



Norwegian Church Aid – UNESCO sponsored

**African Indigenous Peoples’
Workshop on Traditional Knowledge,
Identity and Livelihoods**

Tanzania - South Africa – Rwanda - Gabon

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Organised by Indigenous Peoples of Africa Co-ordinating
Committee and Dorobo Safaris

in co-operation with the South African San Institute,
la Communauté des Autochtones Rwandais,
Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa
and Forest Peoples Project

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Summary

In November 2003, a group of non-governmental agencies and indigenous peoples organisations co-operated to do an exchange visit between hunter-gatherer and post-hunter-gatherer peoples from East, Central and Southern Africa.

The purpose of the exchange was to further a dialogue on the issue of land rights, maintenance of knowledge systems, languages and cultures, management of conservation areas and the creation of livelihoods. The focus was on giving grassroots indigenous people an opportunity to meet different communities and reflect on their mutual experiences.

In addition, the visit was an opportunity for staff of Norwegian Church Aid and the Indigenous Peoples of Africa Co-ordinating Committee to look at common themes and methods that can inform their work in Africa.

The teams, consisting of South African and Rwandan indigenous peoples, visited the Hadzabe people of the Yaeda Valley in Northern Tanzania for a week and then the ǀKhomani San in North-western South Africa (the southern Kalahari desert). This report provides a summary of the experiences, reflections and learnings from those site visits. There are three parts to the overall report: the main report (this document), a detailed transcript of the discussions in South Africa and reflections after the event from Tanzania.

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Introduction

The idea for this exchange visit emerged from a number of different inter-agency discussions and a growing awareness internationally that the hunter-gatherer peoples of Africa are economically and politically extremely vulnerable and yet they are also intellectually rich with a strong knowledge base linked to the ecology of their environments. Traditional hunter-gatherer education teaches people to be analytical, mindful and to build up encyclopaedic knowledge of animal behaviour, plant types, spoor identification and numerous other intellectual and practical skills. This knowledge base is rarely drawn into policy making and hunter-gatherer peoples throughout Africa suffer from severe land loss, political marginalisation and eventually cultural collapse and poverty.

The different agencies currently working with hunter-gatherer peoples in East, Central (Great Lakes) and Southern Africa share a common vision of advocacy and practical support to indigenous peoples so that they can help protect their rights and inform policy-making in favour of both cultural and ecological sustainability.

The challenge in this work is to deal with the stigma associated with hunters at the local level and the ignorance or lack of information at the central government level. From the side of the communities, the challenge is to find legitimate representative leadership in societies that traditionally do not have much hierarchy or designated spokespersons. In post-hunter-gatherer societies various types of trauma and subsequent socio-pathologies such as substance abuse and domestic violence often compound the problem of marginalisation and representation.

Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) has been expanding its commitment to indigenous peoples in Africa. It has provided important support to the southern African San and San support agencies including the **Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA)**, **Letloa** working in Botswana, and the **South African San Institute (SASI)**¹. In the past few years, NCA has started to support Batwa projects in Rwanda and is looking to play a supportive role to Batwa and Bambuti Pygmy² peoples in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). NCA programming in Tanzania is relatively new. NCA is co-operating with the **Ujamaa Community Resource Trust** to look at creative ways of meeting basic needs of the Hadza community in the Yaeda valley.

UNESCO³ Cultural Policy Division has been involved in a series of initiatives in Africa to raise the profile of indigenous peoples and specifically to look at how indigenous knowledge systems and cultural development strategies can help inform national and international policy frameworks on the maintenance of cultural diversity. In 2001, UNESCO released its key platform document on the relationship between

¹ WIMSA is a San run organisation. SASI and Letloa are support organisations which include San staff.

² 'Pygmy', like the term 'Bushman' is sometimes considered to be pejorative. Some communities and leaders use the term, others reject it. No offence is intended by its use here.

³ UNESCO = United Nations Educational Scientific Culture and Communications Organisation.

culture, development and communications – the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity. In November 2002, UNESCO co-operated with the UN Human Rights High Commissioner and the International Labour Organisation to host a meeting with indigenous peoples of Central Africa in Gabon, entitled: Pygmy Peoples, Human Rights, Development and Cultural Diversity.

The **Indigenous Peoples of Africa Co-ordinating Committee** (IPACC) has had a mandate since near its inception in 1997 that it should be supporting the most marginalised groups in Africa, specifically those who currently live or previously lived by hunting and gathering. IPACC has provided support to Batwa and San networks and has put significant resources into outreach efforts to hunter-gatherers in Kenya.

