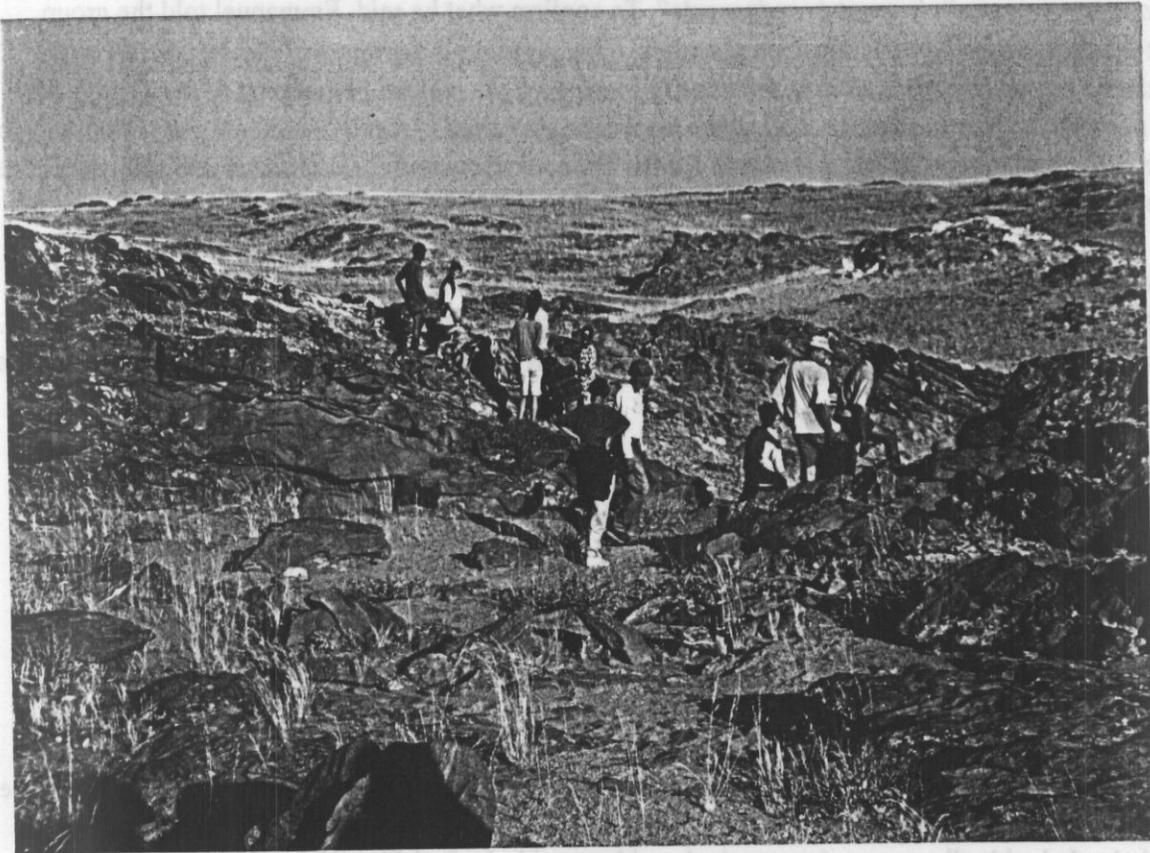
We drove to Homeb, and chose the camp next to the river where we sat in a circle. As this was an informal gathering we introduced ourselves again before starting to share information on various aspects related to the parks and the social welfare of the communities including the current role of traditional leaders in community issues. The Richtersveld group members were older than our group which had a very positive effect on the interaction.

Topnaar and Richtersveld Exchange Group engaged in discussions at Homeb



After lunch we had two hours rest before visiting the old Gorob mine sites where we looked at the historic *Welwitschia mirabilis* plants. I told the tour group the historical significance of the old mines as well as the scientific value of the *Welwitschia mirabilis*.

Exchange groups at an old mine near Gorob



Floors asked if the mines are still productive if opened. I told him that mining is still possible, but because of the expenses involved it is not worth the cost at the moment. Paddy suggested that the Topnaars should fence off the *Welwitschia mirabilis* to prevent people from touching the plants and damaging them.

I also told the exchange group about the possibility of ministerial officials sabotaging the idea of a community-managed park. To illustrate this, I showed them the site where a building which we intended to use as a much needed information centre, was demolished and buried.

Our next destination was the Research Station at Gobabeb where we found out about the station and its various functions. On our way we saw two ostriches. At Gobabeb we were split into three groups and given a station tour by DRFN staff members. The decision was that we would meet in the lounge after the station tour and report on our observations for ten minutes before looking at documentary films on the Richtersveld and the Kuiseb.

In less than an hour and we were all gathered in the lounge where I asked if anyone could tell us their impressions of the station. It was a common feeling within the tour group that the station was very well organized and most interesting. The staff were friendly and professional in executing their duties.

The documentary video on the Richtersveld was faulty and we could not watch it. We did, however, watch the documentary video on the Kuiseb and the Topnaar community. After this we looked at some slides of the Richtersveld. The video prompted the following question from Oom Willem Hendrik of the REG: "If someone asked how you could claim the Kuiseb as your traditional heritage, how would you respond?"

Emmanuel Kooitjie responded to this by saying "My father and mother are both buried here and so are the Topnaar community's great-grandparents". To confirm what he said, Emmanuel told the group about the incident in the early nineteen seventies. "The previous department of nature conservation introduced rhinos into the Kuiseb in the hope of scaring off the natural inhabitants of the Kuiseb. We were not afraid of these animals at all. After the rhinos they tried to forcibly relocate our community to farms in the south near Gibeon, purchased for the Topnaar community. These farms are still registered in the name of the Topnaar community at the registrar's office".

Many more questions followed such as the issue of traditional leaders, and the role of the Ministry and the DRFN. As it was late we decided to continue the discussion back at camp where supper awaited us. Everybody was tired after the day's programme and we went to bed as soon as we had finished our meal.

Tuesday 20th May: By five O'clock, the cooks were up and busy preparing breakfast for the group. By half past six the sun was shining and by seven everyone was up and breakfast was served. This would become the daily routine for the next five days.

As soon as we had finished breakfast, I introduced the day's programme to the group. First on the programme was to load everything into the vehicles before travelling downstream to Lauberville – Rooibank, where we would overnight.

Taking down and loading the tents took longer than expected, and we left later than anticipated. All the vehicles left in convoy for Gobabeb to fill up with petrol. About 1 km from Oswater, the brand new vehicle loaded with all our camping gear had problems with the fuel filter. After replacing it with another, we continued on to Gobabeb.

From Gobabeb we left for Soutrivier where we visited ouma Johanna Fischer who welcomed everyone with open arms. After a couple of pictures were taken, we briefed her on the tour programme before moving on to the next settlement. Time was limited since we were expected at Rooibank mid-afternoon where Water Affairs officials would brief us on the water management system for the coastal towns of Walvis Bay, Swakopmund, Hentiesbay, Arandis and Rössing mine.

We didn't stop at Klipneus, but informed the visitors about the settlement's involvement in the fog project being conducted by the Research Unit at Gobabeb.

We stopped at Swartbank to look at the ruins of the first mission built on an island in the riverbed. The group was also told that the water level at this settlement is very shallow and people dig 'ghoras' (traditional hand-dug wells) to get their water.

Time was moving fast, so we went straight to Utuseb to visit the monument and school where one of the teachers explained the historical significance of the boarding school to us. From there we proceeded to Rooibank. One of our vehicles got stuck in the soft river bed, but we managed to pull it to the other side of the river. We then went to the office of the dept water affairs and where we were told about the water supply system and how it is monitored with the use of a computer.

Exchange Group near Swartbank during their trip downstream



Auntie Monica asked the official what benefits the Topnaar community get from the extraction of water from their traditional environment. Mr. Bart, the official, said that he isn't aware of such an agreement, but that they are trying to assist the community wherever they can, for example, the provision of water tanks to some of the settlements near Rooibank and assistance with transport when going to Walvis Bay.

