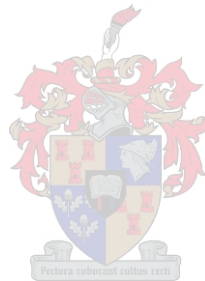


**COMMUNITY-DRIVEN EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING  
MODEL FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT RESULTING IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC  
UPLIFTMENT IN THE WESTERN SOUTPANSBERG**

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Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MPHIL  
(Sustainable Development Planning and Management)



at Stellenbosch University

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December 2008

## **Declaration**

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Date: 10 November 2008

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## **Abstract**

This thesis used the Logical Framework Approach to create a project proposal for the establishment of a community-driven educational and training model for sustainable community development based in the Western Soutpansberg in the Limpopo Province. The project aims to provide much-needed socio-economic upliftment to this area, which is characterized by many large poor local communities with relatively few employment opportunities.

The proposed programme focuses on the formation of the Soutpansberg Centre for Sustainable Development. This Centre is intended to be a demonstration model for land and agrarian reform based on sustainable development principles, indigenous knowledge and appropriate technologies. It would serve as a working example of how the reform process could be accelerated thus making a significant impact particularly on the lives of the rural poor and landless in the surrounding area.

The research that was undertaken for this proposal entailed assessing and building on available primary data and information. It was informed by existing documentation, research and interviews with key stakeholders. The intention is for this project to become a reality in the near future and therefore it was necessary to create a document that is both viable and practical taking into consideration and assessing the various elements involved in such a sustainable development initiative.

## **Opsomming**

Die Logiese Raamwerk Benadering is in hierdie tesis gebruik om 'n projekvoorstel te skep vir die daarstelling van 'n gemeenskapsgedrewe opvoedkundige en opleidingsmodel vir volhoubare gemeenskapsontwikkeling wat baseer is in die Westelike Soutpansberg van die Limpopo Provinsie. Die projek beoog om dringend nodige sosio-ekonomiese opheffing in die gebied te voorsien wat gekenmerk word deur vele omvangryke arm plaaslike gemeenskappe met relatief min werksgeleenthede.

Die voorgestelde program fokus op die stigting van die Soutpansberg Sentrum vir Volhoubare Ontwikkeling. Die sentrum beoog om 'n demonstrasie model te wees vir grond en landelike hervorming wat baseer is op volhoubare ontwikkelingsbeginsels, inheemse kennis en toepaslike tegnologie. Dit sal dien as 'n werkende voorbeeld van hoe die hervormingsproses versnel kan word wat 'n noemenswaardige impak sal hê op veral die lewens van die landelike armes en die grondlose mense in die omgewing.

Die navorsing wat gedoen is vir hierdie voorstel behels waardebeplanning en voortbou op bestaande primêre data en inligting. Dit was ingelig deur bestaande dokumentasie, navorsing en onderhoude met sleutel deelgenote. Die intensie is vir hierdie projek om werklikheid te word in die nabye toekoms en dit was daarom noodsaaklik om 'n dokument te skep wat lewensvatbaar en prakties is en wat die verskillende elemente wat betrokke is in ag neem en waardeer binne 'n volhoubare ontwikkelingsinisiatief.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. Research design .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. Context Analysis .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. Background .....</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1. The Lesheba Trust.....	5
3.2. The Soutpansberg Biosphere Reserve.....	6
3.3. Achievements.....	7
3.4. Schoemansdal Environmental Education Centre (SEEC).....	7
3.5. The Soutpansberg Centre for Sustainable Development.....	8
<b>4. Literature Review .....</b>	<b>10</b>
4.1. Unique Environment of the Western Soutpansberg.....	10
4.2. A Model for Sustainable Community Development.....	10
4.2.1. Sustainable Development .....	10
4.2.2. Definition of Community.....	11
4.2.3. Sustainable Community Development .....	11
4.2.4. The Soutpansberg Centre as a model for sustainable community development.....	12
4.3. Community / People Driven Development .....	12
4.3.1. Social capital.....	12
4.3.2. Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) .....	13
4.3.3. Sustainable Livelihoods Approach .....	14
4.3.4. Land reform / restitution in South Africa .....	17
4.3.5. Participation / involvement of local communities .....	19
4.3.6. Gender, equity and the youth.....	20
4.4. Socio-Economic Upliftment.....	22
4.4.1. Organic Permaculture Farming.....	23
4.4.2. Appropriate Technologies and Skills Development .....	25
4.4.3. Indigenous/Traditional/Local Knowledge Systems and their Preservation.....	25
4.4.4. Training & skills development /environmental & sustainable development education .....	29
4.4.5. Eco-tourism.....	31
4.4.6. Food and Medicine .....	32
4.5. Economics, Governance, Management, Monitoring and Evaluation.....	33
4.5.1. Economic Assessment .....	33
4.5.2. Governance .....	34
4.5.3. Management .....	36
4.5.4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review .....	36
4.6. Policy context.....	37
4.6.1. South African biodiversity policy and legislation .....	37
4.6.2. Agreements, Declarations and Guidelines .....	38

<b>5. Stakeholder Analysis/Participation Analysis .....</b>	<b>42</b>
5.1. Community Public Private Partnerships .....	42
5.2. Stakeholders according to the four main groups:.....	44
5.3. Ownership and Management of the Project .....	45
5.4 The Soutpansberg Centre Steering Committee (‘the SCSC’ / ‘the Committee’).....	45
5.5. The Project Management Unit (PMU) .....	46
5.6. Other relevant resources.....	46
<b>6. Problem Analysis / Situation Analysis .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>7. Objectives Analysis.....</b>	<b>48</b>
7.1. Overall objective .....	49
7.2. The Project Purpose/Immediate Objective.....	49
7.3. Results/Outputs .....	50
<b>8. Plan of Activities .....</b>	<b>52</b>
8.1. Project Organisation and Implementation.....	56
<b>9. Plan of Resources, inputs in order to implement the activities .....</b>	<b>58</b>
9.1. Plan of Resources.....	58
9.1.1. Technical expertise .....	58
9.1.2. Equipment / training in the use of equipment.....	58
9.1.3. Facilities / Premises .....	59
9.1.4. Financing for the project.....	59
9.2. Time Schedule.....	61
9.3. Budget and Financing (see Annexure A – Project Budget) .....	62
<b>10. Indicators .....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>11. Risk Analysis and Risk Management .....</b>	<b>63</b>
11.1. Overall Objective: Risks .....	63
11.2. Immediate Objective: Risks .....	64
11.3. Plan of Activities: Risks.....	64
<b>12. Analysis of Assumptions .....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>13. Conclusion .....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>14. References .....</b>	<b>66</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 1: The Study Area .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Figure 2: Sustainable Livelihoods Framework.....</b>	<b>16</b>

## LIST OF BOXES

<b>Box 1:</b> Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) .....	9
<b>Box 2:</b> An Introduction to Fair Trade .....	12
<b>Box 3:</b> Capital Assets .....	13
<b>Box 4:</b> SLA Principles .....	15
<b>Box 5:</b> The Different Types of Sustainability .....	17
<b>Box 6:</b> Two Types of Participation .....	19
<b>Box 7:</b> Examples of immediate and developmental impacts of the Integrated Pest Management Farmer Field School, arranged according to the technical, social and political domain .....	24
<b>Box 8:</b> Local Knowledge .....	26
<b>Box 9:</b> The Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) Policy .....	27
<b>Box 10:</b> CASE STUDY: Enhancing Pastoralist Self-Reliance through Sustainable Economic Development in Kenya .....	27
<b>Box 11:</b> CASE STUDY: Locally Available Indigenous Edible Species of Plants Enhance Community Health, Provide Income, and Conserve Biodiversity in Kenya .....	28
<b>Box 12:</b> CASE STUDY: Promoting Local Communities' Strategies for Conservation of Medicinal-Plant Genetic Resources in Africa .....	29
<b>Box 13:</b> Integration of IKS in Education and the National Qualifications Framework .....	31
<b>Box 14:</b> Five Principles of Good Governance .....	35
<b>Box 15:</b> Various strategies which are possible in respect of IK protection and exploitation .....	40
<b>Box 16:</b> Community-based Natural Resource Management .....	41
<b>Box 17:</b> The Poverty Datum Line .....	44
<b>Box 18:</b> The Biosphere and Sustainable Livelihoods Exhibition .....	46
<b>Box 19:</b> Potential Training Curriculum Table and Development Model .....	51
<b>Box 20:</b> The Indigenous Knowledge Systems Fund .....	60

## ANNEXURES

<b>Annexure A:</b> Project Budget .....	72
<b>Annexure B:</b> LFA Matrix .....	75
<b>Annexure C:</b> Afristar Foundation Company Profile .....	83
<b>Annexure D:</b> Flow Diagram of the Soutpansberg Centre for Sustainable Development .....	86
<b>Annexure E:</b> Dharamitra Profile .....	87

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>ABCD</b>	Asset Based Community Development
<b>CBD</b>	Convention on Biological Diversity
<b>CBO</b>	Community-based Organisation
<b>CPPP</b>	Community / Public / Private / Partnerships
<b>CSIR</b>	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
<b>CWCI</b>	Conference, Workshop and Cultural Initiative Fund
<b>DBSA</b>	Development Bank of Southern Africa
<b>DEAT</b>	Department of Environment and Tourism
<b>DfID</b>	Department for International Development (UK)
<b>DLA</b>	Department of Land Affairs
<b>DoE</b>	Department of Education
<b>DST</b>	Department of Science and Technology
<b>DWAF</b>	Department of Water and Forestry
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations
<b>FTTSA</b>	Fair Trade and Tourism South Africa
<b>GEP</b>	Gender Equity Perspective
<b>IDP</b>	Integrated Development Plan
<b>IKS</b>	Indigenous Knowledge Systems
<b>IPM</b>	Integrated Pest Management
<b>IUCN</b>	World Conservation Union
<b>KSLCs</b>	Kutama / Sinthemule Local Communities
<b>LED</b>	Local Economic Development
<b>MAPP</b>	Media, Advertising, Publishing, Printing & Packaging
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>NDA</b>	National Department of Agriculture
<b>NEF</b>	National Empowerment Fund
<b>NLDTF</b>	National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund
<b>NQF</b>	National Qualifications Framework
<b>OBE</b>	Outcomes Based Education
<b>PMU</b>	Project Management Unit

<b>PP</b>	Public Participation
<b>RDP</b>	Reconstruction and Development Programme
<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Community
<b>SAQA</b>	South African Qualifications Authority
<b>SCSD</b>	Soutpansberg Centre for Sustainable Development
<b>SCSC</b>	Soutpansberg Centre Steering Committee
<b>SD</b>	Sustainable Development
<b>SEEC</b>	Schoemansdal Environmental Education Centre
<b>SETA</b>	Sector Education and Training Authority
<b>SL</b>	Sustainable Livelihoods
<b>SLA</b>	Sustainable Livelihoods Approach
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environmental Programme
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>VDM</b>	Vhembe District Municipality
<b>WNBR</b>	World Network of Biosphere Reserves
<b>WWF</b>	World Wide Fund for Nature

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“Transformation is only valid if it is carried out with the people, not for them...”

Paulo Freire – Pedagogy of the Oppressed

“Development brings freedom, provided it is development of people. But people cannot be developed; they can only develop themselves. For while it is possible for an outsider to build a person's house, an outsider cannot give the person pride and self-confidence in themselves as human beings. Those things people have to create in themselves by their own actions. They develop themselves by what they do; they develop themselves by making their own decisions, by increasing their own knowledge and ability and by their own full participation as equals in the life of the community they live in. People develop themselves by joining in free discussion of a new venture and participating in the subsequent decision; they are not being developed if they are herded like animals into the new ventures. Development of people can, in fact, only be effected by the people.”

Julius K Nyerere, former president of Tanzania

Freedom and Development, Oxford University Press, Dar es Salaam, 1973

“Go to the People

Live with them

Learn from them,

Love them.

Start with what they know,

Build with what they have.

But with the best leaders

When the work is done

The task accomplished

The people will say,

“We have done this Ourselves”

Lao Tsu, China, 700BC

## **1. Research design**

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The research that was undertaken for this proposal involved building on existing available primary data and information. It was informed by existing documentation, research and interviews with key stakeholders. Since it is intended for this project to become a reality in the near future, it was necessary to create a document that is both viable and practical. In order to do this, it was necessary to consider aspects involved in the creation of such a sustainable development programme and assess them accordingly. Since there appear to be no projects of this kind and scope being run in South Africa at present, background literature on the topic was scarce.

Given that the concept for such a programme has already been initiated, my research will hopefully serve to enhance and directly contribute to the final product, perhaps enabling its existence. The programme's main components will focus on education and skills development for the surrounding communities. The programme will incorporate:

- indigenous knowledge systems;
- alternative / appropriate technologies;
- sustainable development issues;
- agriculture and sustainable livelihoods.

Other sub-categories will include: energy, water, sanitation, health, building, organic / Permaculture farming, building technology, eco-tourism, and indigenous medicine. Public outreach, advocacy and land restitution issues will also be addressed.

## **2. Context Analysis**

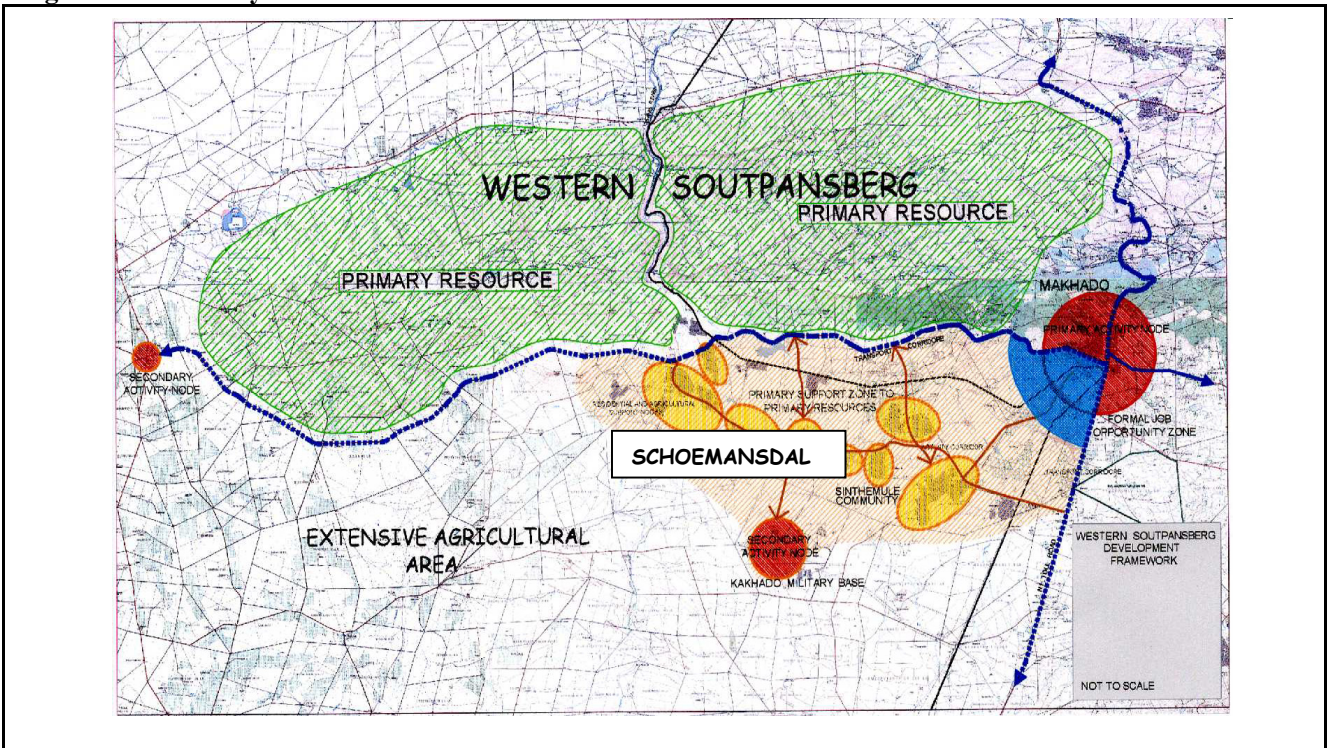
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The Western Soutpansberg is a relatively poor rural part of the Limpopo Province which is in need of an overall socio-economic upliftment strategy. (The diagram below sets out the study area.) The proposal is to establish the Soutpansberg Centre for Sustainable Development (SCSD) as a Sustainable Community Development Programme based at the existing Schoemansdal Environmental Education Centre (SEEC). The new Centre would then be used for training in order to provide skills which would be aimed at creating a long-term sustainable solution to reversing the trend of the growing poverty in the area. The need is therefore to create a programme around the term 'sustainable development' in which skills will then be used to stimulate the establishment of 'demonstration projects' highlighting this concept.