Forest Peoples Project has had a long-term commitment to its Rwandan project partner, the **Communauté des Autochtones Rwandais** (Community of Indigenous Rwandans). FPP also supports a project in southern Uganda and makes outreach to groups in Cameroon, Burundi and DRC. In 2001, FPP and CAURWA sponsored a dialogue between indigenous peoples on land rights and the environment. Representatives of WIMSA, SASI and the †Khomani people attended the workshop to give a presentation on their own experience of land claims, cultural resource management, land mapping and ethno-botanical research.

It was only a matter of time before these interests flowed together. The passion for the exchange visit came from Hans Petter Hergum, the NCA programme officer for the indigenous peoples of Africa programming. Hans Petter, in dialogue with his NCA colleagues, David 'Daudi' Peterson (Dorobo Safaris), Nigel Crawhall (IPACC) and Dorothy Jackson (FPP), hit upon the idea of a three country exchange where hunter-gatherer peoples could reflect on different approach to maintaining their cultures, looking at issues of land rights, tenure, political organisation and livelihoods. Ujamaa Community Resource Trust in Tanzania has been supporting the Hadzabe community to secure political control over their territories and to create additional livelihoods through tourism. The South African San Institute (SASI), in co-operation with Open Channels (UK), Strata 360 (CDN) and UNESCO Cultural Policy Division has been implementing and documenting a ground breaking project on cultural resources auditing and management in the Southern Kalahari⁴. The two situations, the Yaeda Valley and the southern Kalahari, provided very different yet inter-connected case studies of indigenous peoples trying to hold onto their lands, identity and cultures. The situations are reviewed below.

The exchange consisted of taking a team of indigenous peoples to the Yaeda Valley in northern Tanzania to visit the Hadzabe people for one week. The Hadzabe are living primarily from hunting and gathering but are experiencing land loss to neighbouring peoples, primarily pastoralists who have themselves been dislodged from other areas. The team, including four Hadza representatives, then travelled to the southern Kalahari Desert of South Africa to meet with the †Khomani San people. The †Khomani had a successful land claim in 1999 that included getting a portion of their territory returned to their full ownership. Part of the settlement includes ownership of 25 000ha of land inside the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park.

⁴ WIMSA and Open Channels have co-operated with the Hai||om community on a similar project of land, heritage and knowledge mapping. The Etosha project was managed by Ute Dieckmann.

Ideally, the project should have also visited Rwanda to understand the dynamics of that country, which has been through the most extreme situation of human rights violations against indigenous⁵ and majority peoples. The funding and logistics did not permit additional travelling for such a large delegation. The CAURWA / Batwa team brought their voices and experience into the exchange project and hopefully returned home with new ideas and greater confidence in their convictions. UNESCO Division for Cultural Policies assisted us in making a connection to Pygmy people in Gabon. One activist and an anthropologist joined us from Gabon and were rapidly integrated into the South African proceedings. We had hoped to have a full team of representatives from the Hai||om community of Etosha National Park in Namibia. WIMSA's regional San specialist, Mathambo Ngakaeaja attended with a colleague from Botswana.

Why Hunter-Gatherers?

During our visit to the Yaeda Valley in Tanzania we were able to witness a fully intact hunter-gathering economy. People feed themselves each day while protecting the full range of biodiversity in their territory. Trees are not cut down, wild animals are not driven away or killed (other than for food), most settlements are temporary and seasonal. The impact of people on their environment is light and well balanced.

The Hadzabe explained to us that during their discussions with neighbouring pastoralists and agriculturalists, the other groups talked about drought and their memories of famine. The Hadzabe have no memory of famine. There is always food even when game is scarce. Hunter-gatherers rely on a wide variety of bush foods and are not dependent on one type of animal or one type of alien plant. They, and their food, are part of the ecosystem, not imposed on top of it.

The immediate crisis faced by most hunter-gatherers is land loss. Land alienation and the destruction of eco-systems by food producing peoples have caused problems ranging from diminishing food resources all the way to genocide. This crisis is primarily political in origin. Most governments and some development agencies think of hunting and gathering territories as unoccupied and they think of the people as unproductive. Policies for giving land to food producing peoples work against the interests of hunter-gatherers who have no voice in the political system and, at the same time, usually have a deleterious effect on the ecological systems. The main crisis in East Africa has been the destruction of forest areas or the creation of National Parks, which expel the aboriginal owners of the land.