After the visit, we drove through the river to Lauberville camp where we were to meet pastor Moritz at half past four. While the group had lunch, I went to the church to wait for pastor Moritz. After a long wait, I decided to go back to the camp. On my way back I met pastor Moritz and gave him and his two passengers a lift across the river because his vehicle couldn't cross.

Pastor Moritz asked me to take him to 'Holy ground' of the Topnaar people, as he wanted to take pictures of the monument of the late Reverent H. Scheppmann, the first European missionary to work within the Topnaar community in the Kuiseb. As it was late in the afternoon, the group was waiting eagerly for his arrival and they welcomed our guests with open arms. We all gathered together to listen to the Pastor's presentation on the historical background of the Lutheran church in the west of Namibia.

The first missionary arrived in the west in 1845 at /Awa - !Haos (Rooibank) where he set up his camp on the river bank amongst the Topnaar community. From here, he started to teach the local inhabitants about Christianity. As the country was in a process of recovering from the colonial war, with sporadic clashes between the Hereros and the Namas, the situation was unstable. The Nama warlord Jan Jonker

Afrikaner was constantly threatening the other Nama leaders if they didn't join him in the war against the Hereros and the Germans.

The establishment of Walvis Bay was very much linked to the history of the Topnaar Community. Authorities failed to recognise this and so the church tried to get recognition for the people by erecting a small church and monument at /Awa - !Haos. Another interesting and historically important feature was the planting of date trees in the river next to the households of those who were converted to Christianity through baptism. The evidence of the strong movement of Christianity can still be seen in the river at /Awa - Haos.

Pastor Moritz also told us about the history of Lauberville camp. In the early 1980s, the S.A. Police force requested a piece of land from the Topnaar leadership to build a small camp next to the monument for the training of young police officers. Although this request was granted, it became a problem for the community as the police completely ignored the conditions agreed upon.

We told him that Lauberville camp is now the property of the community and that we are looking forward to improving the camp for the future benefit of the community through tourism.

His experiences amongst the Topnaar community motivated him to write a number of books on the unique and important !nara plant. He told the group about the traditional and cultural value of the !nara, but said that local people would give a better explanation of the various traditional uses of the plant.

After more than an hour with the exchange group it was time for the pastor to leave. He blessed us with a short but powerful message and a prayer. I thanked him for the valuable historical information that he imparted to us, and the TEG sang a song of appreciation before I took him back to his vehicle.

That evening, a number of community members living nearby visited the exchange group and brought some !nara melons and pips for the Richtersveld group to taste. Many questions were asked and we tried to answer them to the best of our knowledge. One of the visitors, Obadja, explained the process of harvesting and processing the !nara. He told the group that he wanted to show them the entire process, but that his donkey cart had broken down and he couldn't get things ready for the group.

As the flames of the fire in the camp lit the night sky, the group leader called the group together to discuss the following day's programme. The group was told to be ready by 7:00am as we had to leave for Walvis Bay to do some shopping before visiting the municipality and the museum. After the tour through the museum, we would leave for Swakopmund.

Supper was served a little late that evening and after eating, everyone got ready for bed. Some of us slept in the big hall, others slept in the vehicles whilst others preferred their tents.

Wednesday 21st May: There was a lot of fog in the air and the south-easterly wind was blowing very lightly as we got ready after breakfast. We loaded the vehicles with our gear and left the camp in convoy for Walvis Bay. We arrived there at 8:30am and parked our vehicles in front of the municipal building at the civic centre. Everyone was given the opportunity to do their shopping, and we agreed to meet at 9:50am before entering the building.

I left for my office to contact Paul, as we had arranged to meet him in Swakopmund at lunchtime. At 9:50am sharp we were ready to start the tour of the building. Our tour guide Mrs. Brand took us around the building showing us its various unique features. The interior architecture perfectly reflected the environment of Walvis Bay.

The features of particular interest were the pelicans, other sea birds, seals, boats, dunes and the harbour. The floor is covered with a special woven mat depicting the sea and the birds. Mrs. Brand told us that this mat was woven in Durban on special request by the municipality. We also saw the council chamber, where all the major issues concerning the town are discussed.

We then went to the building which houses the library and the museum. The museum is very small and most of the articles in the museum have been donated by local people. Jill was very upset when she found out that the skulls in one display came from the old grave sites in the desert. She suggested that the Topnaar youth should confront this issue and request that the skulls be taken back and buried properly. The tour group also observed the lack of information on the Topnaar community. J.J. Links observed that the museum only depicts the history of whites and nothing from any other nationalities. Mrs. Brand agreed but said that this is not a matter of discrimination. The goal of the museum is to obtain as much cultural, traditional and historical information on the Topnaar community as possible. The youth were invited to bring any information they think is valuable to their community's history to the museum for safe-keeping. We thanked Mrs Brand for her contribution and drove on to Swakopmund.

On our way to Swakopmund, the REG were very impressed by the beautiful coastline and said that they would love to come back in the future. They were particularly impressed by Dolphin Park and Langstrand and they complimented Walvis Bay town council for their efforts.

Swakopmund was an inspiration to the tour group. We stopped at Shoprite where we had arranged to meet Paul and Ruth who were hunting for mattresses. They arrived after a few minutes, and Ruth suggested that we find a nice spot to have lunch.

We had lunch along the beach, and while enjoying lunch some people strolled along the beach waiting for Ruth to arrive with additional mattresses to supplement our rather inadequate supplies. After an hour and half we were ready to leave for Brandberg West Tourist Camp on the Ugab river – 215 km north of Swakopmund. It was already 16:00 by the time the convoy, led by Paul, left Swakopmund. Before we drove out of town Paul gave me one of his radios as I was driving the last vehicle. This was as a precaution to make sure that we kept in contact if anything happened.

The weather was misty and as we passed Hentjes bay, we hit rainy weather. The road was very wet at some spots and we had to drive carefully to avoid skidding.

At some places the sea water was less than 100 m from the road, and we could see how rough the sea was from our vehicles. We passed several fishing spots such as mile 108. At one stage we were far behind and I called Paul over the radio to make sure that we are still on the same road. After another 10 km our vehicle had a right rear puncture. The radio served its purpose as I contacted Paul again telling him about the puncture.

After replacing the punctured tyre, we continued until after the turn off to Cape Cross. From there we drove for another 15 km before turning off to Brandberg West. From there the road was very uneven, much like the roads in the Kuiseb, and we drove for another hour before turning off to the Ugab Camp, situated in the mountains. By this time it was already dark and we had to be very careful as we were driving on a very rough and rocky terrain. The road was very steep in some places and we drove through various dry river beds with loose sand.

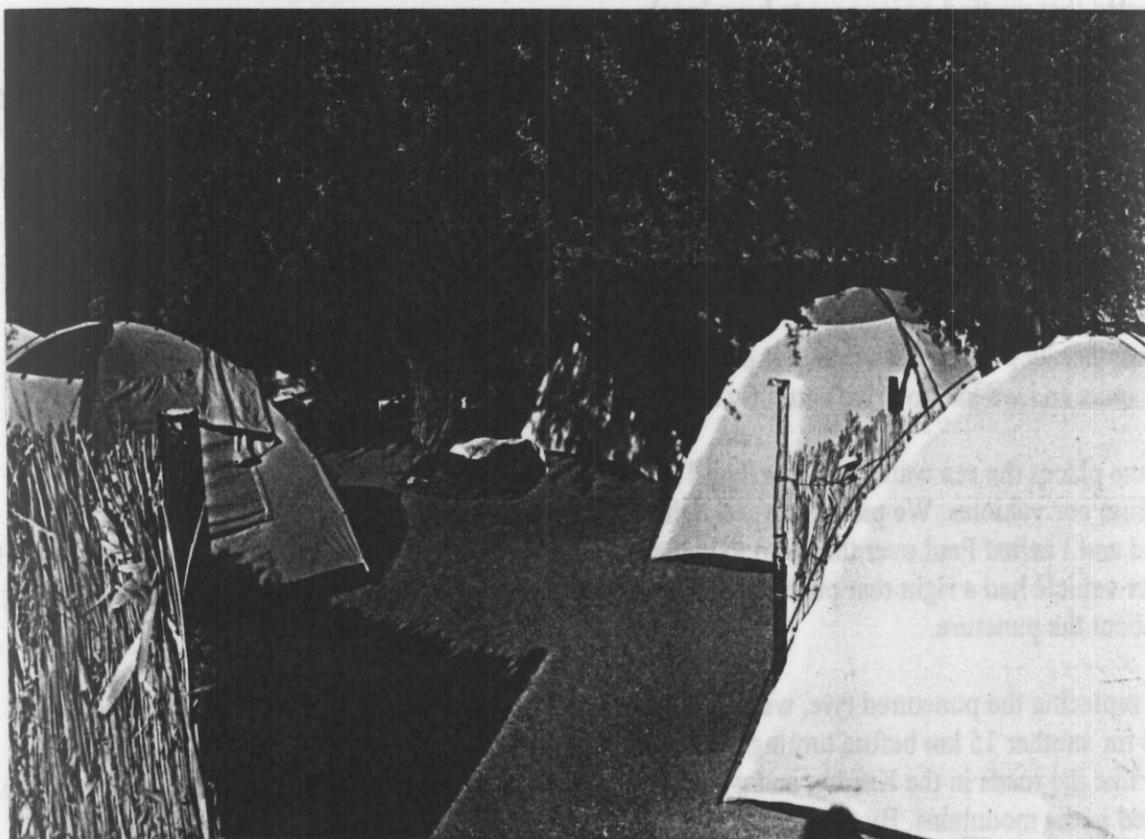
Although it was getting dark, we could observe how the environment was changing. We could see more plants - an indication that we were moving inland.