The study area focuses on Schoemansdal but stretches from Makhado in the east to Vivo in the west and covers the Western Soutpansberg, often referred to as 'the forgotten mountain', which is an extremely biodiverse area. MacDonald *et al.* (2003), comment that the "complex interplay between topography and macro- climate gives rise to an intricate mosaic of habitats and micro-climates. The consequent exceptional diversity of biotopes is inhabited by complex and, as yet, mostly undescribed assemblages of plant and animal communities. This diversity of biotopes is unparalleled anywhere else in southern Africa" (MacDonald *et al.*, 2003)

The Soutpansberg Conservancy was formed in 1997 and through consultation with a wide variety of stakeholders (from the local community level through to the local authorities, the Vhembe District Council and the Limpopo Provincial Government and where possible, land claimants) the process was begun to create a common vision for the area. This process of consultation eventually culminated in the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environment of the Limpopo Provincial Government agreeing to support and promote an application to UNESCO to declare the area a Biosphere Reserve. This initiative has support ranging from the Provincial Government to the traditional local communities, all represented by a wide range of stakeholders in the Vhembe Biosphere Initiative Committee. Importantly, the SEEC forms part of the proposed Vhembe UNESCO Biosphere Reserve initiative. The Soutpansberg with its unique biodiversity and people presents an excellent example of where the Biosphere principles can be put into effect.

**Figure 1: The Study Area**



The study area focuses on Schoemansdal but stretches from Makhado in the east to Vivo in the west and covers the Western Soutpansberg. This area forms part of the Vhembe District. Included is a relatively large concentration of local community villages on the southern side falling under the traditional leadership of Chiefs Kutama and Sinthemule.

The SEEC is part of the Vhembe District (previously known as Venda), an area rich in culture and heritage, which includes a relatively large concentration of local community villages on the southern side falling under the traditional leadership of Chief Kutama (chairman of the National Traditional Leaders Council) and Chief Sinthemule.

The living cultural resources of the Soutpansberg and the surrounding areas are also abundant. “The Venda was the last cultural group to be affected by colonialism and the Venda people’s culture is still a way of life and is not just an object for material gain” (MacDonald *et al.* 2003). There is also a long history of acclaimed artists from the area, especially in the field of woodcarving. Examples include Noria Mabasa and Paul Thavanha.

The majority of people living in the Vhembe District are VhaVenda and as such share a common language. There also seems to be a shared set of beliefs, cultural traditions and customs. There is a real sense of community with people appearing to have pride in their culture as well as self-respect and a wealth of indigenous knowledge, especially in the area of traditional divination and healing (MacDonald *et al.* 2003). These aspects are vital in the process of starting an initiative such as this one because they create an enabling environment where communication is possible without language and cultural barriers. It is acknowledged, however, that communities are not homogenous entities and that further communication with and a closer analysis of the communities will be required in order to determine what inherent conflicts, interests and concerns exist.

Traditional leaders are recognised as the “formal custodians of the customary values of the communities, which are historically and constitutionally entrusted to them” (DST, 2004:19). Traditional leadership structures cover the whole Vhembe area and provide an informal institutional structure that lends itself to community driven socio-economic upliftment. Adding to this, the Limpopo Provincial district and local government structures have respect for the above and have shown a willingness to cooperate with them. This cooperation is an important step in the project’s long-term success.

“In many other countries in Africa, it was only realised after repeated failures of local development experiments, that traditional leaders and traditional authorities constitute a valuable asset in the development process” (DST, 2004:19). Therefore, to encourage the success of the project it is essential that from the start of the process there is support from and direct involvement and participation of the traditional leaders, authorities and their communities.

“The Traditional leadership within the local sphere, the institution through its custom based structures should facilitate community involvement in the IDP processes, support municipalities in the identification of community needs and in the implementation of development programmes, promote indigenous knowledge systems for sustainable development. Since a large number of people reside in rural areas which are under the leadership of traditional leaders, they are correctly located to be entrusted with the responsibility to promote socio-economic development and service delivery by advising government in developing policy impacting on rural communities and the development of legislation that impacts on rural communities. To further deepen democracy, the traditional leadership may perform various functions in support of government, arts and culture, land and agriculture, health and welfare, economic development and environment and tourism” (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2007). This particularly applies to the Kutama Sinthemule Local Communities (“KSLCs”), which fall under the Makhado Local Authority. The KSLCs are situated over 35 km away and therefore receive relatively little financial and resource assistance. On the other hand the Traditional Leadership is well structured and can perform the functions indicated above.

It is primarily because of all the above factors that this area may well be receptive to such a community-driven venture. However, although traditional leadership may play a central and facilitating role in the community development process, it is important to acknowledge that traditional institutions are often not democratic but are instead caught up in and hindered by controversy and corruption. As much as the traditional leadership of Chiefs Kutama and Sinthemule has its fair share of problems and conflicts, it nevertheless has positive attributes that stand it in good stead for such a community initiative. Chief Kutama is the Chairman of the National Traditional Leadership Council and advocates greater involvement by communities in sustainable development projects. He and Chief Sinthemule also have a long partnership and a history of good leadership. They are both well-respected by their communities who appear to trust their judgement. Therefore, although there will always be competing interests and inequalities amongst and within the communities, the fact that these two leaders are able to work together constructively and are able to motivate their communities into action, is promising. It leads one to believe that one can be cautiously optimistic and that these circumstances might be an exception to the rule. It is also understood that even though the leadership may be strong and support the project, without the endorsement and direct involvement of the communities themselves, the project cannot be successful.

MacDonald *et al.* (2003), emphasise the following sociological aspects that need to be considered in the conservation of the area:

- 
- Environmental, political, social and economic issues cannot be treated as individual elements.
  - For any conservation action to be successful, local communities must be involved at all levels.
  - The conservation of the Soutpansberg will depend on an interdisciplinary approach for the socio-economic upliftment of local communities and for the promotion of the sustainable use of ecosystems.
  - Environmental education of local children is a necessity for the future conservation of the mountain range and its surrounds.
  - The cooperation of local stakeholders, communities and authorities is needed for any conservational project to succeed

It is interesting to note that there are few models of successful rural development projects in South Africa, and there is a need to establish an innovative rural socio-economic development model. It is submitted that the study area in question has the potential to fulfil this objective.

### **3. Background**

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In 1993, the Rosmarin family (under the Rosmarin Family Trust / the Trust) purchased Lesheba Wilderness ('Lesheba'), a game farm located on top of the Western Soutpansberg mountain range in the north-western part of the Limpopo Province of South Africa. John Rosmarin, a former town and regional planner, soon became aware that there were two major challenges facing the area, firstly that there was no overall vision, policy or strategy for the area and secondly that there were few job opportunities for the local population – this primarily being the Kutama and Sinthemule Local Communities ("KSLCs"). Having perceived the potential of the area the Trust decided it was necessary to actively contribute towards establishing a meaningful community development programme.

The challenge and motivation to achieve such a development initiative was compounded by the land restitution process in which the Rosmarin family found that not only was Lesheba subject to land claims but in fact so was virtually every property between the Soutpansberg and the Limpopo River. Thus it became necessary to address the broader issues and initiate a wider development process that would result in greater benefits than any land claim process.

A broad strategy was evolved by the Rosmarin family with the informal advice and guidance from inter alia Mark Swilling and Eddie Koch, which was aimed at changing the direction of this trend. A decision was made to address the two issues outlined above i.e. to assist in creating an overall vision for the area and to simultaneously develop what could be called "demonstration projects"<sup>1</sup> as innovative forms of socio-economic upliftment. It was realised that to achieve this end would require a combination of efforts from various levels and is best described by the concept of "Community / Public / Private / Partnerships – CPPP". The Lesheba Venda Arts and Culture Trust (which is in the process of being changed to the Lesheba Community Development Trust - 'The Lesheba Trust'), which was registered in 2001, was created to form part of the 'Private' component.

This process started what is now part of the Rosmarin family's social responsibility programme. Fundamental to this was the realisation of the importance of undertaking this process through a transparent and sincere community involvement programme.

#### **3.1. The Lesheba Trust**

The Lesheba Trust's primary aim was initially to contribute towards the preservation and promotion of the unique artistic culture of the Venda woodcarvers. The first projects undertaken concentrated on the field of the arts and crafts. The scope of the original programme has now been broadened with the objective of preserving, researching and promoting local indigenous knowledge ('IKS') to be used for broad-based skills transference & economic upliftment in the area. The focus of the project is aimed at creating sustainable livelihoods for rural development specifically aimed at the KSLC. The longer term objective is to use this model and expand it into the Vhembe District and the Limpopo Province.

The specific aims of the Lesheba Trust are:

- To facilitate training programmes to educate and empower local people with traditional knowledge, to utilise their natural resource base for sustainable economic upliftment.
- To develop research capacity in the field of Indigenous Knowledge in the local sub-region.
- To develop, design and secure funding for community based poverty elimination programmes in the broader Makhado area.
- To utilise Lesheba Wilderness as a resource base to understand and explore the potential contribution of Indigenous Knowledge to local development and nation building.

---

<sup>1</sup> "Biosphere reserves can also serve as learning and demonstration sites in the framework of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD)" (UNESCO, 2007b). In order to demonstrate how Biosphere Reserves can benefit rural areas UNESCO recommends the establishment of "Demonstration Projects" / learning sites, which can be used as examples of how communities can implement their own socio-economic development projects.

Based on the above, The Lesheba Trust established a permanent facility at Lesheba called the Lesheba Centre of Indigenous Knowledge and Appropriate Technology. This has proved to be a success and is accepted by a wide range of stakeholders in the region. The focus is now extending towards promoting sustainable development and livelihood security to complement the proposed Soutpansberg Biosphere Reserve process (see below).

### **3.2. The Soutpansberg Biosphere Reserve**

The Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism realised the potential of the area and agreed to proceed with an application to UNESCO to declare the area a Biosphere Reserve. The proposed Biosphere area extends up to the Limpopo River in the north and the Kruger National Park in the East and includes the entire Soutpansberg and the SEEC. The very essence of a Biosphere is about integrated management of the environment where man conserves and utilises the environment in a sustainable manner benefiting local communities, farmers, government administrators and scientists. A key question regarding Biosphere reserves is “How can we reconcile conservation of natural resources with their sustainable use?” To summarise, there are two basic requirements for a Biosphere reserve:

- i. Achieve a balance between the natural environment and man’s use of the environment. The very essence of a Biosphere is where man utilises the environment in a sustainable way where there is integration of the sensitive bio-diverse environment of the Soutpansberg with the cultural assets of its people, to jointly promote the sustainable utilisation of the area for the benefit of all its stakeholders; and
- ii. It must represent the wishes of the majority of the stakeholders in that area i.e. it must be community / people driven. In other words, it must ensure that a transparent consultation process is established with the aim of involving all stakeholders in the area in the decision-making, implementation and management process.

The UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme (UNESCO, 2007a, 2007b) states that there are three central complementary and mutually reinforcing functions that a Biosphere reserve is intended to fulfil, namely:

- i. A conservation function – to reduce biodiversity loss by contributing to the conservation and maintenance and health of landscapes, ecosystems, species, genetic variation and biological diversity
- ii. A development function – to improve livelihoods and enhance social, economic and cultural conditions for environmental sustainability by fostering economic and human development which is socio-culturally and ecologically sustainable (this includes trying to cooperate in solving natural resource problems)
- iii. A logistic function –to provide support for research, monitoring, education and information exchange related to local, national and global issues of conservation and development as well as to learn about natural systems and traditional forms of land-use and how they are changing. This also includes sharing knowledge on how to manage natural resources in a sustainable way.

All the above factors are intended to contribute to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in particular MDG 7 on environmental sustainability. Today, the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) consists of more than 480 sites in over 100 countries (UNESCO, 2007b).

There are other areas of action that UNESCO’s Draft Programme for 2006-2007 addresses (UNESCO, 2007b), namely:

- Capacity-building, training, education and the development of a network of learning centres for integrated ecosystem management
- The enhancement of linkages between cultural and biological diversity – this includes such things as the establishment of a knowledge base on cultural practices, the use of local and indigenous knowledge and fostering awareness of the role of sacred natural sites, cultural landscapes and intangible heritage in ecosystem management and sustainable use of biodiversity

The proposed Soutpansberg Centre on Sustainable Development which would fall within the Biosphere Reserve would address the above areas of action.

All Biosphere Reserves consist of three zones:

- Core areas have legal protection and only allow limited activities which do not adversely affect the natural environment and wildlife;
- Buffer zones adjoin or surround the core area and activities within this area are managed to help protect the core. Activities include: research, education, creation and variety of economic activities all based on ecological principles. The SEEC falls within this zone;
- Transition areas are the outermost parts which surround the core and buffer zones. The KSLCs fall within this zone.

Through the declaration of this area as a Biosphere reserve, a larger structure will be provided under which projects such as the one proposed here would find support and endorsement / reinforcement. “The WNB and its regional networks will be used as vehicles for knowledge-sharing and exchange of experience, research and monitoring, education and training, and testing of participatory decision-making, thereby contributing to the emergence of "quality economies" and to conflict prevention” (UNESCO, 2007b). The Biosphere reserve structure would thus also potentially provide a platform for conflict resolution, where all stakeholders involved (from local officials and private landowners to communities and NGO’s) are able to debate and discuss any issues or differences in opinion that may arise.

### **3.3. Achievements**

The above reflects the history of the present project and the key dynamics and challenges. The following is a summary of what has been achieved to date:

- There has been widespread buy-in to the establishment of an overall vision and policy for the area through the acceptance of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve concept. The now-called Vhembe Biosphere Reserve Initiative Committee is represented by a wide cross-section of role players and stakeholders from Provincial level down to the Traditional Leadership level. The draft Nomination Form for the declaration of the area as a Biosphere Reserve has been lodged with the DEAT and once finalised will be sent to UNESCO.
- The Lesheba Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Appropriate Technology has been established where research and training is taking place through the transfer of skills and the creation of capacity building.
- The Bio-Prospecting Unit of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) together with the Department of Science and Technology, have in terms of their Sustainable Livelihoods Programme, together with the local Kutama and Sinthemule Communities already approved the establishment of a R2 million Bio-Prospecting and Agro-Processing project (for the cultivation of indigenous aromatic plants and essential oils) on a site in the vicinity of the abovementioned communities.<sup>2</sup>
- A Sustainable Livelihoods Exhibition was recently organised by the Lesheba Trust and implemented by Afristar Foundation (see Annexure C) for the KSLCs and the Provincial authorities to demonstrate the meaning of sustainable development through the use of Indigenous Knowledge and appropriate technologies.
- A continuing process of dialogue, discussions and workshopping is presently taking place.

### **3.4. Schoemansdal Environmental Education Centre (SEEC)**

The Schoemansdal Environmental Education Centre started in 1976 as a Veld School where students were taken on fieldtrips to experience the outdoors. Today the SEEC offers leadership development, environmental education and adventure activities. Trained teachers guide visiting groups (children and adults) through hands-on activities and active learning techniques towards environmental literacy. Schoemansdal is owned by the

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<sup>2</sup> This project could form part of the process in support of the establishment of the new Centre and will act as a catalyst for demonstrating how a CPPP can contribute towards economic upliftment This project will also act as a “Demonstration Project” in terms of the proposed declaration of the Greater Soutpansberg area as part of a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve

Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environment of the Limpopo Provincial Government but is managed and run by the Department of Education.

This facility is situated in the vicinity of the Kutama and Sinthemule communities (KSLCs) and has extensive infrastructure to accommodate relatively large numbers of learners. There is also enough land available for a demonstration and teaching centre to be constructed.

### **3.5. The Soutpansberg Centre for Sustainable Development**

The next step is to take this process to the next level and to establish a Centre for Sustainable Development that will provide training and capacity building programmes and create opportunities for rural renewal through sustainable livelihoods. It is envisioned that the Soutpansberg Centre for Sustainable Development ('the Centre/the Soutpansberg Centre') will become a model for sustainable community development which is community / people driven resulting in socio-economic upliftment. The Centre will be controlled and managed by a Trust ('the Soutpansberg Centre Trust') which will comprise a cross-section of community, public and private Trustees. It is proposed that the Soutpansberg Centre Trust appoints a full-time Executive Committee which will consist of professionally qualified individuals with experience in sustainable development together with suitably qualified local community representatives. A primary objective will be to create capacity building and skills transfer over a period of 5 years in order to ensure that there will be strong community ownership and therefore acceptance by KSLCs.

The Schoemansdal Environmental Education Centre (SEEC), located in the unique environment of the Western Soutpansberg, has been identified as being a suitable site to establish such a Centre for sustainable development, but funding is required for construction. It is proposed to design a facility to align with the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005 to 2015 and to make it a living model of sustainable rural development, producing its own energy, processing its own waste, harvesting its water, producing its own food etc. It will therefore address the meaning of terms such as climate change, pollution & the re-use of resources by demonstrating that sustainable development can provide a better quality of life. The establishment of the Soutpansberg Centre for Sustainable Development into a place that physically demonstrates in as many ways as possible what "sustainable development" means will of course occur over a period of time.