The colonial economic models were designed to extract raw resources out of Africa. The Europeans, as agricultural societies themselves, naturally favoured agriculturalists over pastoralists in their occupation and dominance of the continent. The British in particular needed local collaborating peoples to produce food surpluses. However unequal and exploitative that relationship was, it had the effect of pushing agricultural peoples into positions of dominance in the postcolonial systems. Agriculturalists associated with the colonial regimes received education and opportunities that translated into political power after Independence.

In this political economy pastoralists were highly marginalised, as they remain so today

⁵ In 1994, during the general turmoil of the genocide approximately one third of the 30 000 Batwa Pygmies were killed by both of the dominant ethnic groups, Hutu and Tutsi.

in Kenya, Tanzania, Namibia, Cameroon, Guinea and other African countries. Yet if pastoralists were marginalised, hunter-gatherers were non-entities. In some Central African countries it is still common to hear people speaking of citizens and Pygmies as exclusive categories. In South Africa, a country obsessed by race during the 40 years of apartheid, the hunter-gatherer peoples who were not exterminated by the settlers had their identities removed and were reclassified as being mixed race. If there was any doubt about vulnerability of hunter-gatherers the genocidal war of 1994 in Rwanda made it clear that this particular community with little civil society organisation and no political voice could be slaughtered without the international community making any comment⁶.

The marginalisation of hunter-gatherers and the ignorance of policy makers are nowhere more apparent than in the creation of National Parks on indigenous lands. Where indigenous peoples have had sustainable relationships with the eco-system for millennia, they are suddenly expelled by the state to 'protect' the environment. There are very few cases in Africa where the state and NGOs have recognised that the indigenous people are themselves experts in nature conservation and could, through mutually beneficial agreements, assist the state in maintaining special conservation areas as well as adding value for the tourist. Our visit to the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park was a reminder how staff working in the Park know very little about the heritage of the area or the cultural landscape that is presented to the tourist as a blank slate.

Another indicator that highlights the extreme vulnerability of indigenous peoples and moreover hunter-gatherer societies is the current rate of language death. The official UNESCO red book on languages estimates that of the world's approximately 6000 languages, over 50% are in danger of extinction in the coming twenty years.

Luisa Maffi of Terralingua writes:

Along with the loss of biodiversity and the erosion of traditional cultures, the world is currently undergoing a third extinction crisis: that of the diversity of human languages. Causes and consequences of all these phenomena reside in the ever more unsustainable exploitation of the earth's natural resources, as well as the growing marginalisation and dispossession of indigenous and minority groups who struggle for survival and self-determination as distinct peoples, with their own land bases and means of subsistence. Increasingly, these peoples see their languages and cultural traditions – and the fight to protect or restore linguistic rights – as essential elements of this struggle. (Maffi 1999: 19)

The scientific community is still not clear how fast languages are dying but it appears that a major crisis is unfolding at present. Typically, some of these endangered languages are those of ecologically vulnerable indigenous peoples and not necessarily oppressed minorities. Where as groups such as the Roma of Europe hold tightly to their languages, we see an extreme destruction of languages amongst the first peoples of the world, in Canada, Australia, the United States, South Africa, Brazil and elsewhere. The East African pattern is for agriculturalists to displace herders who in turn encroach on the lands of hunter-gatherers. Hunting-gathering economies require a large territory to

⁶ The Rwandan genocide was a terrible experience for the whole country. Many people died needlessly while the world community stood to one side. It was a double tragedy that the world media and NGOs considered the conflict to be between Hutu and Tutsi peoples and ignored the terrible losses and post-genocidal vulnerability of the first peoples.

maintain the requisite bio-diversity. Once that territory shrinks too far the economy is unviable and there is a rapid social disintegration as young people marry into the dominant herding group and take on that language (See Crawhall: in progress) .

Reaction of the Non-government sector

In the new millennium, as a result of a world wide awakening to significance of indigenous knowledge systems, there is some new thinking about how indigenous and local approaches to sustainability may need to inform current economic planning. Notably, the idea that pastoralism is inherently uneconomic and impractical have been strongly challenged in East Africa.