At last I saw the brake lights flashing in front of me and I realised that we had finally made it to the Ugab Camp. We went through a very high gate, which was immediately closed after all the vehicles had entered. Paul took us to the campsites and arranged firewood for us immediately as there was no light. He then introduced us to the workers at the camp, but as it was dark it was difficult to remember them the next morning. We were shown the bath and toilets, and in the meantime some of us started to set up the tents.

The ladies from Richtersveld surprised us by insisting that they should prepare dinner for us. They wanted to treat us with some traditional dishes from their community in Richtersveld. When dinner was ready we were served by the ladies as a special treat. While standing around the fire place we discussed the programme for the next day. Paul said he would tell us all about his camp the following morning at 9:00am when we were due to meet. He told us about the rhinos and elephants in the area and that we might hear them during the night, passing in the river next to the camp. He assured us that there was no reason for panic.

Most of the tents were set up inside the camp, which was build out of reeds. The fire place was build using of rocks from the disused mine nearby.

Campsite at Ugab River Camp – Brandberg-West



Before we went to bed, I called on everyone to gather around the fire place as a very important issue had come up. The Richtersveld group felt that we were spending too much time driving and not enough time in discussion. They thought that it was important to sit down and talk about issues of importance to us

and to share information on our respective areas. On behalf of the Richtersveld group, Jill asked me to propose to the TEG that we spend at least a few hours in group discussion before continuing our journey to Bergsig another 400 km away. This was misinterpreted by a number of the TEG group members who started to question the merits of the suggestion. It was obvious that some of them were not happy with the suggestion and Jerry said that we were making decisions without consulting them. It looked to them as if the REG was favoured by the coordinators. As tour group leader I tried to explain the request to the TEG. Another issue which became very clear was that an opposition group was forming within the TEG.

Oom Willem intervened and told the Topnaar group that what they were doing was wrong and that they should not disrespect their group leader in the presence of their guests. They should rather call him to a meeting and talk to him in private if they are not happy with something concerning the tour.

Emmanuel was not happy with the statement made by oom Willem and Jerry requested an immediate meeting with the tour group leader. As we could not reach consensus on the programme for the next day, we excused the Richtersveld group and went to discuss the problem outside the camp. After nearly two hours, Gonzales suggested to vote on the issues involved.

Various issues came up during our discussions, such as not involving Francisco in the decision making process. In response to this question I said that it was an issue to be resolved by the three people working for the DRFN and not by me as a group leader. My immediate responsibility was the welfare of the exchange groups.

Esau suggested that instead of travelling just halfway, we should go back and show our guests around Walvis Bay. This suggestion was outvoted by the rest of the group. Gonzales suggested that we accept the invitation from the Richtersveld group to sit and talk to each other for at least four hours. We could then decide whether to continue to Twyvelfontain or even Bergsig if need be. After this marathon meeting I reported back to the rest of the Richtersveld group.

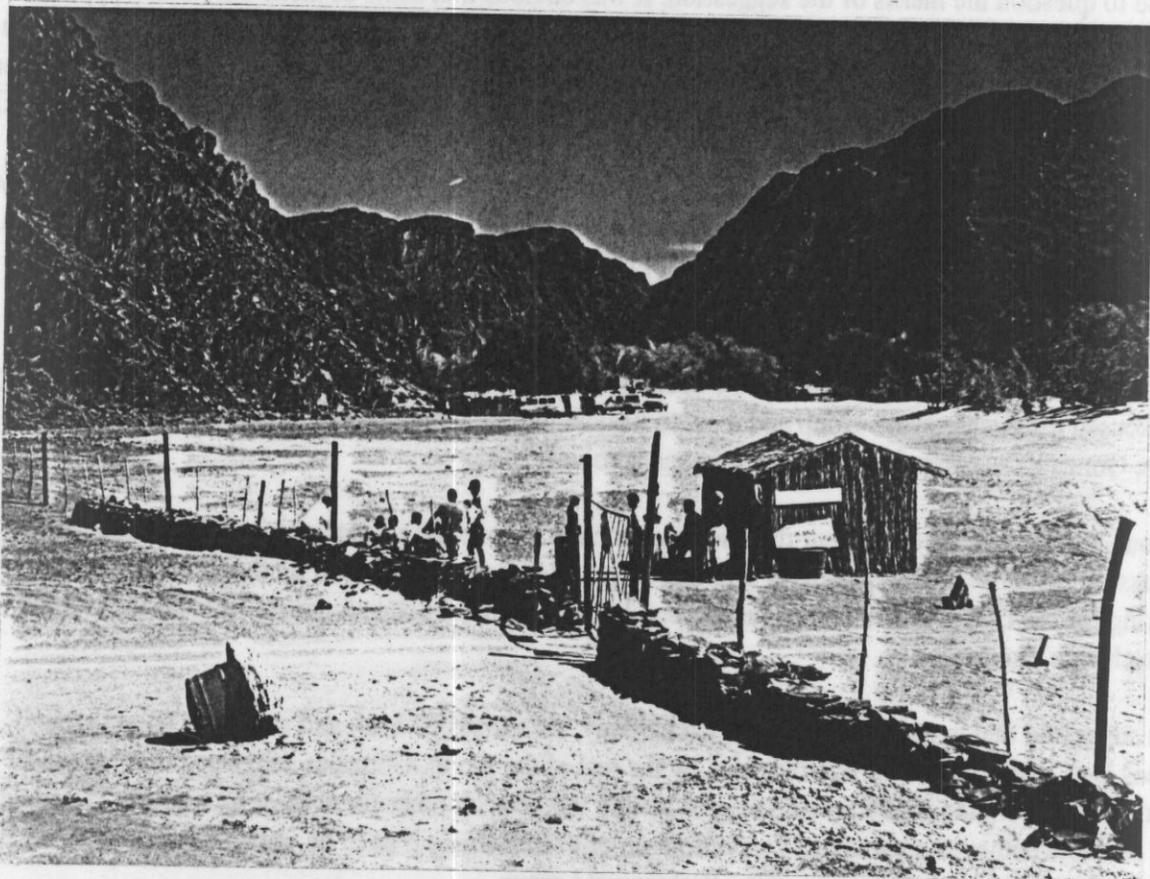
The sky was clear with the moon lighting the campsite and we could see trees and other structures clearly. The group was fascinated by the landscape at night and we wondered how it would be during daylight. Everyone was in bed by 1:00am exhausted from the long drive and all the excitement.

Thursday 22nd of May: The two Anna's responsible for our daily meals, were doing a superb job. By the time we were up, breakfast was ready and the water was boiling so that we could all enjoy a cup of tea or coffee. We expected a very cold morning but it was just cool and there was no real wind as you would expect in such an environment.