The project will be aimed at identifying the needs of the area and then to establish a centre using existing skills found in the community with the aim of developing capacity through establishing a new range of community skills. These skills will then eventually assist local communities in using the concept of 'sustainable development' to develop their own long-term socio-economic upliftment programme. The Centre will potentially consist of the following:

- A research centre (for research, preservation & promotion of indigenous knowledge);
- An education centre (for education based on the transfer of knowledge on sustainable development) and
- A training centre (for the practical training of skills in land care based on sustainable development principles).

The underlying project mission is to regenerate the rural economy and to provide a model for development focusing on encouraging sustainable livelihoods. This objective is intended to be achieved through the major output of the Centre, namely, a training and skills development programme which will focus on skills that educate and empower local people with traditional and appropriate indigenous knowledge; so as to utilise their natural resource base for sustainable economic upliftment. Concepts that will be taken into account include 'indigenous knowledge systems' especially in the fields of agriculture (including medicinal and aromatic plants) and alternative / appropriate technologies that can contribute towards poverty alleviation and thus promote economic upliftment.

The project will entail a two-step process, for which funding is required, consisting of:

- i. The stakeholder consultation process, participatory design and participatory programme development to determine the Centre's activities and
- ii. The design and construction of the Soutpansberg Centre.



The programme's focus on training and skills development will incorporate the creation of 'sustainable development field officers' / outreach workers who will travel out into the surrounding communities and impart the skills and knowledge they have gained. The project will also include an onsite demonstration model as outlined above. The establishment of the Centre will entail a new approach, in which Government and local communities with the help of the private sector will combine efforts in a unique partnership to establish a unique rural socio-economic upliftment programme.

The Centre will provide a variety of benefits for the KSLCs including: training, skills development and employment opportunities as well as potential additional income from future entrepreneurial business initiatives and importantly a sense of ownership and pride.

The ongoing maintenance and operation costs are outside the scope of this proposal and are not included as funding. Although initially the 'Centre' may run at a loss due to the inputs that need to be outlaid for project development, construction of infrastructure, salaries etc, the income generated from the education and training activities, the longer-term farming activities and other external funding will contribute to the necessary maintenance and operation costs. The 'Centre' will partner with the appropriate Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) for learnerships in order for the courses offered to be accredited. The SETA also provides financial subsidies to learners which will cover some of the operation costs. In addition the project has already secured commitments for funding support from other donors (European Union, De Beers Fund, IKS Fund) who are able to fund outputs for the project should the Centre be established.

A central concept of the programme is that through demonstrating a positive example and promotion of effective solutions, people will be inspired to lessen their impact on the world while at the same time improving their livelihoods.

#### **Box 1: Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA)**

"SETA" stands for Sector Education and Training Authority, organisations established by the Honourable Minister of Labour, Membathisi Mdladlana, on 20 March 2000. There are at present 23 SETAs operational in South Africa. The main function of a SETA is to contribute to the raising of skills, to bring skills to the employed, or those wanting to be employed in their sector. They do this by helping to implement the National Skills Development Strategy and ensuring that people learn skills that are needed by employers and communities. There is no value in training people if they cannot use the skills they have learnt. Training and skills development is not just for young people starting their first jobs though it is important for them too! The skills of people already in jobs must also be enhanced. Training must be to agreed standards, within the National Qualifications Framework wherever possible. It is no good if someone is trained in one province if their qualifications are not recognised in another. It is not ideal for one employer to increase the skills of his or her staff if another employer does not recognise them. All training, wherever it is provided, should be subject to quality control and where appropriate be compared to the best international standards.

In order to achieve these objectives the Skills Development Act states that the functions and duties of a SETA are to:

- i. Develop a Sector Skills Plan within the framework of the national skills development strategy;
- ii. Implement the Sector Skills Plan by:
  - establishing learnerships;
  - approving workplace skills plans
  - allocating grants in the prescribed manner to employers, education and training providers and workers;
  - monitoring education and training in the sector
- iii. Promote learnerships by:
  - identifying workplaces for practical work experience
  - supporting the development of learning materials;
  - improving the facilitation of learning; and
  - assisting in the conclusion of learnership agreements.

Source: CTFL SETA (2006)

## **4. Literature Review**

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The main question that needs to be asked is whether a project of this kind has been carried out before or is presently in existence in South Africa. There are projects being run that address skills development and the creation of job opportunities and socio-economic upliftment, however, at present, there appear to be no active projects that address all the areas that the Soutpansberg Centre project intends to address. The approach of the Soutpansberg Centre would be unique in that it will not only provide skills training but will have onsite and offsite demonstration projects where others can participate and learn and where skills and knowledge can be shared. Added to this, the Soutpansberg Centre initiative aims to offer a wide variety of skills training ranging from organic farming to the application and use of alternative / appropriate technologies.

This literature review will therefore focus on concepts and approaches that will ideally contribute to the successful initiation, management and implementation of the project. Throughout this proposal it will be reiterated that this area (the physical environment), and the people who live there (including their culture and traditions) make it potentially conducive to a project of this scope and nature. The below concepts and approaches including Social Capital, Asset Based Community Development and the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach may prove beneficial if applied to the different steps and processes (e.g. researching, implementing and managing) of the Soutpansberg Centre initiative.

### **4.1. Unique Environment of the Western Soutpansberg**

As previously mentioned, the Soutpansberg area is very rich in biodiversity and natural resources (MacDonald *et al.*, 2003). There have been recent developments in the area, where organisations such as the CSIR have investigated the unique medicinal properties of certain plants (Rosmarin, J., 2007. Pers. Comm.). There are, as a result, community run projects in action where these plants are now being cultivated, processed, packaged and sold into the market. This shows the potential for similar ventures to take place in the area and due to the success of previous enterprises, may influence the receptivity of the communities to similar projects and ideas.

### **4.2. A Model for Sustainable Community Development**

#### **4.2.1. Sustainable Development**

Before one can define sustainable community development, it is necessary to understand the basic tenets of sustainable development (SD). SD means different things to different people. The definition that is most often used is from the report *Our Common Future* also known as the Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987:43) which defines sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. Flint (2007) describes SD as progressive social betterment that does not grow beyond ecological carrying capacity. There is, however, one question that still arises regarding the term, namely: “How can development be sustainable?” The answer to this lies in the understanding of the term ‘development’.

In order for the concept of sustainable development to be functional and applied in practice, the difference between development and growth needs to be clarified. Flint (2007) differentiates between the two by explaining that “Growth is an increase in physical size through quantitative material increase. In contrast, development is the realization of a fuller and greater potential -- qualitative change, realization of potentialities, and transition to a fuller or better state”.

Sustainable Development is a complex multi-pronged concept that aims to address and integrate in a balanced way environmental, social and economic issues. “It is about equal consideration between economic development and environmental quality, between technological innovation and community stability, and between investment in people and investment in infrastructure” (Flint, 2007).

#### 4.2.2. Definition of Community

The term community has many definitions and is a much contested concept. Wikipedia (2008) defines community in the following way:

“Traditionally a ‘community’ has been defined as a group of interacting people living in a common location. The word is often used to mean a group that is organised around common values and social cohesion within a shared geographical location, generally in social units larger than a household. However, the definition has evolved and been enlarged to mean individuals who share characteristics, regardless of their location or type of interaction. In this sense, “community” can mean a community of interest or an ethnic group. Finally, wider meanings of the word can refer to the national community or global community. What these various meanings have in common is that they refer to the strength of the ties between the group, of whatever nature—cultural, ethnic, or moral—they may be” (Wikipedia, 2008).

According to The South African Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism *et al* (2003) in their ‘Guidelines for the implementation of community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) in South Africa’, “Communities are groups of people living in the same area and using the communal land and resources to make a living”. Treue & Nathan (2007) further elaborate that although some CBNRM practitioners presume (*rural*) communities to be “small spatial units, with homogenous social structure and shared norms”, this is rarely the case. Instead as Agrawal & Gibson (1999) in Treue & Nathan (2007) point out, “communities are rather characterised by dynamic relations of: (i) multiple and somewhat conflicting interests, (ii) different actors attempting to influence decision-making, and (iii) internal as well as external institutions shaping decision-making processes”.

Therefore it is important when working with communities to be aware of what the common values, social structures and cultural characteristics are. At the same time, however, it is essential to recognize the complexity of the community and the potential or existing conflicts, differences, competing interests and power struggles that are present.

#### 4.2.3. Sustainable Community Development

This leads to the question of ‘what is sustainable community development?’ According to Rainey *et al* (2003) sustainable community development

“encompasses a set of policies and activities that work together to create economic vitality, environmental stewardship, and social equity. Economic vitality implies increasing and strong standards of living during current times as well as the ability to adjust to changes over time so that local operators and individuals remain globally competitive. Environmental stewardship implies that current and future activities do not degrade local resources such that the community becomes less productive and/or attractive over time. Social equity entails encouraging development that will benefit all segments of local society. This development process implies educational training that prepares current and future labourers not only to meet their current employer's needs but also to be rapid adapters to new technology and capable of becoming entrepreneurs”.

It is important to remember that each community is unique, with its own particular issues to address and for this reason if the process of working / participating with communities to encourage sustainability on all levels (environmental, social and economic) is to be productive, it must be flexible, dynamic, creative and resourceful.

Fair trade principles will be applied to all community-based inputs to ensure ownership, pride and economic sustainability.

## **Box 2: An Introduction to Fair Trade**

The Fair Trade movement started in Europe in the 1960s to help producers in developing countries receive their fair share of the revenue from the sale of their products in the developed world. Since then Fair Trade has grown in influence and power. The movement has created trading partnerships and ethical trading initiatives. It has improved working conditions, remuneration and market access. Since the 1980s, Fair Trade labeling has raised awareness with consumers dramatically. The result? Fair Trade products are now in 43 000 supermarkets and 12 000 retailers in Europe and the USA. Globally, sales exceed \$500 million a year.

Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA) encourages and publicises fair and responsible business practice by South African tourism establishments. This is achieved through the FTTSA Trademark, an independent symbol of fairness in the tourism industry. The Trademark is awarded to tourism establishments that meet stringent criteria.

- Fair wages and working conditions, fair operations, purchasing and distribution of benefits.
- Ethical business practice
- Respect for human rights, culture and the environment

**Source: Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA) (2007)**

### **4.2.4. The Soutpansberg Centre as a model for sustainable community development**

One of the long-term objectives of this project is for the Soutpansberg Centre to become a local self-sustaining model for sustainable community development that encourages entrepreneurship and showcases indigenous knowledge and appropriate technologies for poverty alleviation. South Africa is in need of such a model for sustainable community development and the success of this project could potentially have far-reaching repercussions. It is envisioned that the Soutpansberg Centre will ideally set a precedent and become a functioning model that can guide other communities, organisations as well as government in the process of achieving sustainable community development. However, for this to happen, the Centre will need to be able to demonstrate both its successes and its setbacks – clearly revealing the lessons learned and the appropriate solutions.

In order to set an example of best practice and create such a model of sustainable community development, there are certain broader context issues, which are set out in the sections below, that may arise for discussion. These issues demonstrate that without a process that is inclusive, participatory, community / people-centred, equitable, flexible, transparent, accountable and well-managed, it will be very difficult to achieve a wholly successful outcome.

### **4.3. Community / People Driven Development**

The following concepts and approaches which emphasise the importance of a community driven process will ideally contribute to the successful management and implementation of the project:

#### **4.3.1. Social capital**

The World Bank Group (2002) describes social capital as referring to “the institutions, relationships, and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society's social interactions” and “includes the social and political environment that shapes social structure and enables norms to develop”. It continues by emphasising that this social cohesion is essential for there to be sustainable development and economic prosperity within communities and societies and that the necessary support from government and the private sector should be provided. The New South Wales (NSW) Department of Community Services (2004) in Australia states that “social capital refers to the networks within a community and the level of trust, mutual support and participation by people in the community in activities that strengthen their sense of social belonging and community well-being”.

Therefore, considering that social capital centres on multi-dimensional attributes such as relationships, norms, trust, support, networks and social belonging, it is not surprising that social capital is very difficult to evaluate

and quantify. As a result, concepts like “trust, civic engagement, and community involvement” (World Bank Group, 2002) are generally seen as possible terms used in its measurement.

In rural communities where poverty is often a major problem, social capital plays an especially important role in determining how a community copes with the challenges it faces. It is interesting to note that “high levels of social capital indicate a high quality of life...(but that) this does not necessarily equate with a high level of income” (New South Wales Department of Community Services, 2004). This can be seen in communities where although there is poverty, there are also, and more importantly, strong social ties between people that provide mutual support and give hope and maintain a high quality of life. In conclusion, it would be to the benefit of all societies to promote and cultivate social capital in a positive form, such as described above, in order to create socio-economic upliftment and community cohesion. The negative form of social capital takes the form of for example gangs and crime syndicates.

Box 3 illustrates the different categories of capital assets.

### **Box 3: Capital Assets**

<p><b>Natural capital:</b> the natural resource stocks from which resource flows useful for livelihoods are derived (e.g. land, water, wildlife, biodiversity, environmental resources).</p> <p><b>Social capital:</b> the social resources (e.g. networks, membership of groups, relationships of trust, access to wider institutions of society) upon which people draw in pursuit of livelihoods.</p> <p><b>Human capital:</b> the skills, knowledge, ability to labour and good health important to the ability to pursue different livelihood strategies.</p> <p><b>Physical capital:</b> the basic infrastructure (e.g. transport, shelter, water, energy and communications) and the production equipment and means which enable people to pursue their livelihoods.</p> <p><b>Financial capital:</b> the financial resources which are available to people (whether savings, supplies of credit or regular remittances or pensions) and which provide them with different livelihood options.</p>
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Source: Carney (1998), adapted from Scoones (1998) in Gordon & Craig (2001)

#### **4.3.2. Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)**

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) is described by Cunningham and Mathie (2002:1) as an “approach to community-based development, based on the principles of:

- Appreciating and mobilising individual and community talents, skills and assets (rather than focusing on problems and needs)
- Community-driven development rather than development driven by external agencies”.

The traditional approach of external agencies when approaching poor rural communities is to assess what the problems and needs are within those communities. This approach according to Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) is one based on deficiency-oriented policies and programmes and can be referred to as the ‘deficiency model’. They point out that this approach only conveys a part of the truth of the situation (which is often taken to be the full truth) and not the actual prevailing conditions of the community. Viewed in this way, the efforts to help communities are often not successful, since the communities, realising all they lack and assuming that they are not capable of solving the problems themselves, expect help from an external source. However, “it is increasingly futile to wait for significant help to arrive from outside the community. The hard truth is that development must start from within the community” (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993)

Therefore, for any long-term change to occur, another approach needs to be taken – that of capacity-focused development or ABCD which focuses instead on communities’ assets, abilities, skills and capacities instead of their needs. Kretzmann & McKnight (1993) point out that “historic evidence indicates that significant community development takes place only when local community people are committed to investing themselves and their resources in the effort”.

It is important to remember that each community consists of individuals, associations and institutions each with their own skills and talents that are often underutilised in the context of community development. In order for

socio-economic upliftment to occur, all these available local assets need to be located and connected with one another so that their strengths combine and their effectiveness increases, so that ultimately “new structures of opportunity, new sources of income and control, and new possibilities for production” can come into being (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).

ABCD also investigates other dimensions of a community’s assets such as its physical characteristics (e.g. land and infrastructure) and its natural resources as well as the strength of its local economy upon which depends the well-being of any community. Relating to this last point is the fact that ABCD does not imply that because community development should focus on the skills of the community and that the process should be internally driven that there is no need for any additional resources or aid from outside sources. Rather, as Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) explain, ABCD “simply suggests that outside resources will be much more effectively used if the local community is itself fully mobilized and invested, and if it can define the agendas for which additional resources must be obtained”.

Cunningham & Mathie (2002:1) explain that ABCD builds on the following:

- “Appreciative inquiry which identifies and analyses the community's past successes. This strengthens people's confidence in their own capacities and inspires them to take action
- The recognition of social capital and its importance as an asset.
- Participatory approaches to development, which are based on principles of empowerment and ownership of the development process
- Community economic development models that place priority on collaborative efforts for economic development that makes best use of its own resource base
- Efforts to strengthen civil society. These efforts have focused on how to engage people as citizens (rather than clients) in development, and how to make local governance more effective and responsive.”

#### **4.3.3. Sustainable Livelihoods Approach**

Before describing this approach, it is important to give a definition of the term ‘livelihood(s)’. DfID’s Sustainable Livelihoods Distance Learning Guide Glossary (2007) describes it as “...a combination of the resources used and the activities undertaken in order to live. The resources might consist of individual skills and abilities (human capital), land, savings and equipment (natural, financial and physical capital, respectively) and formal support groups or informal networks that assist in the activities being undertaken (social capital)”. DfID (1999) in Bovarnick and Gupta (2003:26) summarises an individual’s livelihood as consisting of “his or her well-being, availability of food, income levels, access to and use of natural resources and vulnerability to shocks”.