Indigenous pastoralists (such as the Beja, Maasai, Barabaig, Mb ororo and others), who have been active in Africa for several thousand years, have shown that they have the culturally based knowledge which can be used to manage semi-arid range lands, drought resistant stock, and their own social systems to maintain an economic safety net and population control. In contrast, and the contrast is extreme, agriculturalists the world over have shown that they do not have the same kinds of checks and balances. Agricultural communities require ever-increasing access to labour and land to sustain them. Their approaches usually include a steady destruction of wild areas, of forests, of water catchments, and displacement of traditional foodstuffs and medicines from the land. Agriculture has been devastating for Africa. It has undermined the aeons old bio-diversity of the continent and led to situations of overpopulation, soil erosion, drought, famine and conflict.

The role of international development agencies, in general, is to help alleviate poverty around the globe, notably in the South. The origins of poverty and human suffering are multiple, complex and debatable. During the 1960s and 1970s, Northern countries attempted to support newly independent African states to alleviate poverty and achieve some measure of social stability. The model of development was more or less that of Europe and North America, namely to promote intensive mono-cropped agriculture to allow African economies to enter world markets and earn foreign exchange to purchase things they were not producing themselves.

The general consensus is that the approach of that period failed to deliver sustainability. It failed in part because the donor countries were sometimes operating with agendas that had little to do with sustainable development. Government agencies were then, as now, frequently driven by unreliable political agendas. Certain countries were using development assistance to boost domestic trade and industry interests or were looking to secure raw materials from the South for processing in Northern economies. Sometimes the problem was that projects were being organised through the elite of the African states and as such were not participatory and worked against the interests of rural communities. Whatever the problems were, the underlying paradigm remained agricultural and often based on inappropriate understandings of the environment, ignorance of local knowledge and norms, and geared only to short or medium term needs. This is a much-debated issue and this brief summary is only one perspective and evidently a generalisation.

Hunting and gathering as both an economic activity and cultural identity is regaining attention in Africa. This is due to two main reasons: there is a greater awareness of the

vulnerability of the indigenous peoples of the world and there is a growing concern about the implications of the continuing destruction of the world's biodiversity and supporting ecosystems.

The United Nations has facilitated a Decade on the Rights of the World's Indigenous Peoples (1994 – 2004). Many have been dissatisfied with the response of governments to the Decade but nonetheless it has created extraordinary forums for the world's first peoples to speak out. UNESCO's General Conference has adopted a Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity that includes reference to taking a pro-active approach to the protection of the cultural heritage of indigenous peoples.

The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), in connection with the Global Biodiversity Assessment, has published a tome about indigenous perspectives on conservation entitled Cultural and Spiritual Values of Biodiversity. However difficult the challenge, UNEP and the Global Environment Facility (GEF)'s programming is turning its attention to perspectives of hunter-gatherer societies.

The 1992 Rio Convention on Biodiversity is probably the most important international forum that linked the issues of indigenous peoples' cultural and knowledge systems with the world's ecological survival. In Johannesburg, ten years later, delegates noted the limited progress made on implementing the Convention, but the principle that indigenous peoples must be consulted came home to Africa and was ratified by the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. Close behind this came the IUCN's ⁷ World Parks Congress in Durban in 2003, which included high visibility of indigenous peoples who have been excluded from conservation efforts.

The most powerful indicator that indigenous peoples' rights are going to be an issue in the years to come has been the creation of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) in 2002. UNPFII is a high level committee of ECOSOC that includes eight indigenous experts from around the world to help monitor the work of the UN agencies and their impact on indigenous peoples.

There is growing attention to the importance of a more holistic approach to development. Agencies are starting to recognise the relevance of peoples' cultural systems, many agencies see human rights and tolerance as important components of their work. Moreover, there is a slowly growing awareness that indigenous peoples have development paradigms that are substantially different from those known by the dominant ethnic groups of the Western world who typically set the agendas.

For the few good examples of work (e.g. Farm Africa's work with pastoralists in Kenya and Ethiopia) there are also devastating examples of ignorance. A major Canadian agency has been involved with state sponsored development projects that have had grim results for indigenous peoples in Africa. In Tanzania, the Canadian agency worked with the government to establish a wheat-growing project in the Hanang District. There was no recognition that this territory was indigenous peoples' land and part of the migratory territory of Barabaig pastoralists. The displacement of the Barabaig created a chain reaction that eventually led to various Tatoga groups being pushed deep into Hadza territory in the Yaeda Valley. The same agency then supported the government of Cameroon to develop a law on forests and forestry. The consultation process excluded

⁷ IUCN = International Union for the Conservation of Nature, usually known by its acronym.

the aboriginal Baaka Pygmy peoples. The new law extinguishes the rights of the First Peoples and requires them to move into resettlement villages. Meanwhile international logging companies cut trails through the equatorial forest, some of which have destroyed Pygmy villages and wreaked havoc on the ecosystem. This agency has done other creative work with indigenous peoples in the Americas but has no policy or monitoring mechanisms to ensure that First Peoples are taken into account in its work in Africa or Asia.