The camp looked very simple as nothing here was luxurious or modern. I immediately asked some of the TEG members what they thought of the camp. Gonzales said that the camp was very primitive but at the same time it was unique with a very beautiful layout.

Thusnelde Kham said she did not expect hot water at a camp like this and was very surprised when she showered in hot water. You can decide exactly how much water to use by mixing the hot and the cold water in a bucket which you again pour into the shower unit. The shower container is attached to a pulley system and can be lowered or raised according to your height. It was obvious that the people were eager to find out more about the camp, and I suggested that they wait for Paul and his workers to join us and give us a proper tour of the camp.

Ugab River camp – main entrance



At 9:00am, Paul called us together and we formed a circle. He introduced us again to the people who were responsible for the camp. Paul's assistant manager Maria, is responsible for the smooth running of the camp when he is not there. She is also responsible for all the bookings at the gate and for the collection and registration of fees paid. The members involved in the building of the camp were the group leader Martin Nawaseb who is responsible for collecting building material from the riverbed, and Paulus Johnny who is responsible for tracking animals in the veld. Gerson is one of the young men assisting with the maintenance of the camp. Another young man visiting his brother Johannes also assists in the project.

Paul introduced himself properly to the group and explained the set up of the camp as follows: He is employed by the Save the Rhino Trust and his responsibility is to look after the wildlife in the Brandberg West area. The camp was originally one of the several conservation camps in the area, but last December he started a new project involving local people. The objective of the project was for local people to assist with conservation whilst at the same time creating an income-generating project for the people working with him for the S.R.T.

The camp was started in December by Paul and Martin. They built both camps without any financial assistance. The reeds in the river were used to build the fences and rocks and stones from the disused mine were used to build the braai spots and fire places. Another two men joined them later on, along with Maria, the wife of one of the rangers, to assist with the management of the camp. Within two

months they received their first visitor at the camp, and with the money generated, enough cement was bought to build the first toilet and shower.

The toilets are deep holes in which three 210 l drums have been placed on top of one another. The base of the seat is build out of rocks and a second hand seat has been installed as the only equipment bought. In response to the question of unwelcome odours, Paul said they use ash from the fireplace to help reduce unwelcome smells. To only cost for building the toilet was labour - very little money was needed.

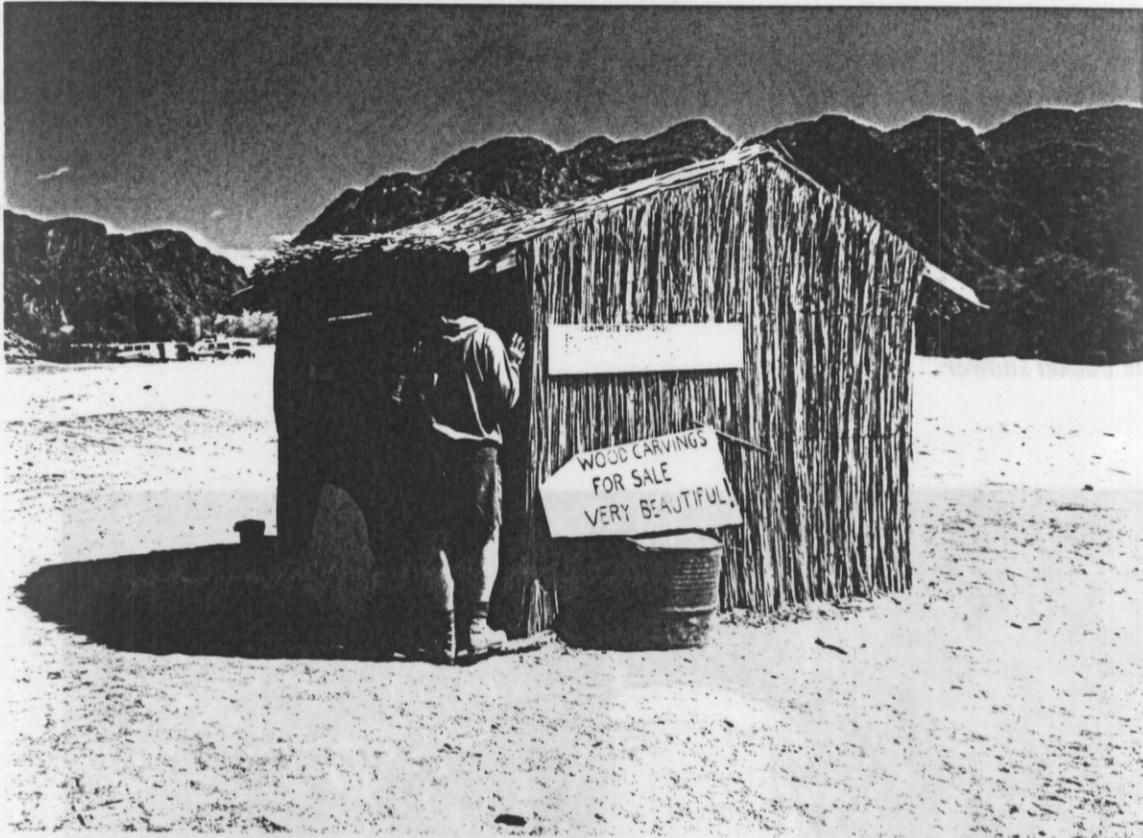
The showers are simply buckets with a shower attachment which has an adjustable flow tap. Water is heated in an oil drum, over a fire in the evenings and by the sun during the day. The water is then poured into the shower bucket which hangs from a tree on a hoist mechanism. The total cost of each shower unit is just N\$100.

Simple bucket shower



Before we could ask any more questions, Paul suggested that we should divide into five groups and each of which would be led by one of the local members of the campsite team. The idea was for us to see for ourselves how things were running. We could then meet later to talk about any issues that might arise from the tour. The ladies were asked to join Maria so they could learn from her about all her duties. The tour would take at least two hours, so we decided to meet after lunch.

Craft shop built using reeds from the riverbed



Lunch was again superb and afterwards, everyone was given time to rest before starting the next session. Those who felt energetic played volleyball.

We called the groups together at 14:30pm to discuss the issues pending. Obviously the first item was the camp tour, questions such as "who is the owner of this camp?", "what are the benefits for the people involved?", "What is going to happen if Paul is gone?"

Paul answered the questions as follows: At present, the project is managed by Paul until such a time as the people here and nearby are capable of managing the project by themselves. The money generated at present is split among the workers and the rest is used to buy the necessary material to improve and upgrade the camp. At this moment we are busy to generate enough money to build a new information centre and office next to the dam. Our principle responsibility now is to educate people about the benefits of conservation.

According to Paul, the only thing that required financial support was the solar water pump unit, which cost nearly N\$12, 000. This cost should be recovered within three years. Apart from initial funds from the Save the Rhino Trust, the camp is totally self-sustaining. All materials used in building the camp are found locally at no cost; reeds from the river bed enclose the camp areas, toilets, and showers. The money that they received from the exchange group will be used to build a new craft shop and office. The camp is real proof that development initiatives can work without huge financial input, and this was something which the exchange group found most encouraging.

Paul's advice to the TEG was to go back and first try to find out what materials are available in the area and then decide what to do next.

The second issue we talked about was the exchange of information between the Richtersveld and the TEG groups. The previous night's incident was very important as it really opened the eyes of the young people from the TEG community. Up to that point they had just been looking forward to a sightseeing tour, but as a result of the serious discussions of the previous night, it was obvious that they wanted to learn as much as possible from both the Richtersveld and Ugab Camp people. While we were sharing information on our respective environments, Paddy had to rush Jill to the hospital in Swakopmund, as her condition became serious. We were uncertain what the problem was.

The uncertainty of Jill's condition affected us all as everyone in the group felt it was better to shorten the tour. The young people surprised me when they said that after more than five hours of discussion, they had achieved a great deal at Ugab camp, and felt that they had got all the motivation they need from the experience. They therefore agreed that we would return to the Kuiseb on Friday after visiting the Brandberg and Uis.