In order to break negative impacts of poverty, efforts to bring about socio-economic upliftment need to be long-term and livelihoods need to be sustainable. Therefore, the next question is what is a sustainable livelihood? The Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheets (DfID, 2007) describe a livelihood as sustainable (which incorporates both social and environmental sustainability) “when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintains or enhances its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base”.<sup>3</sup> So what is of importance is that “the broad base upon which livelihoods are built remains firm, or improves...(thus ensuring) that people have greater opportunities in the future than they had in the past” (DfID, 2007).

To identify obstructions in socio-economic development and to create long-term alleviation of poverty, which is in itself a complex phenomenon, it is essential for external aid agencies (as well as communities themselves) to assess communities’ livelihoods first in order to help determine possible strategies for poverty reduction. It is often tempting for aid workers, NGO’s, government organisations etc. to make generalisations and assumptions about methods of poverty relief instead of applying individual assistance and solutions to individual

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<sup>3</sup> This is adapted from the definition originally proposed by Chambers and Conway in their 1992 work. Chambers, R. and G. Conway (1992) Sustainable rural livelihoods: Practical concepts for the 21st century. IDS Discussion Paper 296. Brighton: IDS

communities. Bovarnic and Gupta (2003:26-27) reiterate this by commenting that "...poverty has a multi-dimensional nature, and therefore it is risky and not necessarily accurate to assume that business development is the solution for poverty alleviation". They continue by pointing out that in order to reduce poverty, one or more of the aspects of one's livelihood may need to be improved.

In this vein, it is thus important to examine the following issues:

- "The context in which different groups of people live, including the effects upon them of external trends (economic, technological, population growth, etc.), shocks (whether natural or man-made) and seasonality;
- People's access to different types of assets (physical, human, financial, natural and social) and their ability to put these to productive use;
- The institutions, policies and organisations that shape their livelihood;
- The different strategies that they adopt in pursuit of their goals; and
- Vulnerability and dependency on the environment." (Bovarnick & Gupta, 2003:27)

Although the concept of sustainable livelihoods has been around since the 1980's (Hussein, 2002:11), it was only in 1992, that it was first formally introduced as an actual development approach by Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway (Chambers & Conway, 1992) in their discussion paper entitled, "Sustainable rural livelihoods: Practical concepts for the 21st century". Since then it has been adopted and incorporated into projects and programmes by a number of different donor agencies, NGO's, research institutes and international agencies, including CARE, the UK Department of International Development (DfID), Oxfam, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations and the World Bank amongst others (Hussein, 2002).

"Sustainable Livelihoods approaches have evolved from changing perspectives on poverty, participation and sustainable development" (see Chambers and Conway 1992, Carney 1999 in Arun *et al*, 2004). DfID's approach to sustainable livelihoods is one of the more well known and the principles (see Box 4 below) upon which its Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) is based are not mutually exclusive and can be incorporated into other programmes. There are also no hard and fast rules about how to apply, promote or implement the SLA, it is not prescriptive, although DfID (as well as many other organisations – see Hussein, 2002) has drawn up a framework (see Figure 1 below) to assist the process of assessment, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. It is worth noting that although different frameworks have been created, the same focus and general principles "rooted in early work on participatory methodologies, ecosystems analysis, vulnerability and livelihoods" tend to apply to them all (Hussein, 2002:54).

"The principles (see Box 4) support approaches that are responsive and participatory whilst recognising that macro-level structures and processes influence and often constrain local livelihood options" (Baumann, 2004:1).

#### **Box 4: SLA Principles**

- People-centred: 'focusing on what matters to people'.
- Responsive and participatory: 'poor people themselves must be key actors'.
- Multi-level: 'the micro-level informs the development of policy' and 'macro-level structures and processes support people'.
- Conducted in partnership: 'with both the public and the private sector'.
- Sustainable: 'economic, institutional, social and environmental sustainability'.
- Dynamic: 'recognise dynamic nature of livelihood strategies, respond flexibly, and develop long-term commitments'. (Baumann, 2004:2)

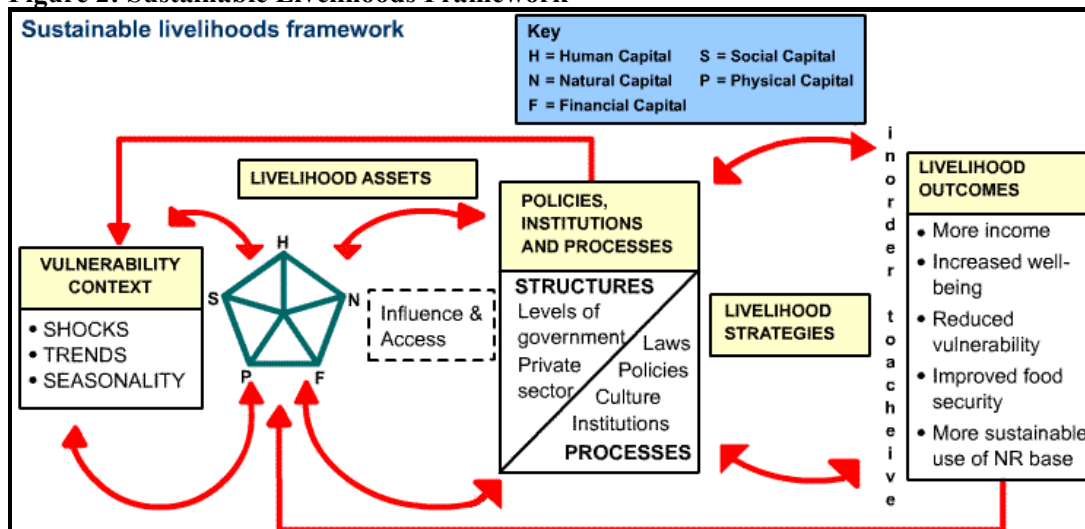
Two more principles have been added by some organisations (Hussein, 2004:15) namely:

- Holistic: reflecting the integrated nature of people's lives and diverse strategies
- Building on strengths: while addressing vulnerabilities

Sources: Baumann (2004:2) and Hussein (2004:15)

The SL framework (see Figure 2) “recognises the complexity of local livelihoods and looks beyond disciplines and sectors to focus on the assets that people have and the wider context that influences how these can be used” (Baumann, 2004:1). DfID (2007) emphasises that this framework is a simplification and a guide and does not intend to provide “an exact representation of reality” and should be adapted to different situations and conditions.

**Figure 2: Sustainable Livelihoods Framework**



Source: DfID (2007)

The objective of the SLA according to Baumann (2004:1) is to provide “a pragmatic means to make sense of increasing rural complexity and to identify people-centred development interventions” to alleviate poverty. These interventions include activities such as:

- “improving access to high-quality education, information technologies and training and better nutrition and health
- facilitating a more supportive and cohesive social environment
- improving access to, and management of, natural resources
- improving access to basic and facilitating infrastructure
- improving access to financial resources, and
- establishing a policy and institutional environment that supports multiple livelihood strategies and promotes equitable access to competitive markets for all”. (DfID, 2007)

The Soutpansberg Centre project aims to address many of these activities as ways of creating socio-economic upliftment. Another important factor and one that will play a central role in all elements of the Soutpansberg Centre initiative is that of participation and community involvement. According to DfID (2007), the SLA:

- encourages communities to achieve their own livelihood objectives, as determined by themselves;
- it values taking into account differing points of view and opinions;
- it encourages open discussion and debate; and
- it believes in building upon peoples’ strengths and negotiating (a more interactive and intensive communication) with communities as opposed to simply consulting with them.

The level of participatory development in this sense also includes looking at links between policy and local level activity as well as integrating other techniques and processes from other fields of development studies.

The SLA is a holistic approach and as such takes into account all aspects of sustainability including: environmental, economic, social and institutional sustainability. Box 5 (DfID, 2007), defines the different aspects of each.



**Box 5: The Different Types of Sustainability**

Environmental Sustainability	Is achieved when the productivity of life-supporting natural resources is conserved or enhanced for use by future generations.
Economic Sustainability	Is achieved when a given level of expenditure can be maintained over time. In the context of the livelihoods of the poor, economic sustainability is achieved if a baseline level of economic welfare can be achieved and sustained.
Social Sustainability	Is achieved when social imbalances are minimised and social equity maximised.
Institutional Sustainability	Is achieved when prevailing structures and processes continue to perform over the long term.

Source: DfID (2007)

Of course, as with all approaches to poverty alleviation, there are limitations to the SLA approach. One such limitation according to Baumann (2004:3) is that none of the SLA principles guide practitioners in situations where pro-poor project planning meets resistance. In Hussein (2002:17), it is said that “some feel that the framework has serious shortcomings: among these, the absence of political capital, gender and other power issues and rights”. The report (Hussein, 2002:54) continues, however, to point out that many of these shortcomings are being addressed by the different organizations and agencies who have “adapted SLA to meet their own needs” and indicates that different frameworks have now been altered to incorporate the abovementioned shortcomings, namely gender, power, markets and rights issues and have even been used to “complement legal frameworks and codes of conduct” (Hussein, 2002:54).

The SLA cannot be the solution to every problem, but it is a flexible approach and once adapted to individual contexts and situations, can be a very effective means of achieving poverty alleviation. It is an approach that the Soutpansberg Centre project can utilise effectively to help communities improve their socio-economic circumstances and thus increase livelihood security.

#### 4.3.4. Land reform / restitution in South Africa

“Soon after the 1994 democratic elections, the South African parliament passed a Restitution of Land Rights Act. Under this Act, individuals and communities that had been forcibly removed from their traditional (or privately owned) land owing to racially discriminating laws after 1913 could claim restitution for land rights which they had lost” (Luckett *et al*, 2003 page?). The land restitution process is being handled by the Land Claims Court and Commission, established under the Restitution of Land Rights. There are many areas in the Limpopo Province that fall under this category.

In 1995, The Commission on Restitution of Land Rights (The Commission) was established in terms of this Act to:

- Promote equity for victims of dispossession by the state, particularly the landless and rural poor;
- Contribute towards equitable redistribution of land rights in South Africa.
- Promote reconciliation through the restitution process.
- Facilitate development initiatives by bringing together all relevant stakeholders relevant to land claims, especially the Provincial Government and Municipalities (Department of Land Affairs and Department of Agriculture, 2005:11)

Restitution is one of the three main facets of land reform in South Africa. The other two being redistribution of land and Land Tenure reform. Redistribution “aims to provide the disadvantaged and the poor with access to land for residential and productive purposes. Its scope includes the urban and rural very poor, labour tenants, farm workers as well as new entrants to agriculture” while Land Tenure reform is chiefly about improving “the tenure security of all South Africans” (Gwanya, 2003:2)

There are and have been many challenges and difficulties experienced in implementing the restitution process in South Africa, some of which according to Gwanya (2003:4-7) include:

- late lodgment of claims;

- difficult rural claims;
- disputes between land claimants;
- administrative, infrastructure and communication problems in rural areas;
- exorbitant land prices and uncooperative current land owners;
- protracted negotiations between claimants, current land owners and the government;
- development challenges and capacity issues
- high public expectations
- administrative bottlenecks
- the number of land claims to be processed

There are also challenges facing the land claimants once land has been awarded. These problems range from the inappropriate expenditure of finances and lack of interest in development to a lack of technical, organizational, business, financial management and development planning skills (Gwanya, 2003:6). The lack of these skills may have an influence on the achievement of sustainable livelihood security. The Commission has to date “put processes in place to address the challenges that new land owners are confronted by...” (Department of Land Affairs and Department of Agriculture, 2005:26), and now provide training in the above areas.

It is important to note that many of the rural land claim beneficiaries do not necessarily have any commercial farming experience and there is therefore a need for skills training in this area. The development of building skills and other livelihood projects utilising indigenous knowledge and appropriate technologies are also areas that have large potential and should help alleviate poverty. Gwanya (2003:7) states that “There is a significant role for donor agencies to support restitution processes especially in equipping claimants for sustainable settlements “.

The Soutpansberg Centre project, with the assistance of donor funding, could meaningfully contribute towards empowering successful land claimants in producing a successful end result. The National Land Summit held in July 2005 noted that “not only is land and agrarian reform necessary to undo the injustices of history, it must also be a central component of economic transformation, and contribute towards realizing the goals of accelerated and shared growth" (ANC Today, 2006). The project is primarily aimed at establishing a meaningful and relevant community upliftment programme which must be capable of being integrated into the land restitution process for the Vhembe District beginning in the Western Soutpansberg.

It has become clear that the Commission’s initial focus, namely to provide equitable redress and restoration of land rights to the victims of racial dispossession, is insufficient and that its mandate needs to go beyond simple land transfer and should ensure that “land transferred to land reform beneficiaries should be used in a productive manner that ensures a better life for all present and future generations” (Department of Land Affairs and Department of Agriculture, 2005:22). This means that the Commission, including the relevant government departments, should ensure the sustainable settlement of land and should facilitate viable development planning.

Wegerif (2006) highlights some important points to take into consideration when approaching land reform issues and processes. He points out that:

- In order for land reform to succeed, the rural poor need to become the drivers of the process and ensure that they are central to any planning and implementation decisions that are taken. Additionally, any projects that are undertaken should utilise the skills and resources of the community involved. Government departments and municipalities need to be more flexible and open-minded to help keep these projects active and functioning.
- Municipalities should be an integrated part of the land claim process. Any land reform project, as mentioned above, needs to be incorporated into a municipality’s development programme to ensure that it and its practices are sustainable, have access to services and development support and are part of a broader development strategy.
- Stakeholder participation and consultation is extremely beneficial and necessary for any land reform project to be successful. Stakeholders usually have differing objectives and views and it is often a challenge for there to be agreement on issues relating to any land development project. However, it is

important for facilitators to persevere with this process and encourage communication and learning between stakeholders.

- Communities, who are beneficiaries of land reform, need to mobilise and organise themselves in order to be able to hold government accountable for any commitments that have been made.
- It is important that people's sense of community be respected and understood and that their needs and concerns be listened to and taken into account, especially in regards to decision-making. The intention of any land reform process should be to try and maintain a sense of community.

#### **4.3.5. Participation / involvement of local communities**

A vital feature in the regeneration of the Schoemansdal Centre and creation of the Soutpansberg Centre is that the local populations be taken into confidence and that their views, opinions and perceptions be reflected in all aspects (including for example content, approach, implementation and management) of the development of this project. "Participation is understood to involve responsibility, trust and co-operation, not just consultation, to help implement outside innovation more efficiently" (DST, 2004:20). Bovarnick & Gupta (2003:27) comment that the assessment of local populations' views should be "highly participatory and people-oriented" and that "communities should be the ones to identify their needs and priorities for improving all elements of their livelihoods".

The project will fail if the deliverables suggested do not fit into the local communities' existing socio-cultural realities and expectations. Dr Tarak Kate, director of Dharamitra (a voluntary organisation located in Maharashtra State in India) has vast experience in this field having worked with over 1000 farmers. His organisation, which was founded by a group of scientists and social activists dedicated to the cause of sustainable rural development, is engaged in the application and dissemination of eco-friendly technologies relevant to rural areas. Dr Kate comments that, "Earlier field experiences show that even though the implementing agency has all good intentions of improving the livelihood conditions of the people through appropriate Science and Technology (S and T) interventions, the adoptability levels and psychological and social readiness of the people for such interventions need to be judged in order to make the endeavour successful" (pers. comm. Kate, T. July 2007). Therefore questions regarding how the local people will be involved in the decision making, implementation, managing and monitoring of the project need to be asked as well as how this ensured process of inclusion and participation of the local communities is going to evolve.

Participation is described by Aguilar *et al* (2002:32) as "a social process through which the various members of the population, on behalf of their own interests (class, group, gender, among others) participate either directly or through their representatives, in the implementation of the various aspects involved in community life. Participation is a necessary condition for citizenship, as a person considers him/herself to be a citizen when he/she has the power to influence processes bearing a direct or indirect effect on their own destiny".

There are different kinds of participation ranging from passive, informing and consulting participation to self-mobilisation. Pimbert & Pretty (1995) in Luckett *et al*, (2003:10) describe different types of participation, two of which are functional and interactive participation (see Box 6). Although functional participation may appear to be an appropriate option for the Soutpansberg Centre to adopt, especially as one of the main objectives is socio-economic upliftment, the project should rather aim to achieve interactive participation for the participatory process.

#### **Box 6: Two Types of Participation**

**Functional participation:** People participate by getting involved in activities to meet objectives of externally determined projects. The objectives normally involve the social and economic upliftment of people.  
**Interactive participation:** People participate in the formulation of research and action plans. The participation is normally based on interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple perspectives and involve learning processes. Local groups take control over local decisions giving the people a stake in action plans and structures to support these.

Source: Pimbert & Pretty (1995) in Luckett *et al* (2003:10)

An important aspect about participation is that it empowers local communities. “Power in this sense, is measured by the extent to which members of a community increase their options and their capacity to make choices about local action” (NSW Department of Community Services, 2004). This “sense of ownership and empowerment are often powerful incentives for communities to participate not only in subsequent economic activities but also in the pursuit of broader conservation goals” (Bovarnick & Gupta, 2003:26-27).