Response of Governments

While we were in Tanzania, the Ujamaa Community Resource Trust brought to IPACC's attention an article written by Dr James Suzman in the **New African**. In the article, Suzman attacks the notion that we can speak of indigenous rights in Africa. He particularly takes exception for the calls for African governments to sign International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 169 on the rights of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples which he refers to as '*a legal instrument so inappropriate to Africa that no African government has signed it*'. (Suzman 2003: 52)

Few Africans are keen on the idea of privileging any group in perpetuity on the basis of their ethnicity as ILO 169 demands. Nevertheless as far as Survival International is concerned ILO 169 constitutes 'international law'

A core principle in the constitution of the Republic of South Africa is that there has to be redress for past discrimination. The goal of ILO 169 is not to privilege anyone, it is to eradicate insidious forms of discrimination that make Africa's first peoples vulnerable in the current legal and constitutional situation. There is no perceived conflict between the principles in ILO 169 and the South African constitution, for example.

Suzman goes on to say:

Governments formally oppose ILO 169 because of the logic of the indigenous rights message clashes with a universal conception of individual human rights since it apportions special rights in perpetuity on the basis of ethnicity. (ibid)

Here the European value system has been used to eclipse Africa's own experience and legal heritage. Africa was the first continent to adopt the principle that rights are held by both peoples and individuals as far back as the 1940s. Today, the main mechanism for protecting rights at the continental level is the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights. In 2002, at the request of the South African Commissioner, the African Commission created a working group to study the situation of indigenous peoples. Even though a few African governments attempted to protest against the investigation the general view of Commissioners and jurists was that this topic needed to be addressed. The findings of the Commission will be released shortly.

Despite Suzman's assertions, African governments are starting to adjust their perspectives on first peoples. South Africa is in the process of adopting new policies that will recognise 'vulnerable indigenous communities' in line with UN instruments including ILO Convention 169 and the UN Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Rwanda has allocated 8 places in the Senate for representatives of 'historically marginalised communities', - this is likely to include Batwa who are in dialogue with the President's office. CAURWA has raised the issue of signing ILO Convention 169 with the

government.

Kenya is in the process of re-writing its constitution. Pastoralist and hunter-gatherer lobbies are attempting to create a constitutional basis for recognising the rights of indigenous peoples in line with international instruments. Even if this does not work, it is likely that Kenya will accept a policy adjustment to recognise the needs of the indigenous peoples. Lastly, Morocco, which harshly suppressed its indigenous Amazigh (Berber) majority, has unbanned their language and has created a Royal Institute of Amazigh Language and Culture. Morocco, Namibia, South Africa, Ghana, Burundi, Rwanda, Burkina Faso and other African countries are regularly attending UN meetings on the rights of indigenous peoples.

Even countries where indigenous peoples have not entered formal dialogue with the governments, the interventions by the ILO and the promotion of ILO 169 have been welcomed. These countries include the Central African Republic, Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

A human rights approach to the issue of indigenous peoples has not been particularly successful in Africa. But as Suzman carefully ignores, the concept of first peoples or indigenous peoples is a well understood concept in Africa. There are special terms in dominant languages for the first peoples: Batwa, Abathwa, Boesmans, Basarwa, Baroa, Dorobo, Boni, Ntorobo, Sanye, Mang'ati, Tindiga and many others. Despite all the abuse hunter-gatherers have received since colonial times, the general view of the dominant groups is that hunter-gatherers have special spiritual and healing powers. This is not a European agenda, it is a cultural reality on the ground in Africa. The challenge is to support governments and indigenous peoples to find a common platform to talk about their issues. The onus is on the First Peoples to show that they add value to national development. Their strategic niche area is in conservation, wild life management, anti-poaching and eco-tourism. This point is not lost on African governments, particularly when presented in a palatable way.

Aims of the Exchange

The aim of the workshop was to give an opportunity to grassroots indigenous people to look at situations of other indigenous peoples and reflect on the issues that are impacting on their own quality of life and survival. We deliberately balanced the teams to make sure the representatives had leadership credibility at home but were not political leaders. The representatives should be owners of traditional knowledge living with their community. This way they would be able to look at the indigenous knowledge base of the other groups and see where there were connections, parallels and differences.