No one realised how late it was, and by the time we had come to the end of our discussions, the sun had already set and dinner was almost ready. The spirit of knowing more about community based tourism was now burning high within the group. The Richtersvelders were asked about the present situation of community involvement in the management of the people's park. Floors said that it is the people's park now and that the community is the responsible for the management of the park.

One of the young people asked Paul what they must do to convince the ministry about their plans to set up their own campsite in the Kuiseb. He responded by saying that it is important to be persistent if you want to achieve your goal. He also said that we must convince the ministry of our commitment towards taking care of our own environment. If necessary we should go and see the minister.

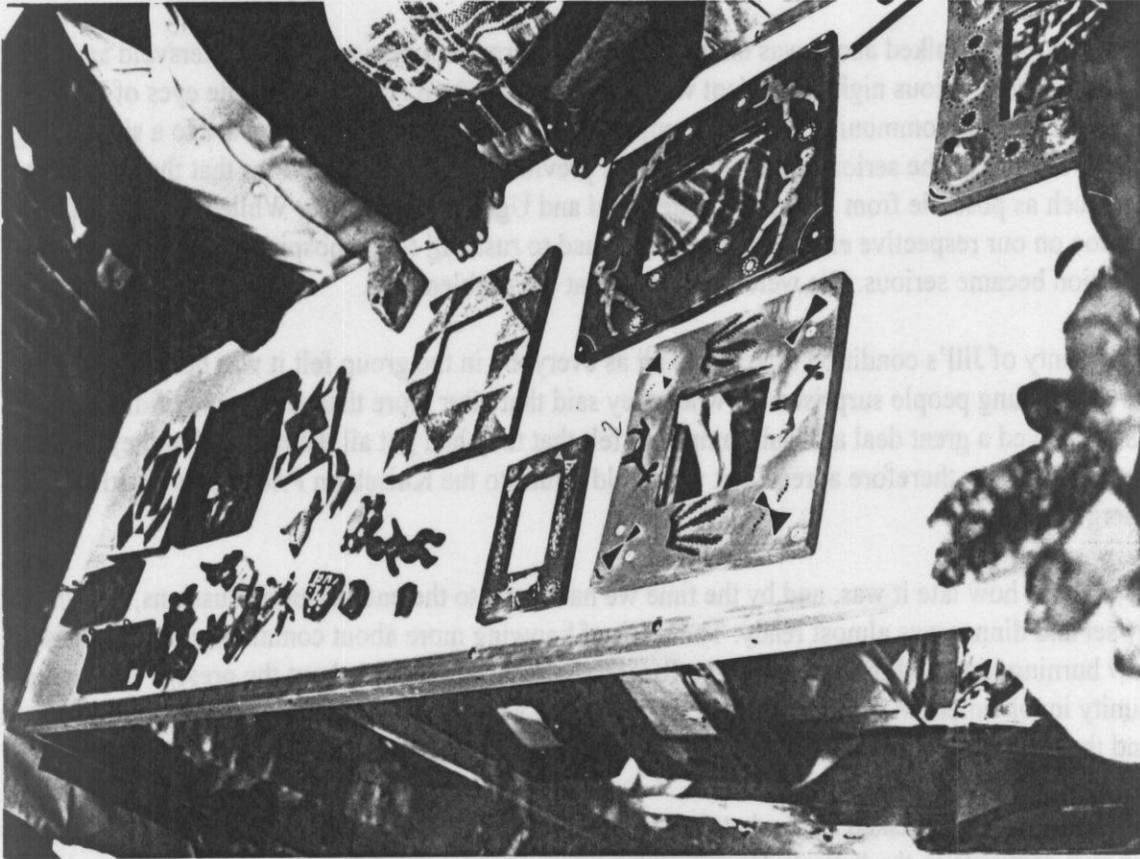
That evening, all of us went to bed with the feeling of satisfaction. The only concern was the uncertainty about Jill's condition.

Friday 23rd May: Breakfast was served early as we had to pack everything up in preparation for leaving. It took some time to take down all the tents, and we had to make sure that everything was double checked. Paul took us on a fascinating tour to the Brandberg. We could not go right up to the Brandberg, so we drove all the way around it admiring its enormity and splendour from the western side. We stopped at several spots to take some unforgettable pictures.

Welwitschias occur in abundance around the Brandberg, and are well adapted to its harsh environment. We didn't see any wildlife in the area, but Paul assured us that near the mountain there are lots of animals.

At Uis we stopped at the service station to fill up the bus and buy some cool drinks. Nearby, there was a group of people selling handmade crafts. With assistance from the Rössing Foundation, a group of young people from the local communities have set up a craft centre in Uis. All their products are made from recycled materials. Beautiful picture frames and mirrors are made from old cardboard boxes decorated with elaborate traditional designs. We decided to go and look at their craft centre. It was an inspiration to see how these people turn cardboard and other rubbish into beautiful crafts. This is something that we could try in the Kuiseb.

Craft stall at fuel station - Uis



After visiting the Daureb craft centre we left for Swakopmund. The Richtersveld group was in a hurry to get to Swakopmund to find out what the doctors had reported on Jill's condition. Monica is a qualified nurse and she suspected Jill to have a bacterial infection of some kind.

The journey to Swakopmund was very quiet. Somehow we were sad because it was almost time to say goodbye to each other.

It was just after 15:00 in the afternoon when we arrived in Swakopmund and we went straight to the hospital to find out how Jill was doing. The doctor said that as soon as she was strong enough it would be better to take her back to Richtersveld where she could be treated further. They suspected that she might have picked up something before coming to Namibia. It was decided that they would take her back on Saturday as early as possible after a tour of Walvis Bay on special request from the people from Richtersveld.

After visiting Jill, we went straight to the Youth hostel to register for the night. What a relief it was to know that we were going to sleep in soft beds again. The prospect of a hot shower was something that no one could resist.

Kate, Ruth and I went to buy some wood, fresh meat and sausages. The ladies jointly prepared dinner and the men were responsible to braai the meat and sausages.

I had to leave for Walvis Bay that evening to make sure that chief Kooitje had arranged everything for the feedback meeting at Utuseb, and most importantly for the church service that everyone was so looking forward to.

Saturday 24th May: I went back to Swakopmund with the news that no arrangements had been made. Before we left the youth hostel, we were informed that Jill would be released that same day.

The weather was cool and wet - no sun for the day. When we learnt about the decision to leave for Richtersveld as soon as possible, the TEG was disappointed and said that it was unfair for to them as they wanted to have a joint feedback meeting as agreed in the beginning. We explained to them the risk involved concerning Jill's condition and how important it was to follow the doctor's orders.

Finally we agreed to meet at the Dolphin Park on our way to Walvis Bay to have a final round-up meeting as we felt it was important to talk about the way forward. Unfortunately the weather conditions got worse and it started to rain. We continued to Walvis Bay hoping that we could talk about the way forward after the tour of the harbour. It was suggested that we stop at one of the markets so that people could buy things they needed for their long trip back to Richtersveld. The TEG members were also given their money to purchase whatever they needed before we drove to Vogelfederberg for a farewell ceremony.

The rain poured non stop while people where shopping. After an hour everyone was ready to leave. We knew this was the last journey together and we had to make most of it by giving each other addresses and exchanging last minute information on issues relating to our respective parks.

When we stopped at Vogelfederberg, it was still raining with a strong wind blowing and we had no other option than to say goodbye to our guests. Saying goodbye took another half an hour. The Richtersveld group left us with the request that the TEG community should not give up to fight for what they belief is their rightful inheritance. However, they must continue to negotiate with the government. Only through negotiations can they successfully convince the authorities.

The Richtersveld community promised to support us whenever they can. It was also decided to identify two members from each group to correspond on behalf of the two groups and to share information on the progress made on both sides. Finally we were reminded not to forget the invitation to visit the Richtersveld before end of the year.

At last the vehicles left and we watched them vanishing in the rain.

We all decided to overnight at Oswater, as it would be easier to transport people downstream in the morning for the feedback meeting at Utuseb. It was still raining when we arrived at Oswater late that afternoon. We struggled to light the fire, but we were fortunate to have two gas stoves and the two Anna's prepared our last meal of the tour. After dinner we had a very short meeting to discuss the programme for the next day but we were too tired to stay up late. The continuous rain drove us all to bed early.

