

**43 years**  
**OF CONSERVATION**



**2025**  
**HIGHLIGHTS**





**3**  
elephants collared for proactive  
conflict prevention.

**6000+**  
women trained and  
employed in various positions.



# 2025 Achievements



**200+**  
food bearing and medicinal trees  
planted in Zambezi communities.

**100,000+**  
benefiting from jobs, income,  
water access, conflict prevention.



**USD 3 610**  
made by communities in Opuwo through  
processing of natural plant products for  
international partners.

**3 tons**  
of maize harvested providing  
food security for 646 people.



**4000+ km**  
(2485 miles) walked by rangers to  
mitigate human-wildlife conflicts.

**520**  
community game guards  
safeguarding natural resources.



## FROM CRISIS TO COEXISTENCE

Communities in Kunene and Zambezi share their land with elephants, lions, and other wildlife. For years, this meant damaged crops, lost livestock, sleepless nights, and tension between conservation and survival. Today, communities and IRDNC are working together to reduce conflict so that people and wildlife can thrive side by side.



## THIS YEAR IN A NUTSHELL

In 2025, IRDNC's community-led Human Wildlife Support Team operated almost daily, preventing wildlife poisonings, protecting communities, and supporting rangers. Despite all these efforts, communities still lost livestock worth the value of N\$900,000. To improve these efforts, there is an urgent need for ranger support through allowances, safety equipment, and reliable vehicles.

*"IRDNC is with us — in the dust, in the heat, when we repair the kraals or chase elephants from our fields. We protect the land together."*

*— Piet Hizarako (retired game guard)  
Anabeb Conservancy.*



## HUMAN WILDLIFE MITIGATION ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2025



15 Boreholes and water points placed strategically



8 predator-proof kraals built in Kunene



321 elephant and lion conflicts mitigated by rapid-response teams & game guards

## OUR METHOD

IRDNC assists communities to deter elephants and lions from community farms and homes. By curating community based response teams & monitoring wildlife movement they can intervene before conflict escalates.





## Five Years, Zero Rhino Poaching

2025 marks five consecutive years of zero rhino poaching in the Kunene North conservancies, made possible by community game guards. These dedicated men and women trek across harsh terrain for up to 20 days each month, often walking up to 20 km a day, to monitor rhinos and ensure they are safe, healthy, and thriving. Since IRDNC's establishment in 1982, Namibia's black rhino population has grown from an estimated 300 individuals to over 2,300 today. As of 8 November 2025, 37 rhinos have been poached elsewhere in Namibia—yet none in Kunene North, proving that community-led conservation works. These game guards are local community members, trained, equipped and supported by IRDNC.

*"We love the Rhinos, they don't bother us at our homes or in our gardens. I work hard to protect them so that my children's children still get to see them"*

*Paulus Kanare, Rhino Ranger, Opuwo*

### How It Works

1. Game guards patrol up to 20km a day by foot in harsh conditions.
2. Observation of dung and tracks to assess the health of each rhino.
3. Once a rhino is spotted, identifying features are noted.
4. The sighting is carefully documented for population data.



*"We love what we do, but we need protective gloves, water bottles, closer water sources and reflector jackets so we can find each other when it is dangerous."*

*- Sirka Amaambo/Ukxa, Chetto Landscape*



# DEVIL'S CLAW



61% female harvestors

For generations, the Khwe people of Bwabwata National Park have harvested Devil's Claw alongside dangerous snakes, scorpions and spiders. Since 2009, with support from IRDNC and partners, harvesting is now fully regulated and sustainable, with permits issued through the Ministry. Only one side of each plant's tuber is dug, leaving the taproot and remaining half to regenerate. The dried product is sold to local and international buyers, and exported mainly to France and Germany, where it is used in arthritis and pain medication.

This year, 61% of harvesters are women aged 40–60. The harvest season was from March to October, during the hot, dry season. The 2025 harvest season generated 4133 kg of Devils Claw that generated N\$227 325 between 8 landscapes. These funds will be used for school fees, food and building material to sustain their homes.

You can get involved by supporting harvester allowances, providing protective and visibility gear, funding water access points, or enabling exchange programmes for value-addition skills.

# COMMUNITY GARDEN



Women and youth involved

In the rocky, remote landscape of Kunene, where temperatures often exceed 40°C and shops are far, the AVSF–IRDNC partnership has helped communities grow fresh vegetables like spinach, tomatoes, onions, and cabbage. Before these gardens, many families relied mostly on livestock, milk, and occasional maize meal, which were vulnerable to elephants destroying entire harvests. In March, communities in Otjivanua and Ongongo conservancies received hands-on training to prepare these vegetables in healthy, diverse ways, improving nutrition and food security.

Through this partnership, electric fences were installed to keep elephants out, water tanks set up to support gardens and livestock, and natural neem-based pest control info translated into local languages. As the project’s funding ends in 2025, continued support is vital to sustain progress and help communities become self-sufficient by establishing supply and value-addition chains to supply local guest houses and boost economic resilience.

*“Before this garden, we didn’t know what it meant to eat fresh vegetables every day. Now we grow our own food it gives us strength and pride.” — Muuua Tjiposa*



## Communities Expand Conservation Boundaries

Spanning over 5 million acres, this groundbreaking Legacy Landscape People’s Park Project connects 14 conservancies from west of Etosha to the Skeleton Coast, creating one of Namibia’s largest unified landscapes for conservation and sustainable tourism. In 2025, collaborative information-sharing meetings inspired by the success of the Hoanib, Ombonde, and Arid-Eden People’s Parks led these conservancies to unite for greater impact. By expanding protected areas, communities gain greater access to resources, economic opportunities, and Human-Wildlife Conflict relief, while wildlife benefits from improved ecological connectivity and safer habitats.

You can get involved by supporting collaborative conservation efforts, sustainable tourism projects like resorts and guided tours, and community gardens. Additionally, contributions toward game guard allowances and safety equipment directly aid those protecting wildlife on the frontlines.





## Be a Voice for *Peace*

# HOW YOU CAN HELP

Your support can make a real difference in sustaining the progress achieved by communities across Kunene and beyond. By contributing to ongoing conservation and sustainable agriculture efforts, you empower families to grow nutritious food, protect their crops from wildlife, and build resilient livelihoods.

- **Game guard & ranger support:** allowances, uniforms, patrol and safety equipment
- **Human-wildlife conflict response:** replacement vehicles/maintenance and rapid-response tools
- **Livestock protection:** predator-proof kraals and elephant-deterrent fencing
- **Harvester safety & livelihoods:** protective/visibility gear, water access and field equipment
- **Food security & climate-resilient gardens:** fencing, tanks, irrigation and training
- **Value-addition, tourism & landscape initiatives:** processing training, market access, People's Parks & Geoparks

*“At first I thought this will not work. But after 2 years we are benefitting from tourists and not just seeing them pass by”*

*— Pehii , Opuwo*

Our progress in the field would not be possible without the unwavering support of our partners. Because of you, wildlife is better protected, and communities are empowered to preserve their cultural heritage and way of life in a way that benefits everyone who shares this land. We are deeply grateful for your trust, collaboration, and belief in this shared vision.

**Mr. John Kasaona, ED of IRDNC**

# POWER THROUGH PARTNERSHIP



Donation link



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