Overall, we were trying to help people understand the relationship between land loss / land control / land ownership on the one hand and cultural sustainability, survival of languages and knowledge systems on the other. It has been our experience that where people lose their land base they rapidly experience a disintegration of the knowledge base. From a development perspective, indigenous knowledge systems are an excellent resource base to develop livelihood alternatives, even if hunting and gathering must be curtailed. However, the normal pattern is that people lose their land and in the process

lose confidence in their own cultural systems and knowledge base. The knowledge becomes fragmented and is not passed from one generation to the next the way it would be in the daily life of hunters and gatherers.

The reason the knowledge is lost is understandable. People have short and medium term priorities that impact on them intensely. Without some internal strategy or external facilitation, impoverished and splintered communities are unlikely to be able to use their collective knowledge base to invent new livelihood opportunities, particularly where the policy environment is hostile. The exchange was an opportunity for peoples in differing states of coherence to reflect on their long-term survival.

As with much of our work, we also know that there are additional benefits that come with bringing people together. The building of solidarity, the feeling that you are not alone in your struggle is a powerful boost for people struggling in their daily lives to feed their families or hold onto their territories. Today, the three societies are in very different situations of vulnerability, however that may change for better or for worse in the coming years. The †Khomani situation was dire in the 1980s and has improved; meanwhile the Batwa situation has degraded radically in the last ten years⁸. The Hadzabe situation is clearly the best but the risks are quite apparent. We believe that there are lessons that the delegates could take home that would help inform each group in their particular struggles.

Objectives

We set specific outcome objectives:

1. Bring Rwandan Batwa and South African †Khomani San to Hadzabe territory in Tanzania;
2. Visit Hadzabe communities in the Yaeda Valley, looking at how people hunt, gather wild foods, control their lands, deal with other peoples moving into their territory, use conservation as a bulwark against land loss;
3. Use the Dorobo Safaris experience as a case study of ethno-eco-tourism;
4. Bring Hadzabe and Rwandan Batwa to South Africa to look at the †Khomani work on cultural resources auditing and management, cultural landscape mapping, the land claim, the relationship with Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park and various income generating and social projects;
5. Invite Gabonais pygmy activists, representatives of the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA) and the Hai||om San community of Namibia to join the South African site visit;
6. Bring NCA staff together to look at the dynamics in the different communities and learn more about work with hunter-gatherer and post-hunter-gatherer societies;
7. Invite a representative from UNESCO to participate in the South African site visit;
8. Facilitate dialogue between the delegates and put these observations and lessons into a report to be circulated to various stakeholders

All of the objectives were met with the following exceptions:

?? Members of the Hai||om community of Namibia did not attend the South African site

⁸ Batwa have almost completely lost any land base, even their traditional position as potters has been challenged. The destruction of the Gishwati Forest and the loss of rights in the forest areas of the north and the south represent threats that may make the Batwa extremely vulnerable.

visit;

?? The UNESCO representative and one of the Gabonais delegates did not attend the South African site visit

Profiles of the communities

Hadzabe of Tanzania

There are approximately 1000 Hadzabe people living in the vicinity of Lake Eyasi in Mbulu, Karatu, Meatu and Iramba Districts of Northern Tanzania. They speak a language unrelated to any other. It has click consonants similar to those found in the southern African languages but is otherwise unrelated (See Sands 1995). Recent genetic research has shown that the Hadzabe have a distinct genetic signature in the male line. Their genetic signature places them as the most distant type from the Khoes-San gene type which is taken to be the founder type of all humans. This is interpreted to mean that the Hadzabe were one of the first peoples to split off from the core Khoes-San gene type (Knight et al, 2003). This separation is dated (as an educated guess) at between 60 000 and 90 000 years ago. This would mean that through language and cultural practices the Hadzabe have survived as one of the oldest and very first 'peoples' on earth.

Most Hadza today live by hunting and gathering in the Yaeda Valley. Local government systems require that communities identify specific villages and growth points. The Hadza have done this while maintaining a mobile lifestyle in tune with rain and food cycles.

A major challenge to the Hadzabe is the in-migration of herding peoples from other Districts. Water shortages and poor veld conditions drive primarily Tatoga herders into the Hadza areas. The problem is that this drives away the game, a primary food source for the Hadza, reduces the water table and heavily pollutes the fragile water supply.