Sunday 25th May: When we woke up in the morning the rain stopped just long enough for us to pack everything into the vehicles. We left Oswater and two of the vehicles went to Gobabeb to off load all the tents and other unneeded stuff to make room to transport community members to the feedback meeting at Utuseb.

By the time we arrived at Utuseb, it had started to shower and we had to go from house to house to gather the people. In the meantime I had to rush to Walvis Bay to pick up people who wanted to attend the feedback meeting at Utuseb.

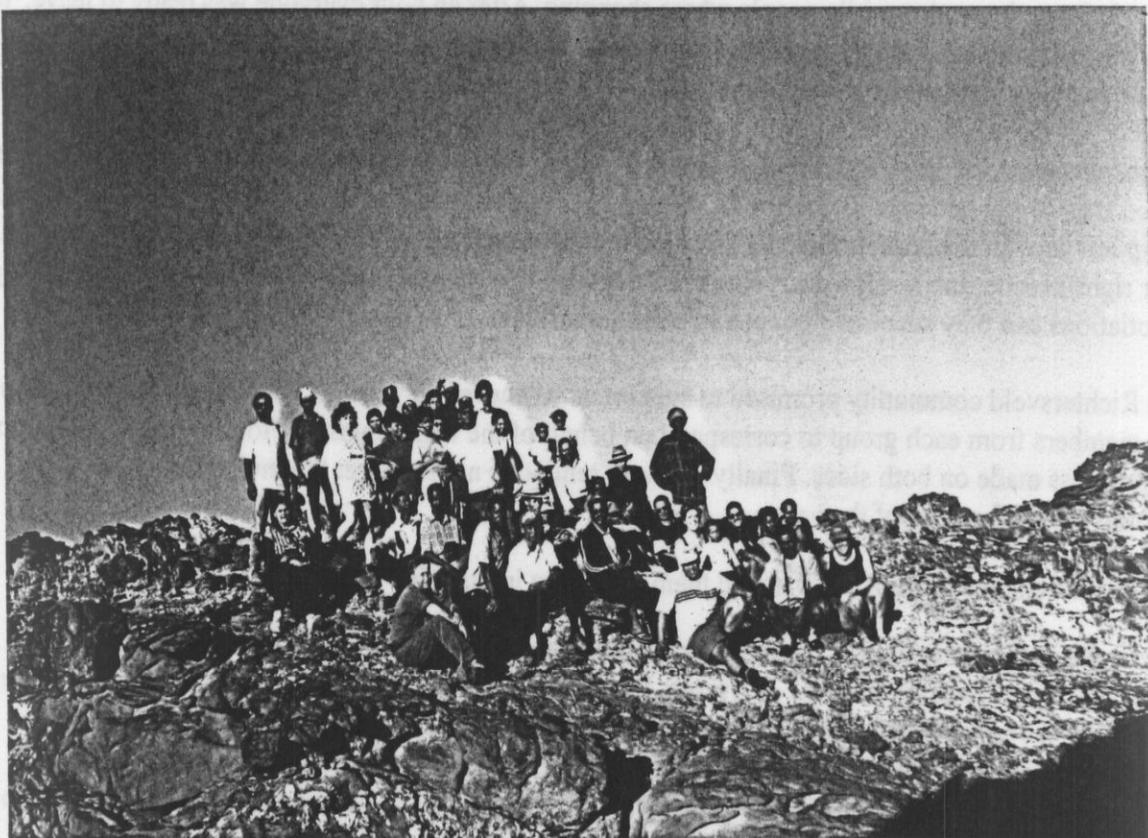
A soft rain fell continuously and the meeting started as soon as we arrived with the people from Walvis Bay. All the people from the settlement below Utuseb were already there.

The meeting was opened by one of the elders and I welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending this important meeting despite the rainy weather.

I introduced the coordinators of the exchange programme and explained the entire program from the first day it started. I gave a detailed background on the preparations done before the tour program commenced and then I gave the floor to the exchange group as they were responsible for the entire feedback programme.

Details of the feedback meeting are presented in a separate report.

Topnaar-Richtersveld Exchange Group – May 1997



Appendix

Minutes of predeparture meetings
held at Oswater

Minutes of Exchange Group meeting held at Homeb on Saturday 26th April 1997

Minutes taken by Ruth Jones

Participants: Rudolph Dausab - Topnaar Community Councilor
Ruth Jones and Francisco Van Nooten - Project Facilitators
Topnaar Exchange Group members: Immanuel and Esau Kooitjie, Irine Engelbrecht,
Irine and Maureen !Khurisas, Pete Kasper, Bennie and Eddie Kariseb, Matheus
Cloete, Rudolph Dausab, Ruth Jones, Francisco Van-Nooten.

TC = Topnaar Community

14.30: Bennie opens with a prayer

Rudolph introduces the day:

"The group is getting smaller and smaller each time. We may have an unexpected increase nearer the time. The minutes from this and the previous meetings will be translated into Afrikaans and distributed throughout the community as proof that real issues have been addressed in these meetings.

Last week we spoke mostly about what we want to achieve from the visit to Bergsig. We identified the main issues to be addressed or looked at during the trip. The questions for this week are: *how will we receive the Richtersveld group?; how will we organise the reception?; what do we want to provide the group with?* We must come up with ideas for the programme."

Eddie proposes that the organisers wait for the Richtersveld group at Gobabeb whilst the others remain at Homeb to prepare the reception.

Details of Reception:

Sunday 11th May - afternoon: When people arrive, they will be welcomed by a 'nama-stap' dancing group and will be given fresh water as a sign of hospitality. **Immanuel** will put ash on the foreheads of the visitors. Two elders will be invited to attend the reception. Oma Johanna will be one of these. The organisers will be the first to introduce themselves and the group as a whole. Individuals will then introduce themselves. The Richtersveld group will be invited to do the same.

Rudolph suggests that the group be met at the Solitaire junction to ensure that they don't miss the turning! In this case, the group will be taken straight to Homeb for the reception. If it is not too late, they will be shown the plains and the Welwitschias. Sundowner at Homeb.

Monday 12th May: Drive along the Kuiseb

At each settlement: *Where was the name derived from?; What happens at each settlement?*

- **Homeb:** **Edward** suggests that he should give the group a short tour of Homeb explaining a little about the history of the settlement. He will indicate certain areas, such as the grave sites, which are of importance for tourism and how they may be used in the future.
- **Natab2:** If there is no representation for Natab2 in the Exchange Group, this settlement will not be visited, just mentioned.
- **Gobabeb:** Ruth and Francisco will be responsible for giving a brief history of Gobabeb.
- **Sautrivier:** Rudolph will show the group the salt pans and the fog screen.
- **Utuseb:** School - developments and future plans.
- **Rooibank:** Rudolph will arrange for the group to visit the Water Works.
- **Scheppmansdorp:** Rudolph will explain the historical significance of the area.
- **!Nara fields:** **Esau** will explain the importance of the !Nara within the TC.

Rudolph will invite a worker from the !Nara fields to demonstrate the processing of the fruit.

Suggestions:

- *Build a small traditional hut out of date branches: Immanuel and Matheus are responsible for organising this. The demonstration will be carried out in this hut.*
- *Traditional value and uses of !Nara will be explained:*
 - behind every plant there is myth
 - necklaces, dance anklets
 - sharpened rib bones were traditionally used to harvest and prepare the !Nara

Walvis Bay Municipality: If there is enough time, Rudolph would like the group to visit the Municipality. Rudolph will organise overnight accommodation in Walvis Bay - perhaps Church Hall?

Next meeting will be held on the evening of Wednesday 30th at Rudolph's house. This meeting will be the last opportunity for individuals to join the Exchange Group. The group members will be finalised during this meeting.