In order for the Soutpansberg Centre to be sustainable, the active participation of all stakeholders is essential. Since the project is aimed at the socio-economic upliftment of the surrounding communities, their support, involvement, input and sense of ownership of the project will help ensure it gets set in motion. According to Thomas & Middleton (2003:55) some of the benefits of involving people in management planning include:

- an increased sense of ownership;
- a greater public involvement and influence in decision-making; and
- a provided mechanism for communication, where views, concerns and opinions on management can be shared.

They point out that through effective communication the identification and subsequent resolution of problems is more efficient which in turn may lead to a better understanding and greater support for the project.

It is important to note that the communities in the study area, through their representative committee (now known as the Soutpansberg Centre Steering Committee) have been involved in this project proposal from its inception. The idea for this project was conceived prior to 2000, when the Lesheba Trust and the KSLCs initiated communication and developed a working relationship. One of the fundamental goals and key needs of the project is skills development using Indigenous Knowledge Systems as a basis. The communities involved are well aware that in order for the project to be sustainable in the long run it will have to be community managed and implemented. This means there will need to be a jointly shared vision of success and a mapping of outcomes as well as a clear strategy in place in order to ensure effective organization and operation of the project.

#### **4.3.6. Gender, equity and the youth**

The Soutpansberg Centre will aim to create niches for women and the youth in the target communities so that they have their own responsibilities in order to assist in their socio-economic empowerment as well as in the overall success and management of the project. Aguilar *et al* (2002:7) emphasise the above point by commenting that “in the search for conservation and sustainable development, each one has his/her own responsibilities and tasks, which, as a whole, will contribute to attain the changes proposed. Should there be participants in a position of disadvantage, subordination, or oppression (due to gender, age, religion, political views, ethnic groups, or socio-economic status) it will be hard to reach even small agreements regarding social participation and equity towards conservation and development”.

The Food and Agricultural Organisation’s Socio-economic and Gender Analysis programme (SEAGA, 2004) emphasises the above points through the three principles that guide its framework, namely:

- Gender roles and relations are of key importance for understanding and improving the livelihoods of rural people.
- Disadvantaged people are a priority in development initiatives. The differential distribution of wealth affects the poorest and most disadvantaged in terms of their ability to access resources.
- Participation is essential for sustainable development, and all activities must address the needs, priorities and capacities of communities, households and individual household members.

These three principles should also play a guiding role in the development of the Soutpansberg Centre as they address important issues that are central to the project which relate to poverty, livelihoods, capacities, participation and gender. Adding to these issues is the connection between environmental, social, cultural and economic elements within communities. These connections need to be understood in order for there to be progress, especially with regards to gender issues.

Howard (2003 in FAO, 2005) raises the concern that the role of women has been misconstrued, disregarded or underestimated, especially with regards to their contribution to the management of natural resources as well as to economic production. The FAO (2005) comments that it is women who direct more of their earnings to ensure their basic needs are met and it gives the following examples of the roles of women and how their contribution is much greater than necessarily expected:

- women are the sole breadwinners in one-third of all households in the world;
- in poor families, with two adults, more than half the available income is from the labour of women and children;
- lastly Howard, 2003 (in FAO, 2005) states that women produce 80-percent of the food in Africa, 60-percent in Asia and 40-percent in Latin America.

Judging by the above statistic for Africa, one can understand the importance of ensuring the active participation of women in helping to achieve livelihood security and sustainable community development.

“One of the most significant gaps between men and women is the lack of female participation in the decision-making processes related to their life and community. This is an obvious and visible reality: very few women are placed in coordinating or managing positions within community organisations, councils, organisations, and conservation or sustainable development projects” (Aguilar *et al*, 2002:33). The FAO (2005) supports this by pointing out that women often play invisible or restricted roles in the public affairs of their community and that tradition often dictates that the household head (usually the man) speaks for the household at public meetings etc. However, it continues by commenting that many men are not sufficiently aware of women's concerns to raise them adequately in these contexts.

This potential lack of feedback and participation from women means that alternative approaches to encourage their involvement may have to be investigated and adopted. It is essential for the success of the project that women's needs are heard, that their innate knowledge and skills be drawn on and that their commitment and support of the project be assessed. This process must also be carried out for the men and for the youth and should take into account differences in “age, ethnicity and social status... (as well as) roles, responsibilities, interests and needs” (FAO, 2005).

Working from a gender equity perspective (GEP) may provide one method to stimulate and ensure participation at all levels of the community. The GEP according to Aguilar *et al* (2002:43) entails undertaking “a series of actions at all levels” and initiating a “permanent and liberating process (that is both participatory and equitable), that includes men, women, boys, girls, and young people, at different moments (design, appraisal, planning, implementation, evaluation and monitoring), allowing their full participation in the (sustainable) development of a society”.

One often assumes that the studying of gender issues within a project means ensuring the participation of women – this should not be the case. When investigating gender issues, both the roles of men and women alike should be taken into account and their equal participation in the project process should be the goal. It must be remembered that “women and men often possess very different skills and types of knowledge concerning local conditions and everyday life” (FAO, 2005). In this regard, the term gender mainstreaming may come into play. Gender mainstreaming means that “continuous attentions should be paid to equality between men and women in development policies, strategies and interventions. It also aims at guaranteeing the participation of men and women in the definition of objectives and planning stages, to ensure that development meets the needs and priorities of women and men alike. Gender mainstreaming requires undertaking an analysis about the impact that development-related interventions might have on women and men in all areas of social development” (Aguilar *et al*, 2002:203).

It is essential however, to bear in mind that each society is unique. Therefore it is important, in this context, to understand Vhembe culture and the specific roles that women play within it. Blacking (1969), who carried out a 22 month study of Vhembe culture in the Sibasa district of the Limpopo Province between May 1956 and December 1958, commented that “in traditionally oriented Venda society, women hold considerable power and almost undisputed authority in certain fields of religious duty, home management, marriage and divorce

negotiations, the preparation of girls for marriage and the control of young mothers”. However, this status of women may have changed since then and the influence of modern society on traditional culture cannot be ignored.

The Soutpansberg Centre needs to assess the roles that men, women and the youth play within the Vhembe district as well as their needs and expectations. These should be kept in mind, when through a participatory process, the goals, objectives, planning, implementation, management and evaluation activities and processes are determined.

#### **4.4. Socio-Economic Upliftment**

“The challenge of development is to improve the quality of life, which generally calls for higher incomes. But it involves much more. It encompasses, as ends in themselves: better education, higher standards of health and nutrition, a cleaner environment, more equality of opportunity, greater individual freedom, and a richer cultural life” (The World Bank, 1991).

Many of South Africa’s rural communities are struggling economically. In the Vhembe district, high unemployment, minimal economic opportunities and rising rates of HIV/AIDS are among some of the factors responsible for the widespread poverty in the area. The Soutpansberg Centre aims to create socio-economic upliftment through a variety of methods as outlined in this section.

Local Economic Development (LED) is one such method of creating socio-economic development. Khanya-aicdd (2005) define LED as "local people working together to achieve sustainable economic growth that brings economic benefits and quality of life improvements for all in the community”. Nowadays, the achievement of LED might also require the involvement and active participation of local government, NGO’s and the private sector.

Central to improving the local economy is the concept of livelihoods (see Sustainable Livelihoods Approach above for a definition of livelihoods). DfID (2007) points out the importance of recognising that “people’s livelihoods are influenced by multiple factors (which can originate within their own culture, from the natural environment, from the government, etc.) which in turn influence economic development. This is supported by Bovarnick and Gupta (2003:26) who comment that it is through assessing livelihood needs that “key barriers to generating income” will be identified.

The Khanya-aicdd (2005) emphasises the importance of:

- recognising human capabilities and the opportunities that people have to address livelihood needs;
- assessing people’s vulnerability to stresses;
- understanding the different kinds of capital involved in communities (see Box 1: Capital Assets) as well as
- considering how “policies, institutions and processes support/hinder access to these capitals...”.

To clarify obstacles and identify potential strategies (or ideally enhance a community’s existing strategies) and to encourage socio-economic upliftment, questions need to be asked of communities and issues clarified relating to culture, tradition, health, socio-demographic issues, natural resource use as well as institutional and political structures.

Additionally, for a community to be sustainable and for livelihood security to be enhanced there needs to be both individual and communal economic activity. For the Soutpansberg Centre to be efficient and equitable, existing economic prospects need to be maintained while new opportunities are introduced. The FAO (2005) points out that indigenous knowledge is a form of human capital and that a community’s “ability to build and mobilize knowledge capital is as essential to sustainable development as the availability of physical and financial capital”. It continues by reiterating that communities use this local knowledge and experience for survival – to produce food, provide shelter and to manage, maintain, improve and be in charge of their own lives.

#### 4.4.1. Organic Permaculture Farming

A key thrust of the project will be to focus on producing sustainable farming techniques using the heritage of century's old indigenous knowledge, together with appropriate technology to develop an effective South African solution to local agriculture. The creation of a practical working organic farm will also serve as a training centre. A key example of this and one that will possibly be utilised as a case study for the project is Dharamitra (an "eco-technology research centre for sustainable development"). Dharamitra's advice and guidance based on its wide variety of experience would be very valuable to the Soutpansberg Centre initiative. It is apt to note that Sustainable Development is defined by the World Conservation Union (IUCN), the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) as "improving the quality of life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting eco-systems" (IUCN/UNEP/WWF, 1991).

Permaculture is a design system for sustainable human settlements and agriculturally productive ecosystems, which have the diversity, stability, and resilience of natural ecosystems. Permaculture design integrates the landscape and its people, sustainably providing food, water, energy, shelter and medicine. Permaculture principles correlate with biodiversity through the preservation of flora and fauna, integrating humans with their environment to create sustainable ecologies. With the incredibly bio-diverse environment of the Soutpansberg there is the opportunity of achieving a unique poverty alleviation programme through the application of Permaculture and organic farming (pers. comm. Heinemann, 2007).

The aim of Permaculture is to assist people and communities to develop the tools to help themselves, to develop ecoliteracy (ecological literacy) and ecodesign skills and work towards more sustainable ways of living. Permaculture teaches, amongst other things, how to:

- observe nature and become more ecologically aware and responsible
- create locally-appropriate solutions and provide for basic needs sustainably
- grow fresh, healthy, chemical-free food (food security)
- create sustainable community food systems
- maintain and restore soil fertility and prevent erosion
- restore the land and natural ecological systems
- protect water resources, improve water quality and access
- reduce resource consumption, pollution and waste and utilise resources responsibly
- plan and design sustainable houses and human settlements
- develop appropriate technologies and renewable energy systems
- strengthen local communities and cultures
  - build on local strengths and abundances
  - support local and bioregional self-determination and decision-making
- strengthen the local economy, create local employment and work co-operatively
- create sustainable and meaningful livelihoods
- share knowledge with others

(Gamble, 2002; Gamble & Raymond, 2007)

The Afristar Foundation, a non-profit organization which specializes in the training of organic farming and Permaculture techniques, will offer a South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) accredited competency based training package, allowing learning to be more creative and flexible where theory is balanced with healthy amounts of practice.

Another important aspect to consider is that of agrobiodiversity which "is the result of the interaction between the environment, genetic resources and management systems and practices used by culturally diverse peoples... (It) encompasses the variety and variability of animals, plants and micro-organisms that are necessary for sustaining key functions of the agro-ecosystem, including its structure and processes for, and in support of, food production and food security" (FAO, 1999). Agrobiodiversity implies the integral role that a community and its culture, indigenous knowledge and agricultural activities play in the conservation of biodiversity (FAO, 2005).

Farmer Field Schools have also proven to be a very successful approach, especially with regards to Integrated Pest Management and this should be an approach that the Soutpansberg Centre initiative investigates further as a viable option to encourage community knowledge sharing and support for the project. Van den Berg (2004) explains the concept of the Farmer Field School as “a form of adult education, which evolved from the concept that farmers learn optimally from field observation and experimentation. It was developed to help farmers tailor their Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices to diverse and dynamic ecological conditions”. It also encourages groups of neighbouring farmers to learn from each other and share valuable knowledge and improve their farm management skills.

Box 7 below illustrates the positive immediate and developmental impacts of the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Farmer Field School, arranged according to the technical, social and political domain. As can be seen below, many of the Soutpansberg Centre’s objectives are reflected in the developmental impacts column.

**Box 7: Examples of immediate and developmental impacts of the Integrated Pest Management Farmer Field School, arranged according to the technical, social and political domain**

<i>Domain</i>	<i>Immediate impact</i>	<i>Developmental impact</i>
Technical	Knowledge about ecology	More sustainable production
	Experimentation skills	Improved livelihoods
	Improved crop management	Ability to deal with risks, opportunities
	Pesticide reduction	Innovation
	Yield increase	More cost-effective production
	Profit increase	Reduced water contamination
	Risk reduction	Reduced frequency of farmer poisoning
		Reduced public health risks
		Improved biodiversity
		Improved marketability of produce
	Poverty reduction	
Social	Group building	Collaboration between farmers
	Communication skills	Farmer associations
	Problem solving skills	Community agenda setting
		Farmer study groups
		Formation of networks
		Farmer-to-farmer extension
		Area-wide action
Political	Farmer-extension linkage	Stronger access to service providers
	Negotiating skills	Improved leverage position
	Educational skills	Awareness campaigns
		Protests
		Policy change

Source: Van den Berg (2004)



#### **4.4.2. Appropriate Technologies and Skills Development**

One of the objectives of the project is to develop and manage the Centre as a model for appropriate technology and skills development where indigenous knowledge and modern technologies are combined.

The Centre will utilise traditional knowledge in its construction and showcase a blend of traditional building technologies with a modern architectural approach to ensure passive solar heating, natural light and ventilation. Local people will be utilised to manufacture the bricks, build and roofing. The process will be well documented to provide a library for the methodology of the technologies that are utilised.

Structures that will eventually need to be developed include: management offices, a restaurant, demonstration areas, residential accommodation for interns, a communications centre, workshopping space and accommodation for visiting lecturers and guests as well as potential packaging, drying, bottling and processing areas.

Construction will explore traditional building technologies combined with alternative building technologies such as wattle and daub, mud brick, rammed earth and straw bale to meet a mandate of experimentation and creating structures that are of relevance and interest to community development and tourism. Appropriate technologies also need to be explored for sanitation and power such as biogas and composting toilets. Reed beds for processing sewage water can also be developed as a part of the features creating manmade wetlands to clean water. Additional technologies for cooking can be explored such as solar cooking.

An existing registered non-profit training company “LITE” may be able to assist in using their learnerships to create structures in terms of construction that would receive SAQA accreditation. LITE could be approached to utilise modern alternative/indigenous building technologies towards creating innovative models. Skills training through NQF building courses could be facilitated at the Soutpansberg Centre facility.

Additional developments of residential accommodation, restaurant, and demonstration facilities will grow slowly and organically into a fully-fledged sustainability education centre and demonstration site for skills training. This development will display infrastructure including the following:

- orchards, forestry trials, commercial organic plots, organic kitchen garden, indigenous medicinal gardens, Permaculture gardens,
- alternative off-grid power, alternatively constructed energy efficient buildings, waste treatment and refuse systems, tools and equipment as well as
- an holistic Permaculture design including many examples of guilds, strategies, plantings and structures. (pers. comm. Heinemann, 2007)

#### **4.4.3. Indigenous/Traditional/Local Knowledge Systems and their Preservation**

The meaning of indigenous knowledge lies in the definition of the term knowledge itself. Blaikie *et al* (1992) give the following definition of knowledge that highlights a number of factors about indigenous knowledge systems: “Knowledge concerns the way people understand the world, the way in which they interpret and apply meaning to their experiences. Knowledge is not about the discovery of some final objective ‘truth’ (but rather) it is the understanding of culturally subjective - conditioned products that emerge from complex and ongoing processes. Knowledge involves selection, rejection, creation, development and transformation of information. These processes, and hence knowledge, are inextricably linked to the social, environmental and institutional contexts (in which) they are found”.

Indigenous knowledge sometimes referred to as local or traditional knowledge, “is the information people in a given community have developed over time. It is based on experience, adapted to the local culture and environment, and is continuously developing. This knowledge is used to sustain the community, its culture and to maintain the genetic resources necessary for the continued survival of the community” (FAO, 2005). Based on the above definition, it is therefore essential that in the development of any project that involves the participation of local communities, that existing knowledge and skills (embedded within community tradition and culture and passed down through the generations) be valued and acknowledged, drawn upon, analysed, recorded and utilised. Added to this, development organisations need “...to understand exactly what it (indigenous

knowledge) is before it is incorporated in their approaches (and)... they also need to critically validate it against the usefulness of their intended objectives” (FAO, 2005).