The Hadzabe use the village government system (*ujamaa vijijini*) to protect their rights over the land and the environment. They have designated much of their territory as conservation areas and are working with external companies to introduce appropriate eco-tourism that helps generate cash income for the Hadzabe and some of their neighbours.

ǀKhomani San of South Africa

The colonial occupation of South Africa from the 16th century onwards took a brutal toll on the indigenous peoples of that country. Thousands of people died as a result of new diseases brought by the Europeans. Later, settlers identified the mobile San hunter-gatherers as a particular threat to their land seizures. Settlers and their proxy troops systematically exterminated San peoples. Children were taken from their families and raised as slaves. By the end of the 19th century almost all San cultures had been destroyed in South Africa. The main exception was in the Kalahari where Europeans could not penetrate due to the lack of surface water.

In 1908, the Kaiser's Imperial army invaded South Africa in pursuit of Nama rebel troops. It was a time of genocide and scattered the San of the area. The Union government reacted by encouraging settlers to sink boreholes and occupy the territory. Most San were forced to become farm labourers. Some withdrew to an area between the ǀNosob and Auob rivers, which was proclaimed a National Park in 1931. Most of the San were expelled from the Park, but a few families remained to help with conservation and tracking. Later, during *apartheid* (the policy of racial separation that lasted 40 years), the last families were expelled.

In 1994, South Africa became a democratic country. A new law allowed people to reclaim land they had lost on the basis of race since 1913. With the help of the South African San Institute the ǀKhomani community put in a claim against the National Park. In 1999, the government awarded them 40 000ha of land outside the Park and another 25 000ha inside the Park.

During their diaspora the San lost a great deal of their knowledge and almost lost their identity completely. All San were forcibly registered as being of mixed race and had to learn Afrikaans. Their ancient languages ǀ'Auo, ǀHaasi and Nǀu were all but wiped out. Some people kept speaking Khoekhoegowab, a language of both San and herding Nama people. During the land claim process community researchers and SASI helped recover 28 elders who could speak the Nǀu language. Today, young people are documenting their history, heritage and languages.

The ǀKhomani community has put an emphasis on using their traditional skills to develop new types of livelihoods in conservation, anti-poaching, tracking and tourism. There are approximately 1000 ǀKhomani San adults spread over the Siyanda District of the Northern Cape Province. No one lives exclusively by hunting or gathering. Small-scale hunting continues in the Kalahari as well as extensive use of food and medicinal plants.

Today, there are approximately 90 000 San altogether in Southern Africa. Most of them live in Namibia and Botswana. They speak different languages and live in different situations. The most acute crisis for them has been land loss and exclusion from government planning. Several thousand ǀGui, ǀǀGana and Naro San were recently expelled from the Central Kalahari Game Reserve by the Government of Botswana.

Batwa of Rwanda

There are more than 300 000 Pygmy peoples living in Central Africa. They have different languages and cultures but share a heritage of being the first peoples of Central Africa and hunter-gatherers of the forests. The indigenous people of Rwanda are called Batwa. Before the genocide of 1994 there were about 30 000 Batwa. One third were killed during the three-month period of intense warfare (see Lewis 2000).

The Batwa roughly fall into three different cultural heritages. Most of the Batwa lived in forest areas as hunters and gatherers. Over time the forests of Rwanda have been cut back with the most recent devastation being the removal of the Gishwati Forest. This has left Batwa with no land and no livelihood. Other Batwa were potters. This was a caste position and Batwa would live by making pots that they could sell to the Tutsi Court or other urban dwellers. A third category of Batwa included Hutu or Tutsi people who came into the King's disfavour and were reclassified as Batwa, a social demotion.

With the dispersal of families and communities, the coherence of Batwa society has been greatly damaged. There is still clandestine use of natural resources near protected areas but the penalties for gathering honey, medicine and food, even for starving families, are severe.

Today, the Batwa are represented by the Communauté des Autochtones Rwandais (the Community of Indigenous Rwandans) based in Kigali. CAURWA promotes self-sufficiency projects and advocacy work. CAURWA has helped negotiate the release of

Batwa held in prisons since the genocide and is negotiating for political representation of the Batwa in the Senate. A major challenge for CAURWA is to secure a sustainable relationship between Batwa and the three main forests of the country – Nyungwe, the National Volcano Park north of Ruhengeri, and the remains of Gishwati.