Minutes of Exchange Group meeting held at Homeb on Saturday 19th April 1997

Minutes taken by Ruth Jones

Participants: Rudolf Dausab - Topnaar Community Councilor
Ruth Jones and Francisco Van Nooten - Project Facilitators
Kate Evans - Project Assistant
Topnaar Exchange Group:

TC = Topnaar Community

TCF = Topnaar Community Foundation

TEG = Topnaar Exchange Group

DRFN = Desert Research Foundation of Namibia

MET = Ministry of Environment and Tourism

DEA = Directorate of Environmental Affairs

7.30 am - Breakfast together

9.15 am - J.Uirab opens the meeting with a prayer

Issue of attendance:

Absentees are identified:

- Helmut Naweb
- Gonzalis Dausab (no longer on exchange having found employment)
- Katherina Herero (unable to attend meeting due to KYG meeting)
- Maria Engelbrecht (as above)
- Jakobus Kooitjie (no longer on exchange)
- Jesaye Animab

- Why are these people not attending the meetings despite being informed ?
- Who is not interested ?
- We should talk to these people to find out whether they are still interested

Rudolf stresses once more that exchange group members must be 100% committed to the exchange. It is better to have a smaller committed group than a larger group where only a few members are committed. Rudolf will speak to those who did not provide good reason for their absence.

Minutes of last meeting:

Rudolf reviews the minutes from previous meeting

In response to point 2 of minutes, A. Kooitjie comments that the principle reason for the enlargement of the Exchange Group is to maximise the level of community feedback. The Topnaar Community must be informed about their history; this should be integrated into the feedback process.

General discussion about question of splitting into groups.

Must establish a strategy; which points are we going to look for ?

Must set guidelines for the next meeting to ensure maximum productivity.

Groups:

Each group must decide what its focus will be. What information should each group target?

Those absent from the last meeting introduce themselves and explain their interest in the exchange:

J.Uirab: Member of original Richtersveld group. Wants to look at tourism; animals, community etc. in Bergsig.

E.Kooitjie: Oswater resident. Youngest son of the late Chief Kooitjie - 'last lamb!'. He recognises that problems exist between Nature Conservation, the Environment and the Community. He would like to see how people in other areas set up forums to address such issues and apply this knowledge to the TC.

J.Beess: Born in Walvis Bay, grew up in the area, now lives at Natab 2. Wants to observe what the relationship between nature and the community is in areas to be visited. Is the situation there similar to the situation among the TC?. People in other areas are able to make a living from their Natural Resources. Is it possible for the TC to do so also?. What about game farming at Natab 2; breeding Springbok or Oryx for example?

A.Kooitjie: Wants to learn more about what is happening elsewhere. His interest is linked particularly to the community youth. Most of the young people have low qualifications. Involvement in such exchange tours will teach them much about how to address problems faced by the community and how to set up community projects. It will also provide the community with a better opportunity to promote the Kuiseb and the community in the context of international tourism. The area has high potential for income-generating activities. Wants to learn how best to apply ideas into the Kuiseb context.

Rudolf reviews all the ideas from the previous meeting and opens the floor for questions.

J.Uirab: Information sharing and community feedback are both essential to this exchange.

- *When will feedback happen?*
- *How will traditional leaders and community interpret feedback?*
- *How can community use feedback to their advantage?*
- *Will the community participate in feedback?*
- *How will they implement ideas generated at the feedback meeting?*
- *How can we motivate the community to participate seriously in future planning?*

For example: J.Uirab started an adult education programme at Utuseb which failed through lack of information and because individuals didn't realise the importance of the programme.

Rudolf: A similar problem was experienced with the gardening project at Utuseb.

- *Why do these projects fail?*
- *We must develop a strategy by which to avoid this happening again.*
- *How can we motivate the community?*
- *How will traditional leaders participate in motivating the community?*
- *What is their role in the feedback process?*
- *How can they strengthen this process?*
- *What will we do if Councilors and leaders are unable to attend the feedback meeting? - will we simply inform them of what has happened on the tour?*

Other comments: The feedback meeting will give the community an opportunity to learn from what other communities in similar situations are doing. It may also provide the community with a vision for the development of community-based tourism projects in the Kuiseb.

The community should be informed of the feedback meeting at least one week in advance. Permission from traditional leaders is not required. Leaders will be involved in the meeting, however we must avoid giving them the opportunity to prepare answers to questions asked by the exchange group and other community members. Responses should be spontaneous.

J.Uirab: The feedback meeting will enable the community to gain the necessary ideas and skills to set up such projects in the future. Again this will require community motivation.

Role of TC:

- *What will the TC do after the feedback?*
- *How will they use information and knowledge gained to initiate community development projects?*
- *Leaders should be the motivators*
- *What will the role be of individual community members (including exchange group members) during and after feedback ?*
- *Who are the other role players in the Park?*
- *What will their roles be during and after feedback?*
- *What role will management authorities play?*
- *What does the community envisage for the future?*

Feedback meeting should be held on **Sunday 18th** before school starts on the Monday. Dates for Bergsig visit should be changed to accommodate this.

Suggestions for Kuiseb programme:

- Richtersveld group will be met at Gobabeb by project facilitators - join exchange group at Homeb
- Traditional reception at Homeb; Richtersveld group will be presented with a traditional dance and water; "*Never deny your enemy water!*" Dance followed by braai. Further details to be arranged later
- Visit to Welwitschia plains
- Detailed map of area
- **J.Uirab:** Elders from each settlement should give a short history focusing on features of interest at the settlement
- **J.Uirab:** Visit to Swartbank Berg - lichens

We must reserve an area to set up tents.

Issues to be addressed and questions to be asked in Bergsig:

- *How was the Bergsig joint venture initially established?*

Francisco divides the group into three smaller groups. Each group appoints one member to present the group discussion output concerning what the group would like to achieve from the tour.

Three main focal points:

1. Management Set up:

- How does it relate to the historical background of the area

2. Infrastructure:

- How was the site set up?
- Whose idea was it originally?
- What materials were used for construction purposes etc.?

3. Natural Resources:

- What are the area's natural assets?
e.g. landscape, wildlife, water features, vegetation etc.
- How important are these natural resources to the community?

12.30 pm - 3.00 pm: Lunch - group discussions over a braai

3.00 pm: Rudolf reviews morning session

Decision made that members of the exchange group who have failed to attend three meetings without good reason will no longer be involved in the exchange.

Group discussion feedback: *Questions and Observations.*

All three groups present their output on flip chart paper; all presentations will be retained for use during exchange evaluation and feedback meeting

Group 1: Management - E.Kooitjie

- Who was responsible for initiating the project?
- Was it someone internal or external to the community?
- Is there a management committee, and if so, how and by whom was it elected?
- How are relations between the community and the management structure?
- How do the two groups communicate and transfer/share information?
- Does the community receive any income from the joint venture, and if so, how is it distributed throughout the community?
- How are rural community members catered for with regard to necessary training?
- Who is responsible for such training?
- Did people receive any formal training - for example in establishing the campsite - or was it an internal community initiative?
- How does the community survive from day to day?
- How do individuals contribute to generating income for households?

Group 2: Infrastructure - J.Tjitekulu

- Who was responsible for the construction of the buildings?; i.e. community/government?
- Who is responsible for management of accommodation etc.?; i.e. private/community?
 - More luxurious? More traditional ?
- What tourist attractions exist? e.g. - swimming pool?
 - 5 star accommodation?
- Type of accommodation: e.g. - hotels?
 - bungalows?
 - traditional huts constructed using traditional materials e.g. reeds, wood, bottles, tins?
- Where is their source of water?; river, bore hole?
- Type of pump: e.g. wind, diesel, electrical?
- Do they have electricity?
- Are animals kept within certain boundaries? If so, what materials are used to construct boundaries?; who is responsible for maintenance?
- How do people benefit from wildlife inside the fence? e.g. - hunting seasons for trophy hunters?
- If income is generated from such activities, how is it used? e.g. maintenance or improvement of the park¹?

¹ The Bergsig community does not live within a National Park; the 'Joint Cooperation Venture' is between the Bergsig-de-Riet Residents Trust and Wilderness Safaris Namibia. The Ministry of Environment and Tourism are not, therefore, players in the project.