### **Box 8: Local Knowledge**

Local knowledge includes mental inventories of local biological resources, animal breeds, local plant, crop and tree species. It may include information about trees and plants that grow well together, about indicator plants that show the soil salinity, or are known to flower at the beginning of the rains. It includes practices and technologies, such as seed treatment and storage methods, and tools used for planting and harvesting. Local knowledge encompasses belief systems that play a fundamental role in people's livelihood, maintaining their health, and protecting and replenishing the environment. Local knowledge is dynamic in nature. It may include experimentation on the integration of new plant or tree species into existing farming systems, or the tests a traditional healer carries out for new plant medicines. Local knowledge is unique to every culture or society; elders and the young possess various types of knowledge.

**Source: FAO (2005)**

Rural development project workers must be aware that people within a community possess different forms of knowledge depending on for example, their gender or age. This is important to understand because “to find out what people know, the right people must be identified” and interviewed (FAO, 2005).

Another point that should be emphasised is the fact that it is often assumed that indigenous knowledge is static and unchanging, when in fact it is dynamic and adaptable. This is due to people being able to adjust to environmental changes as well as to assimilate new ideas to which they may be exposed. Due to this adaptable nature of indigenous knowledge, a ‘traditional’ technology or practice is often a mixture of local and externally introduced elements (FAO, 2005). It is thus important that a community development project not only document existing indigenous knowledge, but that it is understood how this knowledge adapts, develops and changes over time as well as the way in which it is communicated and by whom (FAO, 2005).

It is increasingly being recognised that the project process<sup>4</sup> that is carried out to implement rural socio-economic development interventions and improve livelihood security plays a major role in the effectiveness and success of the project. It is also important that local community knowledge is built upon and acknowledged (Khanya-aicdd, 2005).

In today’s technological world where rapid socio-economic and environmental changes are occurring, and where local knowledge is often regarded as inferior to ‘Western’ knowledge (Briggs & Sharp, 2003), much of this valuable indigenous knowledge is disappearing. Sometimes this is due to the quick solutions and promises that development projects offer. Other challenges include climate change, HIV/AIDS, population pressures etc. However, “traditional farmers engage in constant experimentation and adaptation to fit local situations” (Norberg-Hodge *et al*, 2001:60) and local indigenous knowledge systems often adapt to these problems through co-evolution. This refers to “the continuous and dynamic process of mutual adaptation between humankind and the natural environment... which in turn leads to increased diversity” (FAO, 2005). Even so, the FAO (2005) still emphasizes that indigenous knowledge is not necessarily adequate to deal with today’s multitude of challenges and as such it may be important in the development process to encourage the integration of local and external knowledge sources.

#### **4.4.3.1. Indigenous Knowledge Systems in South Africa**

“The Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) developed and maintained by South Africa’s indigenous peoples pervades the lives and the belief systems of a large proportion of the country’s population. Such indigenous knowledge manifests itself in areas ranging from cultural and religious ceremonies to agricultural practices and health interventions” (Department of Science and Technology (DST), 2004:10).

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<sup>4</sup> The project process involves active stakeholder participation; a sense of ownership; accountability and transparency

In South Africa, indigenous knowledge systems are mostly utilized by and offer services to people who are unemployed and therefore it is necessary to assess the potential of indigenous knowledge (IK) to provide employment opportunities (DST, 2004:14). One of the objectives of the Soutpansberg Centre will be to address the potential of IK as an employment generator.

#### **Box 9: The Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) Policy**

The Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) Policy is an enabling framework to stimulate and strengthen the contribution of indigenous knowledge to social and economic development in South Africa. The main IKS Policy drivers in the South African context include:

- The affirmation of African cultural values in the face of globalisation – a clear imperative given the need to promote a positive African identity;
- Practical measures for the development of services provided by IK holders and practitioners, with a particular focus on traditional medicine, but also including areas such as agriculture, indigenous languages and folklore;
- Underpinning the contribution of indigenous knowledge to the economy – the role of indigenous knowledge in employment and wealth creation; and
- Interfaces with other knowledge systems, for example indigenous knowledge is used together with modern biotechnology in the pharmaceutical and other sectors to increase the rate of innovation.

Source: Department of Science and Technology (2004:9)

#### **4.4.3.3. Women and IKS**

The knowledge that women have and the important roles they play within their communities is increasingly being recognized. They are often the custodians of local knowledge which includes knowledge relating to amongst other issues, the environment, health, family structure, food security and agriculture. It has also been shown through studies “that in circumstances of rapid change such as environmental crisis, changing economic activities, and government interventions, women play a crucial role in maintaining livelihoods, cultural continuity and community cohesion” (DST, 2004:20).

The following case studies shows how indigenous/ local knowledge can be incorporated into projects and project planning and to illustrate how it can be used to achieve positive outcomes for people's livelihoods.

#### **Box 10: CASE STUDY: Enhancing Pastoralist Self-Reliance through Sustainable Economic Development in Kenya**

In Kenya, an integrated development programme for pastoralists brings together traditional (indigenous) and modern technical knowledge for training and handbooks on the treatment of cattle diseases. The programme aims to gather indigenous knowledge from different ethnic groups, share knowledge and practices, and promote pastoralism as a valid mode of production and way of life. The Kenya Economic Pastoralist Development Association (KEPDA) brings together traditional and modern technical knowledge in all project activities.

Understanding and awareness of key issues is then promoted through publications and networking. This approach has considerable potential for the sustainable improvement of dry land productivity. In the past traditional knowledge was largely considered a research topic, and technical knowledge was believed to be a replacement for “primitive” or outdated practices. This project aims to integrate these two sets of knowledge.

Source: The World Bank (2005:48) Traditional knowledge case studies. [www.worldbank.org/afr/ik/casestudies/](http://www.worldbank.org/afr/ik/casestudies/)

**Box 11: CASE STUDY: Locally Available Indigenous Edible Species of Plants Enhance Community Health, Provide Income, and Conserve Biodiversity in Kenya**

The National Museums of Kenya is compiling a database of indigenous food plants of Kenya, to compile agronomic, nutritional, cultural and market data on priority species; to promote the cultivation, consumption and marketing of these foods through field demonstrations, educational materials and the media. People were despising their traditional foods in favour of exotic foods. This was most common among the younger generation, who took pride in their 'modern' patterns of consumption. Poverty, famine, and malnutrition were common in rural areas despite the fact that local foods were readily available. Much local knowledge regarding the nutritional value and cultivation of local edible plants was being lost. Most people no longer knew, for example, when and where to collect seeds, etc. Having never been written down, the indigenous knowledge of the elderly was slipping away day-by-day. A number of important species, or varieties of species, were on their way to extinction.

Indigenous knowledge was thus the starting point. Specialists in nutrition, ecology, and botany have had to base their research on it because there was simply not enough time, money or human resources to duplicate all of that knowledge. The scientific, economic, and socio-cultural significance of the indigenous knowledge becomes apparent as specialists and practitioners work with it. The practice is beneficial in several ways. It improves the local communities' living standards and health. It enhances the knowledge which extension workers put to daily use. It generates knowledge that is useful to NGOs seeking ways to alleviate poverty and improve public health. It generates scientific knowledge useful for the preservation of cultural and biological diversity. By raising the status of indigenous knowledge in the eyes of local communities, the practice not only helps to alleviate poverty but also increases people's respect for their own culture. There are some dangers. Commercial interests could result in a selection of species and varieties, and thus reduce the present diversity. Research exposes local knowledge to piracy.

Source: The World Bank (2005:44) Traditional Knowledge Case Studies. [www.worldbank.org/afr/ik/casestudies/](http://www.worldbank.org/afr/ik/casestudies/)

## **Box 12: CASE STUDY: Promoting Local Communities' Strategies for Conservation of Medicinal-Plant Genetic Resources in Africa**

In Africa more than 80 percent of the continent's population relies on plant and animal based medicine to meet its health care requirements. For the most part, the plants and animals used in traditional medicine are collected from the wild, and, in many cases, demand exceeds supply. As Africa's population grows, demand for traditional medicines will increase, and pressure on natural resources will intensify. Africa has a history of conserving bio-diversity in medicinal plants for two reasons: traditional practices surrounding their use reflect local knowledge and wisdom, and the plants are readily available and relatively cheap - being either easy to gather in the wild, or simple to cultivate. Herbalists have preserved traditional knowledge and practices of herbal medicine, often using it in combination with spiritual powers. Certain families keep their recipes secret.

Plants continue to provide most of Africa's rural population with ingredients for traditional medicines. For many generations, throughout the continent, small plots of land near the homesteads have been used as home gardens. Because these gardens serve a family's own needs, they contain an entire range of plants that provide food and medicine. They are used widely to prevent and treat common ailments. Their conservation also means that the indigenous knowledge, associated with their unique properties and correct application, will be preserved.

Through a combination of participatory research, and development activities involving local communities, project workers first learn about the local communities' own solutions to conserving medicinal plants and for putting them to safe and effective use for traditional health care.

Appropriate incentives then provide further encouragement of community efforts to safeguard bio-diversity at the village level. Economic incentives include seed funds, the promotion of income-generating activities and help with marketing. Social incentives include technical assistance and training, information and consciousness-raising related to conservation, the provision of equipment, and technical and scientific advice and assistance. Institutional incentives include guarantees of full property rights and the establishment of local committees and associations for monitoring and planning.

The fact that income can be generated from medicinal plants and traditional medicines helps sustain their cultivation. Recognition of the value of traditional medicine and medicinal plants will foster sustainable methods of propagation and cultivation. Traditional knowledge and practices, pertaining to medicinal plants, will be preserved as herbal medicines are increasingly used to complement other forms of community health care.

Source: The World Bank (2005:48) Traditional knowledge case studies, [www.worldbank.org/afr/ik/casestudies/](http://www.worldbank.org/afr/ik/casestudies/)

### **4.4.4. Training & skills development /environmental & sustainable development education**

The old adage, 'Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, teach a man how to fish and you feed him for a lifetime' emphasises the importance of education, skills development and training in the context of livelihood security. Although it can no longer be assumed that there is an unlimited supply of fish in today's overexploited oceans, the concept that is still relevant and is being highlighted by this metaphor is that of the importance of skills and knowledge transfer.

South Africa and Africa in general face environmental problems such as overpopulation, environmental illiteracy, soil erosion, drought, silting of rivers and desertification. The need for sustainable development training programmes and environmental education is urgent and essential as poverty and the legitimate aspirations of previously disenfranchised communities put increasing pressure on limited natural resources. In this regard, Lotz (1999:51) states that

"...environmental issues and risks are complex and...their resolution will require social transformation. Education is increasingly being viewed as a process of responding to the many diverse environmental issues and risks which arise in different settings. The growing emphasis on environmental education is reflected in developing policy and programmes in the SADC region...The trend towards broadening

environmental education processes reflects an expanded understanding of 'environment' as encompassing the social, political and economic systems of modern societies... Environmental education should thus be seen as a range of educational processes through which we respond to environmental issues in order to foster change in the direction of sustainable community life in a healthy environment”.

It is important to remember, however, that there are no simple solutions to big problems such as poverty and environmental degradation and that socio-environmental issues are multifaceted as well as unique and distinctive to each individual region and community. Irwin (1995:168 in Lotz, 1999:51) in his book *Citizen Science: A Study of People, Expertise and Sustainable Development*, clearly describes the complexity of this issue when he says, “Environmental problems are not problems of our surroundings, but – in their origins and through their consequences – are thoroughly social problems, problems of people, their history, their living conditions, their relation to the world and reality, their social, cultural and living conditions...At the end of the twentieth century nature is society and society is also ‘nature’” (Irwin, A. 1995:168 in Lotz, 1999:48).

There are different levels of environmental awareness within the study area. The older generation, the elders, through their application of indigenous knowledge systems which were largely based on good environmental practices, were raised with an awareness and respect for the environment that they still have today. The next generation appears to have remnants of that awareness but today’s young generation seem to have lost or do not take heed of that knowledge. This is possibly due to a combination of factors, one being that the awareness and environmental knowledge is not being passed down or practised in their traditional village environment. Another issue is the reality of living in our modern era where consumables are largely disposable, materialism is rife and the youth, exposed to all this, seem to rebel against tradition and reject the old ways of doing things. Another aspect to this problem is the lack of viable livelihoods for the communities within the study area. Often a result of pressing livelihood challenges is that even though people may have environmental values, they do not, out of necessity, take heed of them. Therefore, although livelihood issues need to be urgently addressed, there is still a necessity for environmental conservation education and awareness.

According to the Vhembe District Municipality (2008), “more effort should be put on education so that people in the district are skilled to take advantage of the opportunities that may arise as the economy of the district develops”. In this regard, training, skills development and sustainable development education are essential to the long-term future of the Soutpansberg Centre initiative as well as to socio-economic upliftment. However, equally important is that existing local indigenous knowledge, skills and practises be used as a starting point and be taken into account and enhanced and built upon. In order to introduce new knowledge effectively, it is imperative that the existing knowledge be understood so that educators know where to begin and how to modify and adapt the training process. Educators should ensure that the courses are participatory, flexible, draw on the experiences of learners, are responsive to the needs of learners and their socio-ecological context and encourage learners to integrate theory and practice (Lotz, 1999). Janse van Rensburg & Le Roux, (1998:32 In Lotz, 1999:23) comment that participatory learning involves “a deepening understanding of the notion that we are ‘all learners and educators’”.

### **Box 13: Integration of IKS in Education and the National Qualifications Framework**

The White Paper on Education and Training (1995) describes the fundamental goal of the national education and training policy as being essentially to enable all individuals to value, to have access to, and succeed in lifelong education and training of good quality. The key to sustainable technological capacity is identified as requiring a transformed, vibrant and effective educational system... The White Paper on Arts, Culture, and Heritage (1996) views education as part of culture, and acknowledges that culture itself is transmitted through education.

There is a fundamental parallel between the values mentioned above and those that govern IKS, which consist of people, the domains of knowledge and the techniques and technologies that drive the knowledge. It is therefore critical to ensure that the national education strategy is synergistic with and nurturing of IK.

IK is dynamic in nature, and changes its character as the needs of people change. It also gains vitality from being deeply entrenched in people's lives. The transformation of education syllabi from a primarily content driven approach to one of problem solving creates further impetus for the central recognition of IK. This will further require that appropriate methods and methodologies for mobilising IK in various learning contexts be identified and used.

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) embraces the principle of lifelong learning, and recognizes that it is not only in schools, colleges and institutions where you can study and get a qualification. Accreditation by the NQF and related structures may be extended to many diverse forms of learning, and should include the validation of knowledge learned and applied practically in indigenous communities; knowledge which is most frequently transmitted orally. This will in turn create a policy instrument for the preservation and custodianship of the knowledge (especially in the area of biodiversity) of communities that are traditionally viewed as rural and economically poor.

Source: DST (2004:17)

#### **4.4.5. Eco-tourism**

Effective eco-tourism is a challenge, involving capacity building with local communities and creating effective partnerships among the private sector, NGOs, local authorities and funding organizations. How tourism develops in biodiversity hotspots and wilderness areas, therefore, is of great consequence to the future of biodiversity conservation, as well as to the local people whose lives it will impact. The linking of tourism, biodiversity conservation and the economic wellbeing of communities, results in eco-tourism which allows for the creation of strategies that can conserve the environmentally sensitive areas while improving the quality of life for local people.

The Soutpansberg Centre may consider developing a model eco-tourism project that will host day visitors, international volunteers, potential learners and possibly offer accommodation in the form of a small lodge. It will ideally offer travellers an opportunity to experience the splendours of the biologically and culturally fascinating Soutpansberg and the traditional cultures of the VhaVenda people, thereby creating an understanding and an awareness of the importance of preserving both. It will also give visitors the opportunity to directly experience this innovative community development initiative, with little negative impact on that resource, while becoming a potential employment generator and bringing direct income to the local people. Sustainable futures are a growing trend in the world and many visiting international and African tourists are interested in options for social justice and environmental balance and are eager to support fair trade destinations.

It is often assumed that ecotourism "is a powerful force for promoting economic growth, rural development and the alleviation of poverty" (Koch, 2002:25), however there have in fact been very few studies done to "actually measure and quantify the effects of ecotourism on rural peoples' livelihoods." (Koch, 2002:25). One such study intended to fill this gap was that commissioned by the Ford Foundation in Southern Africa and carried out by Maphisa. The study identified "three specific 'streams of benefit' that flow from eco-tourism into the rural economy, namely wages, rentals or lease fees "paid to local people for the use of their communal land and

natural resources, and payments to local residents who provide services such as crafts, vegetables, building maintenance and other small business activities” (Koch, 2002:25). It was found that the returns that lodges aim to generate for local residents are usually overestimated. However, this does not necessarily appear to be the case with ecotourism ventures “which grant strong land tenure and rights for local people to use natural resources.” (Koch, 2002:25). In these instances it was noted that a combination of benefit streams flow to local residents when they are empowered with strong rights and responsibilities, thus making a significant difference to their livelihoods.