What we observed

Culture, Land and Survival

Hadzabe, San and Pygmy communities broke into groups to discuss questions.

1. What is the relationship between land, culture and livelihood (survival)?
2. Can we learn from each other?
3. Do we need to speak to our governments?
4. Are conservation areas important for us?

Hadzabe Feedback

1. Land is the key to livelihood and therefore culture;
2. We have a lot of commonalities between each group. We are in three different positions: the Hadzabe having always had land, the San having regained their land and the Batwa having lost all their land. We have learned how the San have used mapping as a tool to get their land back. We learned about protecting our intellectual property rights.
3. Speaking to government is the only way we will get our rights. We also emphasised that we are the government at the ground level and we have to work through the system at different levels to make sure our voice is heard;
4. Conservation areas are important but it depends on the situation, particularly the rights and ownership of the conservation areas.

Batwa / Pygmy Feedback

1. Land and culture cannot be separated. We cultivate and hunt according to our cultural norms. When indigenous people are removed from their lands their culture and livelihoods are lost as well.
2. Human beings need each other. We need to be interdependent, meet and learn from one another in our own activities.
3. Yes, we need to consult our respective governments with regards to our livelihoods. The governments are the highest institutions thus it would be useless if we ignored consulting our respective governments.
4. We agree with conservation because it is a global issue. What the indigenous people need is to be involved in the consultation, planning and implementation processes. The indigenous people must be given employment in management and control procedures.

San feedback

1. We realise that for us to get our land back there are various techniques we can use like negotiations and mapping. Also that when land is in danger we are in danger as well and that we as indigenous people must play a part in protecting our areas. We see a close relationship between the people and the land and if a people lose their

land they lose their culture and without your culture you are nothing. It is very important not to lose out identity.

2. In the past few days we have learned a lot from our brothers and sisters here. We have learned that there are many similarities between our people and their situations. We were amazed to hear the Hadzabe speaking with the clicks and to find a word that was the same in both languages. What was important was to find how our brothers and sisters lived in the bush like us.
3. Yes. We have found that the government gave us one of the keys to unlock the door but that the door has many keys, which we are still trying to find. Three keys, which are important, are recognising our culture, language and heritage. It is also important to develop the management and land use plan in the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park. The government holds an important role in recognising our rights at the highest level, as they will influence our lives at the smallest level. The government plays an important role in protecting our intellectual property rights to make sure research benefits the San people.
4. Conservation is important to make sure future generations see the same levels of biodiversity. We should be properly consulted in our area about conservation. For instance, it is government policy to eradicate the *driedoring* plant [*rhigozum trichotomum*] but it is an important medicinal plant. There are other trees that are more damaging. The government should consult our people in this process and acknowledge our traditional knowledge.

We learned that fencing is not the same everywhere and we are asking why it is there are so many fences and gates in the Kalahari dividing up the land. What we have learned is that we need to challenge these fences and remove them from our land. It is upsetting to see animals crashing into fences and injuring or killing themselves.

Recommendations

- ?? Land is essential for our livelihood. We need to have land in our full possession. We should negotiate with our governments for land and where this is unsuccessful we should raise money with donor assistance to purchase land.
- ?? We would endorse the continuation of the fostering of links between the communities present and between other hunter-gatherer communities in Africa. We would hope that a fundamental part of this would be exchange visits on regional and inter-regional basis.
- ?? We need to create a network of indigenous peoples' organisations in our region
- ?? We would like to recommend that further communication is needed between our region and San communities as we feel they can improve.
- ?? Specifically, the Hadzabe people would like to ask for help in facilitating
 - Community mapping as a political and heritage tool
 - Assistance in securing intellectual property rights for our communities
 - Assistance to conduct our own exchange programme with neighbouring Akie Dorobo communities

- ?? Education is necessary for the indigenous peoples
- ?? Primary health care is needed to reduce the mortality rate amongst the Batwa.
- ?? We would like to know more about the application process for funds from NCA
- ?? We would like to ask IPACC for documentation about representation to UN meetings in languages other than English

A word of thanks

- ?? We would like to thank our brothers for coming down to join us in our communities. We would like to thank both NCA and IPACC for this opportunity to come together as the first peoples of Africa and share in each other's experience;
- ?? We want to acknowledge and value that you chose to take people from the ground and not just political leaders who we believe often do not take the message back to the ground.
- ?? Lastly we would hope that God bless you and speed you back to the lands which you have come from

Murakoze – Kai se dago gan gan – Nu be?eya

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