Group 3: Natural Resources - J.Uirab

- Are there any natural/geological features which serve as tourist attractions?
- What types of animals occur in the *park*? Do these animals attract tourists?
- What are the dominant physical landscape features?
- Does the area have sand dunes?
- Do *Welwitschia* occur in the area? If so, are they used to benefit the *park* or the community in any way?
- The !Nara possesses great traditional and cultural value for the Topnaar community. Does the Bergsig community have such a plant, and if so, how is this plant used?
- Are there watering points for wildlife?
- Are there any natural underground springs? If so, is this water resource used to benefit the community or does it just provide for game-viewing purposes?
- Does the area have any interesting historical features such as old disused mines? If so, have these features been developed as tourist attractions?
- Old traditional grave sites in the Kuiseb have important historical connections; are there such features in other areas and if so, how important are they within the context of the community and *park*?
- Religion was brought to the Topnaar community by missionary Herr Sheppman who established the first church at Scheppmansdorp near Rooibank. Does the Bergsig community have such religious buildings? If so, do they attract tourists and are they still functional?
- Does the community keep domestic animals such as donkeys?
- Are donkeys used for tourism purposes?
- The roots of the !Nara are used by the Topnaars for medicinal purposes. Are there plants in Bergsig which are used for such purposes by the community?

Summary: How will these objectives be achieved?

Francisco gives an introduction to Venn diagrams². He demonstrates their value by showing the group how they can be used to identify the various parties involved in facilitating the exchange programme and their importance in relation to each other:

- *individuals are asked to write down on a piece of paper which organisation they think is the main role player in this exchange programme.*
- *they cut the paper into a circle to a size which represents the importance of that organisation relative to others.*

Role players identified: **DRFN, MET, DEA, TC, TCF, TEG.**

J.Uirab states his view that "The DRFN initiated the exchange originally to enable the community to see how the Richtersveld people live". He is unaware of the role that the LIFE project plays in the Exchange programme. This prompts Rudolph Dausab and Ruth Jones to explain what the LIFE project is:

- 'LIFE' stands for **Living In a Finite Environment.**
- LIFE is a non profit-making charitable organisation which supports many small-scale development-related community initiatives such as the Richtersveld-Topnaar Exchange programme.
- LIFE funded the trip to the Richtersveld last year and is funding the exchange this year. It is therefore an important player in the programme.

Volleyball and Football provide entertainment whilst braai is prepared.

² Venn diagrams are a PRA tool. PRA stands for Participatory Rural Appraisal -

Sunday morning: Francisco continues to demonstrate some PRA tools.

Rudolph Dausab makes the following points:

- *When the project started, the TCF was not yet established*
- *The initial idea was generated in 1992 during the socio-ecological survey of the Kuiseb. The survey requested ministerial support (in the way of transport and finances) to enable the community to go on tours. Nothing happened until 1996 when the DEA asked the DRFN to organise for a group from the Topnaar Community to visit the Richtersveld National Park in South Africa where the community was celebrating the fifth anniversary of the proclamation of the Park as a 'People's Park'. The LIFE project provided the funding for this visit. The DRFN were therefore the facilitators of the process.*

Details for the feedback meeting are discussed:

- *The TC are the target group*
- *MET and DEA should receive a report of the exchange trip and the feedback meeting*
- *The TCF and the DRFN will give an introduction to the tour*
- *The TEG and REG will divide into three groups to give presentations on the group topics identified: Management, Infrastructure, Natural Resources*

Comments:

- *What do the TEG expect from the feedback meeting and from the TC as a whole?*
 - *The TC should tell us how effective the feedback meeting is.*
 - *What will the next step be following feedback meeting?*
 - *Are people interested in Community-Based Tourism activities?*
 - *The initiative for the 'next step' should also come from the TEG.*
 - *Would the TEG and TC be interested in another exchange? If so, should it be the same group?*
-

**Minutes of Exchange Group meeting held on
Saturday 12th April 1997**

Minutes taken by Ruth Jones

Participants: Rudolf Dausab - Topnaar Community Councilor
Ruth Jones and Francisco Van Nooten - Project Facilitators
Kate Evans - Project Assistant
Topnaar Exchange Group:

Introduction to Exchange Programme - Rudolf:

- The exchange trip is a follow up to the Richterveld visit last year attended by five members of the Topnaar community to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the proclamation of the park as a People's Park.
- Rudolf explained the reason why the group has been enlarged.
- It was decided that the sticker exercise suggested by Francisco was too childish and that people should introduce themselves.
- All members of the group introduced themselves explaining why they are interested in being involved in the exchange.

Reasons for attending the meeting and being involved in exchange:

Bennie Englehad

The exchange is important for the development of the Kuiseb

G.Dausab

Interested in learning more about the trip; the exchange is crucial for educational programmes.

Irine Engelbrecht

Doesn't just want to learn for herself; wants to plough back knowledge obtained from the exchange into the community.

J.Animab

Wants to introduce ideas generated from the trip into the community on return to the Kuiseb. Feels that the trip will be most educational.

H.Naweb

Is interested in seeing how people take development into their own hands. Currently there is no real motivation from Topnaar community leaders for the community to start development initiatives. How do leaders in other communities motivate communities so that unskilled individuals are able to contribute to development?

M.Cloete

Wants to see how people in other communities participate in projects. How do people work together? Wants to compare the Topnaar situation with the areas that will be visited on the exchange. How can the information gathered be used as educational and developmental tools?

E.Kootijie

If he takes part in the exchange, he requests that he and fellow participants (especially those who left school at an early age) "should not go with torn pockets, but with strongly sewn pockets. We should open our eyes and ears in order to see, hear and retain all the information that we obtain. The information should be conveyed back to the community to allow us to develop ourselves in a way that will earn us a living".

T.Gariseb

Wants to learn as much as possible and would like to see a cheetah!

P.Kasper

Feels that the trip will be very interesting and hopes to learn much from other communities. Wants to convey the information gathered back to the young people in the area especially.

T.Kham

Very enthusiastic about the exchange and hopes to learn as much as possible so that she can bring something back for the community.

M.Engelbrecht

Is very happy and enthusiastic about the exchange and is really encouraged and motivated by the other members of the exchange group. The organizers should not be afraid to pressurize the exchange group. Is really looking forward to sharing different ideas and opinions with the Richtersveld and Bergsig communities.

M.Khurasas

Wants to see some animals!

I.Khurasas

Wants to learn as much as possible and to share this knowledge with her parents and other people around her.

B.Beukes

Wants to share experiences with fellow community members.

J.J. (J. Tjitekulu)

Is keen to learn from the Richtersveld and Bergsig communities and to bring back information to share with community members.

K.Herero

Hopes to learn much. Is very interested in tourism and wants to learn more about what's happening in other areas particularly concerning young people. Looking for a job in tourism!

G.Dausab

Would like to see what responsibilities young people in other communities have. Wants to share this information with the Topnaar youth in order to motivate them to stand up and act.

C.Fischer

Although not involved in the exchange, she requests that the exchange group members learn as much as possible from the tour and share what they learn with the community in order to motivate others not involved in this year's exchange to get involved in possible future exchanges.

Rudolf:

- Some people who were supposed to attend the meeting are not here. A list will be made of these people and they will be asked once more whether they are still interested in taking part in the exchange. We need committed people.
- Rudolf introduces the proposed exchange programme to the group; time frame, dates etc.

J.Animab

When the Tour group returned from the Richtersveld visit last year, why wasn't there a proper feedback meeting and won't this repeat itself this time?

Suggestions for programme:

- Visit to Welwitschia fields
- Detailed map of the area
- Individuals from exchange group representing various settlements should be prepared to give a short account of the history of the settlement

Exchange and Feedback meeting on return from Bergsig:

Some concern shown over the proposed dates for community feedback; will look into the possibility of changing the dates so that they don't coincide with the start of school.

Suggested dates: Saturday May 10th - Sunday May 18th.

Next weekend's meeting: Friday 18th - Sunday 20th April

- Exchange group members must commit themselves to the time frame.
- Those living in Walvis Bay should meet at Rudolf's house at 6.00pm on Friday evening.
- Meeting will occur at Homeb if tents can be provided, and if not, possibly at Gobabeb.
- Food will be provided.

Other:

Young members of the Exchange Group have been invited to join the Kuiseb Youth Group.