#### **4.4.6. Food and Medicine**

According to the Traditional Medicine Strategy of the World Health Organisation (WHO), “Traditional Medicine is widely used (and) is a rapidly growing health system with economic importance. In Africa, up to 80% of the population use traditional medicine to help meet their health care needs. In Asia and Latin America, populations continue to use traditional medicine because of historical circumstances and cultural beliefs” (DST, 2004:13).

The Department of Science and Technology (2004:13) state in the IKS Policy document that traditional medicine and traditional agriculture contribute towards the creation of sustainable livelihoods in South Africa, regardless of the fact that there are few structured incentives focused in this area. The Soutpansberg Centre aims to integrate traditional/local knowledge into the programmes that will be run, in order to assist in the preservation and practising of such knowledge

In the short term the priority will be on establishing a food security and natural medicine development strategy (with additional resources to assist communities in the establishment of gardens in their homesteads or communities). This approach is potentially one of the most credible routes to broad-scale community upliftment. However, the success of this strategy will depend on effective and open communication with communities, where local indigenous knowledge relating to food and medicine can be “explored and shared in a participatory fashion, yielding benefits to all parties involved” (FAO, 2005).

The Organic Farming / Permaculture and Medicinal Plant programme will serve to empower and enable emerging farmers with organic farming skills and key market linkages for organic essential oil products and high value medicinal plants.

The growth of Organic Agriculture is being driven by market demand, both for local consumption and for export, whilst organic farming is also seen as an environmentally friendly form of production. In a country where many of the farmers are very poor, labour is plentiful and much of the land is uncultivated or has lain fallow for many years, organic farming is seen as a viable alternative to “modern”, high input agriculture. For this growth to be maintained, the organic sector in South Africa must continue to become more coordinated, professional and develop closer links with the market.

Considerable potential exists for organic farming within the emerging black farming community. This programme seeks to share knowledge and technologies to create a sustainable organic farming enterprise, by grouping small farmers for both production and marketing needs, enabling them to benefit from the economies of scale. An expanding market exists both domestically and internationally for organic products, specifically for essential and cold pressed oils, there is in addition a vast market regionally for medicinal plants that are currently harvested in the wild.

The medicinal plants aspect has been added to the programme as the majority of rural people still rely on traditional healers as their first reference point when they are sick. Traditional Healers rely on harvesting their medicines in the wild which has seen the gradual depletion of medicinal plants from natural areas to the extent that some plants are now regionally extinct. There is a growing demand for indigenous medicinal plants and a decreasing supply.

The project will aim to network with local traditional healers and start the propagation and large scale production of certain plants for regional sale and to be sold around the country at the various medicinal markets. The plants



are typically drought resistant, fairly easy to grow once the correct propagation techniques are established and receive a relatively high price when sold compared to vegetables and other fresh produce.

Growing Medicinal Plants has the added advantage of having a long shelf life and being easy to store and transport. By cultivating medicinal plants community members gain access to a cash crop that has a high value and in addition they will be playing an important conservation role as the demands on our wilderness areas are reduced, thereby helping to conserve and promote biodiversity.

Understanding this indigenous knowledge and realising that it is often “location specific, and not necessarily useful in other agro-ecological or socio-economic situations” (FAO, 2005) is important in the process of creating a food security and natural medicine development strategy. It would also not be effective to design a strategy that is based only on external information without acknowledging the value of indigenous knowledge. This approach would be detrimental to the overall programme and may result in lack of support for the project.

There is also the opinion that “traditional agriculture is an ecologically tolerant and resilient crop production system that has demonstrated sustainability over long periods. It optimises production security through adaptation to the local environment. Crop security is assured through the development of a complex system involving such factors as diversity of crops, well-dispersed plantings, heterogeneous genetic resources, minimum tillage, and varying fallow, as well as sharing of food and labour. Such practices tend to be rational responses to local conditions and are logical adaptations to risks” (DST, 2004:14). On one level, this opinion justifies the importance of acknowledging and utilising indigenous knowledge systems for the attainment of sustainable food security.

Adding to this from a gender perspective it is worth noting that in many rural societies men and women often have differing skills and knowledge. For example, it is often the women who are “mainly responsible for growing and collecting food, securing water, fuel and medicines” (FAO, 2005). If this is the case in the Soutpansberg Centre project, it is important to tap the local knowledge that the women possess and ensure that they play a central role in this arena.

In South Africa there are numerous people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. It is known that a lack of food (and livelihood) security can often exacerbate the negative effects of the disease. Furthermore, the FAO (2005) points out that recent studies have emphasised the relationship between increased food security and health and local knowledge on indigenous food plants. Therefore, it is necessary to acknowledge that “Grassroots responses, which build on agrobiodiversity and local knowledge, can contribute to combating food insecurity and the impacts of HIV-AIDS” (Gari, 2003 In FAO, 2005).

Ideally, in the long term the organic farming / Permaculture graduates will act as sustainable development field officers / outreach workers and start to develop their own Permaculture systems (integrated with food security, primary health care and environmental education) throughout the surrounding Vhembe District. The Centre will also seek in the future to extend its model into NEPAD, offering courses and models of best practice. The large-scale food and medicinal plantations planted in the short and medium term will start to reach optimum production providing jobs in farming, harvesting, processing, packaging and distribution. Limpopo traditional medicinal plants may even have the opportunity to be marketed globally.

## **4.5. Economics, Governance, Management, Monitoring and Evaluation**

### **4.5.1. Economic Assessment**

Any new enterprise or project that is developed through the skills and capacity development of the beneficiaries needs to take into account issues of market linkages, especially in terms of capital investment, funding, provision for running costs, raw material procurement and the marketing of value added goods. There also needs to be some reflection on the role of local contribution in terms of kind, cash or labour (pers. comm. Kate, 2007). Since the Soutpansberg Centre aims to stimulate development and socio-economic upliftment in the Vhembe District (through organic Permaculture farming, alternative/appropriate technologies, eco-tourism and value-added products and services) it is essential that an economic assessment be conducted.

Bovarnick & Gupta, (2003:33) outline the different steps that an economic assessment includes, namely: assessing the market potential; assessing the access to the market; an estimation of costs, revenues and profits; and a review of management capacity and partnerships. They point out that one of the benefits/results of doing such an assessment is that it may indicate that a particular enterprise might be more profitable and worthwhile pursuing instead of another (e.g. organic vegetables compared with medicinal plants) and it can also help ensure that business strategies are realistic and have the finances, capacity and capability to develop further.

If the Soutpansberg Centre aims to assist community members to set up small businesses, it will need to bear in mind that the appropriate business skills training will be necessary and that it will take time before experience and confidence are gained. Additionally, “communities inexperienced with the dynamics of businesses may have different perceptions of how they will work and gain benefit. It is important to understand the local expectations for business development and manage local expectations so that stakeholders understand to what they are committing themselves” (Bovarnick & Gupta, 2003:28). This last point is also important because it will be through understanding the expectations of the different stakeholders that conflict can hopefully be avoided or managed more effectively should it arise.

#### **4.5.2. Governance**

“Good governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development.” – Former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan (UNDP, n.d.)

Graham *et al* (2003: iii) define governance as “the interactions among structures, processes and traditions that determine how power and responsibilities are exercised, how decisions are taken, and how citizens or other stakeholders have their say.” The above authors (2003:3) state that it is essentially about “power, relationships and accountability: who has influence, who decides, and how decision-makers are held accountable”. According to Pagnan (2003:1), the term ‘governance has been expanded and enhanced and now incorporates a variety of concepts from the more traditional such as “control, method of governing, management”, but also terms such as “participatory decision-making, accountability, transparency, equity, responsiveness, shared authority, stakeholder involvement, full disclosure, rule of law, etc.” Pagnan (2003:1) adds to Graham, Amos and Plumtre’s (2003) definition above, by stating that the term governance now also includes “how effectively and efficiently objectives are met and what institutional arrangements are in place to meet these new imperatives”.

It is difficult to define the principles of good governance. Graham *et al* (2003:7) have taken the United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) list of characteristics of good governance (UNDP, 1997) and grouped the principles under five broad themes (See Box 14). The authors (2003:7) do however question whether it is suitable to even suggest a universal set of sound governance principles and point out that some argue “that the emphasis given to different aspects of governance will vary in different settings because societies value outcomes differently” (Graham *et al*, 2003:7) and thus what constitutes good governance may lead “to a debate on values and cultural norms, and on desired social and economic outcomes.”(Graham *et al*, 2003:7).

#### Box 14: Five Principles of Good Governance

The Five Good Governance Principles	The UNDP Principles and related UNDP text on which they are based
1. <b>Legitimacy and Voice</b>	<p><b>Participation</b> – all men and women should have a voice in decision-making, either directly or through legitimate intermediate institutions that represent their intention. Such broad participation is built on freedom of association and speech, as well as capacities to participate constructively.</p> <p><b>Consensus orientation</b> – good governance mediates differing interests to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the group and, where possible, on policies and procedures.</p>
2. <b>Direction</b>	<p><b>Strategic vision</b> – leaders and the public have a broad and long-term perspective on good governance and human development, along with a sense of what is needed for such development. There is also an understanding of the historical, cultural and social complexities in which that perspective is grounded.</p>
3. <b>Performance</b>	<p><b>Responsiveness</b> – institutions and processes try to serve all stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Effectiveness and efficiency</b> – processes and institutions produce results that meet needs while making the best use of resources.</p>
4. <b>Accountability</b>	<p><b>Accountability</b> – decision-makers in government, the private sector and civil society organizations are accountable to the public, as well as to institutional stakeholders. This accountability differs depending on the organizations and whether the decision is internal or external.</p> <p><b>Transparency</b> – transparency is built on the free flow of information. Processes, institutions and information are directly accessible to those concerned with them, and enough information is provided to understand and monitor them.</p>
5. <b>Fairness</b>	<p><b>Equity</b> – all men and women have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being.</p> <p><b>Rule of Law</b> – legal frameworks should be fair and enforced impartially, particularly the laws on human rights.</p>

Source: Graham *et al.* (2003a:8)

The above principles are only a guideline for what good governance should entail. The governance issues that may arise regarding the Soutpansberg Centre initiative will essentially address issues relating to the role that the relevant government departments, the NGO's and the communities themselves are going to play. This is reiterated in the fact that much of the discussion regarding governance is focused on the subject of partnerships between different sectors of society and the role of public participation in decision-making (Graham *et al.*, 2003:29).

Pagnan (2003:5) provides some examples of how good governance is being implemented. The initiatives include the following:

- Making structural and organisational changes aimed at promoting more transparency and accountability
- Improving stakeholder involvement and public consultation
- Entering into co-administration arrangements
- Adjusting to a more consultative decision-making process and
- Strengthening communication and information flow with other organisations and with the public

Ideally, the Soutpansberg Centre will be able to create a governance structure that is fully representative, accountable, adaptive, transparent and efficient and that will address issues in a timely and democratic way.

### **4.5.3. Management**

Management “is understood as the application of individual and group abilities, qualifications, and resources to the definition, decision making, and implementation of short-, medium-, and long-term processes. Therefore, management is considered as the highest level of participation.” (Aguilar *et al*, 2002:32). It includes “the set of political, legal, administrative, research, planning, protection, coordination, promotion, interpretation, education, etc. actions undertaken” in any given project. (Aguilar *et al*, 2002:204).

Project management can be described as the “discipline of organizing and managing resources (e.g. money, people, materials, energy, space, provisions, communication, quality, risk, etc.) in such a way that the project is completed within defined scope, quality (or performance), time and cost constraints” (Wikipedia, 2007) or as the “facilitation of the planning, scheduling and controlling of all activities that must be done to achieve project objectives” (Lewis, 2002:4).

Good or bad management of a project can determine its long-term success or failure. The Soutpansberg Centre will need to set up a management structure that is adaptive, responsive, accountable, transparent and flexible with the capacity to learn and adjust from experience as well able to identify risks and manage them accordingly (Graham *et al*, 2003:20). Risk management according to Lewis (2002:18) is” the systematic process of identifying, analysing, and responding to project risk. It includes maximising the probability and consequences of positive events and minimising the probability and consequences of adverse events to project objectives”.

In order for a management plan to be successful and achieve its objectives, it must take into the account the economic, social and livelihood needs of people (Thomas & Middleton, 2003:55). This also involves ensuring that there is the necessary capacity (both existing within the community and from external sources) needed to manage the project effectively. For example, some of the skills necessary for the Soutpansberg Centre may include: business management; financial planning; entrepreneurial leadership; bookkeeping, accounting and auditing; sales and marketing; labour and community relations; working with financial institution and funders; and technical expertise in production and processing (Bovarnick & Gupta, 2003:48).

It should be noted that if none of these skills exist within the local communities, skills transfer and capacity building will be necessary. This process however, takes time and can be difficult with communities who have very little experience in these areas. As such, Bovarnick & Gupta (2003:48) point out that “developing capacity should be viewed as a long-term process throughout the lifetime of the project and beyond... Once a business is running, provisions should be made for ongoing capacity building so the entrepreneurs and workers can learn new skills that may be required as the enterprise develops (e.g. managing a larger labour force or using new equipment)”.

Capacity building should form an integral part of the Soutpansberg Centre management programme, with training taking place on site and taught through participative and practical instruction both by internal and where necessary external instructors. Management is complex and continuously needs to adapt to the context that presents itself while at the same time focusing on the main objectives that need to be achieved by the project.

### **4.5.4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

Monitoring and evaluation are key elements in the project process and provide essential feedback to the management team who are then able to assess what, if anything, needs to be changed or adapted in the implementation and management process. In order to determine an effective monitoring and evaluation strategy, the Soutpansberg Centre will need to define the parameters that will assess the progress of the project. The strategy will most probably include a method of mid-term evaluation and a system of rectification, if it is needed.

The purposes of monitoring and evaluation are, according to Thomas and Middleton (2003:51), “to identify whether the plan is being implemented effectively and the objectives are being met; to learn from observation of the impacts of management; and to adapt the management actions accordingly”.

Like all other aspects of this project, monitoring, evaluation and review will be more effective if all stakeholders are actively involved in the process and learn how to improve the project on a continuous basis – this includes ensuring that stakeholders are involved as constructively as possible in the implementation and management of the project (IFAD, n.d.).

Monitoring and evaluation is also carried out to assess the competence and effectiveness of management. The best way to achieve this is by evaluating the outcomes (i.e. the actual achievements) against the objectives of the project, however as Thomas and Middleton (2003:52) point out, “many objectives and management targets are not written specifically enough to suggest obvious outcomes which would indicate success”. IFAD (n.d.) however suggests that only assessing whether targets were met is insufficient and that successes and failures as well as unintentional positive and negative effects should be highlighted. Therefore, in deciding what to monitor and evaluate it is important to consider the following issues and use them as a guide: “relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of actions” (IFAD, n.d.).

## **4.6. Policy context**

### **4.6.1. South African biodiversity policy and legislation**

There is policy and legislation to support and back up the project. Section 24 of the South African Constitution (South Africa, 1996) addresses the environment and states that:

“Everyone has the right to:

- an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being
- have the environment protected for present and future generations”

It continues by stating that “The government must pass laws that:

- prevent pollution and damage to our natural resources
- promote conservation
- make sure that natural resources are developed while also promoting the economic and social development of people”

Below is a list of some of South Africa’s biodiversity policy and legislation (adapted from DEAT, 2003) that are relevant to the Soutpansberg Centre initiative:

- *The National Environment Management Act (NEMA) (Act 107 of 1998 – as amended)*  
As part of a suite of environmental legislation that was passed in order to set out the framework for principles of environmental governance in South Africa, the NEMA 1998 established a set of principles binding on all organs of state that must be taken into account in any decision-making relating to the environment. Sustainability, public participation, a precautionary approach to environmental decision-making and the accountability of government are entrenched within NEMA whose principles are in line with the context of section 24 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996).
- *The National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act 10 of 2004)* makes provision for the development of national lists of threatened and protected species. It guarantees uniformity throughout the country in affording the same conservation status to species irrespective of their geographical location. The NEMA also requires the Minister to develop a national biodiversity framework that will provide for an integrated, co-ordinated and uniform approach to biodiversity management. This framework is currently evolving through the development of the NBSAP.
- *The National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (2003 as amended)* sets out mechanisms for managing and conserving biodiversity, protecting species and ecosystems, sustainable use of indigenous biological resources and sharing of the benefits of bio-prospecting. The Act formalises the bioregional approach to biodiversity planning and management. Chapter 3 calls for the preparation of a National Biodiversity Framework, which will integrate and co-ordinate the efforts of all stakeholders, and will identify priority areas for conservation action and establishment of protected areas.

- *The Marine Living Resources Act* (Act 18 of 1998) provides for the protection and conservation of ecologically viable areas representative of South Africa's biological diversity and its natural landscapes and seascapes. The Act envisages a national register of protected areas, with a simplified classification system of Special Reserves, National Parks, Nature Reserves and Protected Environments. The Act addresses the concept of biological diversity for the first time.
- *The National Water Act* (Act 36 of 1998) provides a statutory framework for the national and provincial water management strategies, the use of water, access thereto, and subsequent administrative and financial issues.
- *The National Forests Act* (Act 84 of 1998) under the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry is primarily aimed at meeting the basic needs of present and future generations, promoting equitable access to water and redressing the results of past racial and gender discrimination. In addition, one of the key aims of the Act is to protect aquatic and associated ecosystems and their biological diversity. (DEAT, 2003)
- *The National Environment Management: Air Quality Act* (Act No. 39 of 2004) seeks to reform the law regulating air quality in order to protect the environment by providing reasonable measures for the prevention of pollution and ecological degradation. It also secures ecologically sustainable development whilst promoting justifiable economic and social development.

Since the Soutpansberg Centre initiative will involve local communities, their indigenous knowledge and technologies and the possibility of cultivating traditional medicinal plants, it will be important that project coordinators protect the rights of the communities over these potential genetic resources and technologies. There have in recent years been many international discussions around this topic but as yet, there are no international laws that have been created to support such indigenous knowledge rights (FAO, 2005). There are however, agreements and declarations (as seen below) that have been made towards the recognition of such rights.

#### **4.6.2. Agreements, Declarations and Guidelines**

There is no official legislation to protect indigenous knowledge systems. At present, the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) is the main global mechanism for intellectual property protection. "The main objectives of WIPO are to protect and promote intellectual property (IP), and to build member state capacity to derive economic benefit from their intellectual property" (DST, 2004:29).

South Africa is represented by the African Regional Intellectual Property Office (ARIPO) whose aim is to ensure the protection of community rights while at the same time encourage capacity building for the protection of intellectual property within member states. There is still, however, a need for discussions to address the issue of what constitutes 'property' for indigenous knowledge systems and for this to then form part of the above organizations.

As part of a long-term strategy, South Africa should, in partnership with other African countries, "investigate the feasibility of establishing unifying continental or regional bodies which not only address the protection and rights of an Intellectual Property System, but move beyond this to develop other appropriate instruments for IK protection" (DST, 2004:29).

The list below is provided by the FAO (2005) and includes agreements and declarations relating to natural resources, indigenous and local knowledge, genetic resources and intellectual property that may be relevant to the Soutpansberg Centre project:

- *The African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources*  
Adopted at the Summit of the African Union in Maputo, Mozambique, on 11 July 2003, the revised African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources commits member states to the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. The African Convention requires parties to

provide for fair and equitable access to genetic resources, on mutually agreed terms, as well as the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from biotechnologies, based on genetic resources and related traditional knowledge, with the providers of such resources. Acknowledging the traditional rights of local communities and indigenous knowledge, the Convention compels member states to enact national legislation to ensure that the traditional rights, intellectual property rights of local communities including farmer's rights, are respected. Also, the Convention requires that access to traditional knowledge be subject to the prior informed consent (PIC) of the communities and that communities participate in the process of planning and management of natural resources.

- *The International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (ILO 169)* states that member states should promote “the full realization of social, economic and cultural rights [of indigenous and tribal peoples] with respect to their social and cultural identity, their customs and traditions, and their institutions.” While neither of these instruments creates an explicit obligation, for nation states to implement means of vesting exclusive forms of protection rights in traditional knowledge holders, it could be argued that they support this kind of legislative measure.
- *The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources* was an important breakthrough, as it formally endorsed Farmers' Rights through a legally binding instrument at the global level. Farmers' Rights are based on the recognition that farmers play an important and crucial role in the management and conservation of plant genetic resources. They include the protection of traditional knowledge, participatory decision-making and the right to equitably participate in sharing benefits arising from the utilization of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.
- *Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*  
Article 19 of the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states that indigenous peoples “are entitled to the recognition of the full ownership, control and protection of their cultural and intellectual property. They have the right to special measures to control, develop, and protect their sciences, technologies and cultural manifestations, including human and other genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literature, designs and visual and performing arts.”
- *The Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore*  
Among others, the Intergovernmental Committee (IC) will develop recommendations for a non-binding model for intellectual property clauses. These will be included in contractual agreements governing exchanges of PGRFA between various public and private institutions and national gene banks. It will also look at other types of exchange, e.g. the supply of a wild plant with medicinal uses from an indigenous community to foreign research institutes. The IC is also examining means by which traditional knowledge (TK) can be included in patent offices' searches for prior art. For the time being, the IC is considering working towards recommending a number of TK-related journals that should be included in such searches. In preparation for the next meeting, the Secretariat will assemble a list of TK-related journals, and make an initial effort at establishing the most important for inclusion.
- *The Trade-related Intellectual Property Agreement (TRIPS)*  
Article 27(3)(b) of the TRIPS agreement requires all World Trade Organization (WTO) members to offer intellectual property protection for plant varieties in the form of patents or “effective *sui generis* protection.”

South Africa is a signatory to TRIPS and although there is no mention in the TRIPS agreement of traditional knowledge, the protection of IKS within the context of trademarks is a possibility within its framework. It is also flexible enough to allow some forms of protection. “Although collective ownership could be protected within the TRIPS framework, perpetual protection is not. Issues

of benefit sharing, joint ownership of stakeholders and indication of country of origin where the materials are found are not adequately addressed” (DST, 2004:28).

- *The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)*  
South Africa is a signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) which has three main goals namely:
  - The conservation of biodiversity,
  - Sustainable use of the components of biodiversity, and
  - Sharing the benefits arising from the commercial and other utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way (CBD, 2008)

The CBD also addresses traditional knowledge through Article 8(j): Traditional Knowledge, Innovations and Practices which states the following:

“Each contracting Party shall, as far as possible and as appropriate:

Subject to national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge innovations and practices”(CBD, 2008).

South Africa adopted the Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) Policy in November 2004. This policy is aimed at recognising, affirming, developing, promoting and protecting IKS in South Africa (DST, 2004:3) and as such addresses Article 8(j) of the CBD.

#### **Box 15: Various strategies which are possible in respect of IK protection and exploitation**

India has launched a database of IK focused on Ayurvedic medicine in Sanskrit, efficiently placing this knowledge in public domain. This is in an attempt to prevent foreign companies from patenting naturally occurring medicines and foods that have been used traditionally in Indian communities. This Digital Library records details of up to 4,500 medicinal plants, in an easily searchable database to allow those applying for patents to check whether their 'invention' is actually unpatentable 'prior art'. This strategy limits the direct benefits to IK holders although the database itself can potentially generate revenues.

Recently, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in South Africa and the SAN Community of the Kalahari concluded a Trust Agreement (the San Hoodia Benefit Sharing Trust) to share the benefits that are envisaged from the potential commercial success of a patent that followed research and development of a new technology related to a medicinal plant. In this case, the knowledge is treated as an asset of the relevant community which is transferred to an institution and developed further.

**Source: Department of Science and Technology (2004:28)**



## Box 16: Community-based Natural Resource Management

One approach to acknowledging the important role of communities is through Community-based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM). CBNRM “tends to be associated with approaches where the focal unit for joint natural resource management is the local community...In practice, CBNRM is mostly about ways in which the state can share rights and responsibilities regarding natural resources with local communities.” (Treue & Nathan, 2007:2). According to Treue and Nathan (2007:2) there are different levels of community engagement. These range from community participation without actual involvement in management to joint management between the state and the communities to a complete transfer of land and natural resources from the state to communities.

Child (in Whande, Kepe & Murphree. 2003:37) defines CBNRM as an approach that “deals with the transfer of ownership of high-value, common-property resources from the state to communities” and Jones (in Whande, Kepe & Murphree. 2003:40) states that in Southern Africa, CBNRM “is concerned with providing communal area landholders with the appropriate incentives to manage land and renewable natural resources sustainably”. Borrini-Feyerabend *et al.* (2004: 69) prefer to use the term ‘co-management’ which they describe as “a partnership by which two or more relevant social actors collectively negotiate, agree upon, guarantee and implement a fair share of management functions, benefits and responsibilities for a particular territory, area or set of natural resources”.

As can be seen from the above, there are many definitions and opinions of what CBNRM entails. The South African Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) *et al* (2003:11) in their ‘Guidelines for the implementation of community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) in South Africa’ state that successful CBNRM can deliver many benefits. For example, it can: give people access to resources; improve farming and food supply; create jobs; build small businesses; provide opportunities for education and training; build community organization; improve community health and maintain and strengthen cultural and spiritual values

Part 5 of these Guidelines (DEAT *et al*, 2003:49-51) is titled ‘Eleven Working Guidelines for Communities’, and it provides the following suggestions for communities who plan on embarking on a CBNRM project:

1. Look after the natural resources
2. Work with as many people as possible
3. Use a strong and truly representative organisation to represent local people.
4. Be very clear about what the project will do for the community.
5. Be clear about the different kinds of benefits.
6. CBNRM won't solve all the problems in the community.
7. Some people will contribute more than others—they should be properly rewarded.
8. Expect conflict.
9. Make sure that everyone knows what their duties and responsibilities are.
10. Keep everyone informed.
11. Let people know that they are part of a global community.

It is, however, important to realise that not all local communities will be receptive to a CBNRM initiative and the changes that it may require and bring. Treue & Nathan (2007) comment that “depending on the actual relations within a particular group of people, their knowledge and the conditions according to which they can make decisions, local communities may sometimes, but not always, be the most ‘appropriate’ unit for natural resource management”.

## **5. Stakeholder Analysis/Participation Analysis**

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There are a number of stakeholders from different sectors involved in this project due to the fact that it involves government, local communities and the private sector.

### **5.1. Community Public Private Partnerships**

**i. Community:**

The Kutama / Sinthemule Local Communities (KSLCs)

**ii. Public:**

**National:**

Department of Environment and Tourism (DEAT),

Department of Education (DoE);

Department of Land Affairs (DLA),

Department of Science and Technology (DST);

CSIR

**Provincial:**

The Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism, and the

Department of Agriculture of the Limpopo Provincial Government

**District:**

Vhembe District Council

**Local:**

The Makhado Local Authority

The Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism of the Limpopo Provincial Government are directly involved in the project as they are the current 'owners' of the SEEC. The General Manager of the Department is Annemie de Klerk. She has appointed Lesiba Masibe as head of the three Limpopo Biosphere Reserves (the Waterberg and Kruger to Canyon Biosphere Reserves have been approved and the Vhembe Biosphere Reserve is pending) and Langa Dombo is head of the Vhembe Biosphere Reserve process.

**iii. Private:**

**The Lesheba Trust**

John Rosmarin, trustee of the Lesheba Trust, and owner of Lesheba, has been driving this project as part of a social responsibility programme in order to meet the needs of the area. The Lesheba Trust is already involved in community upliftment projects in the area and there is a need for the development of a permanent training, education and skills development centre that offers practical on-site demonstration projects. This need has been shown through local support and interest in the project. The project would provide much needed employment opportunities and through the training of individuals as outreach workers, the community directly benefits from their skills and knowledge, ideally resulting in food security and improved quality of life. John Rosmarin has appointed Nicholas Heinemann, director of Afristar Foundation, as a subcontractor for the project.

The main activities of the Lesheba Trust include:

- MAPPP (Media, Advertising, Publishing, Printing & Packaging) SETA Skills Programme ~ Entry Level Carving NQF 2, R485 00.00 Granted.
- MAPPP SETA Mentorship Skills Programme ~ Organizing for Large Scale Production R430 000.00 Granted.
- 3 Year Programme - Environmental Education Development for Teachers to Implement OBE at 3 Vhembe District School Gardens, Nursery, Bee Keeping, Garden Signs, Solar Cookers & Nutritional Cooking Workshops, Permaculture Medicinal Garden Workshops, Nature Outward Bound Experiences and Educational Programmes for School Groups, 20 Seater Bus, R3 102 452.00, Pending NLDTF funding.

- Community Organic Farming and Medicinal Plant project in Kutuma Community, Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, R1 402 330.00, Pending NLDTF funding.
- Operational Management 12 months @ R10 000 per month, R120 000.00, John Rosmarin Family Trust – Funded

Funders involved to date:

- De Beers Fund (R310 000.00)
- Irish Government (R 340 000.00)
- Create SA (R 250 000.00)
- Arts and Culture Trust (R 75 000.00)
- MAPPP Seta (R 915 000.00)
- Conference, Workshop and Cultural Initiative Fund (CWCI) (R450 000)
- John Rosmarin (R300 000.00)

Total: R 2 640 000.00

• **Afristar Foundation (see attached company profile – Annexure C)**

Afristar Foundation is a South African Section 21 Company, registered as a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) focused on the design and implementation of sustainable development initiatives. Afristar was founded in 2003 but began operations in 2000. Afristar Foundation's fundamental aim is to motivate communities to work towards creating sustainable villages or settlements that minimise human impact on the environment by meeting basic needs as locally as possible. This can be understood in terms of four secondary objectives that support sustainable development, to;

- Develop local economic development strategies for the eradication of poverty, that utilise indigenous knowledge systems,
- Initiate and assist the process of establishing a vibrant, socially conscious, economically and environmentally sustainable culture,
- Address environmental challenges to safeguard our natural heritage
- Build institutional capacity

Afristar Foundation has extensive experience in this field (having already implemented a model Permaculture medicinal garden for training purposes at the Mokopane Multipurpose Education Facility and two community-based food and medicinal garden Permaculture projects in Dipichi Village).

Afristar Foundation will determine how to maximise resource utilisation through capitalising on the good will of the existing partnerships, through dialogue and consultation with the existing beneficiaries and stakeholders. It will be important to listen to recommendations and suggestions that will assist the successful replication of activities within the community and contribute to the achievement of sustainable livelihoods as well as foster economic and human development within an environment that is socio-culturally and ecologically sensitive. Afristar Foundation is accustomed to obtaining information in a timely, cost-effective, accurate and insightful manner as a basis for development planning and action.

Afristar Foundation has formed a multi-disciplinary team that has a powerful combination of organic agriculture design, planning and training, grassroots community project management, business strategy and development skills to undertake this project. The team has the technical knowledge of community-based natural resource management, Permaculture design, organic farming, essential oils, medicinal plants, land use ecological assessment, impact assessment, public involvement management, grassroots facilitation, landscape planning and rural development planning to enable it to address best practice in developing this project.

## **5.2. Stakeholders according to the four main groups:**

### **i. Beneficiaries/Target group**

**Direct Beneficiaries:** 100 000 (estimate)

This project is specifically aimed at the 13 settlements / local community villages at the base of the Western Soutpansberg, in near proximity to Schoemansdal, which fall under the leadership of Chiefs Kutama and Sinthemule (aka the Kutama Sinthamule Local Communities - KSLCs) which have an estimated population of 100 000. The 13 villages are inhabited predominantly by VhaVembe people who live in marginal conditions often below the poverty line with limited access to services, financial resources or skills development to improve their quality of living.

### **Box 17: The Poverty Datum Line**

#### **Commitment to Halve Poverty**

In 2000, South Africa became a signatory to the United Nation's Millennium Declaration, thereby undertaking to work with other countries "to halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of the world's people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger..."(United Nations, 2000).

"Using the 2000 Income and Expenditure Survey data, Statistics South Africa has estimated that when consuming the kinds of foodstuff commonly available to low-income South Africans, it costs R 211 per person every month (in 2000 prices) to satisfy a daily energy requirement of 2261 kilocalories. In other words, R211 is the amount necessary to purchase enough food to meet the basic daily food-energy requirements for the average person over one month. But households also need other goods and services beyond food to meet basic needs. This includes accommodation, electricity, clothing, schooling for children, transport and medical services, amongst other things. In some countries, poor households spend most of their monies on food and the food poverty line is therefore adopted as a national poverty line. Other countries have made a rough estimate of the non-food component as one-third of the food component, which is then added on top of the food poverty line to derive at a national poverty line" (Statistics South Africa, 2007).

Statistics South Africa (2007) "has attempted to estimate the non-food component of a poverty line. This can be done based on the assumption that those non-food items typically purchased by household that spend about R211 per capita per month on food can be regarded as essential, as such households forego spending on food to acquire these non-food items. The cost of such essential non-food items amounts to R111 per capita per month. Adding these figures together (R 211 and R111) gives an estimate of the minimum cost of essential food and non-food consumption per capita per month. It gives a poverty line of R 322 per capita per month in 2000-prices. This yields a poverty line of R 431 per person in 2006 prices."

At present Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) are compiling data for a comprehensive poverty survey in order to establish a "poverty line" for South Africa. The Living Conditions Survey (LCS) aims to address the "multidimensional character of poverty...to collect data to describe poverty, inform poverty indicators, measure the extent and distribution of poverty and set up a framework as a basis for future poverty measurements" (Lehohla, 2008). The creation of a poverty line will assist government in identifying poverty as well as facilitate in assessing progress in poverty reduction in line with the Millennium Development Goals.

**Indirect beneficiaries in terms of the broader community:** 1.5 million (estimate)

The beneficiaries are all resident in the Vhembe District, which stretches from Vivo in the West to the Kruger National Park in the East; the total population of the District is about 1.5 million. There are large numbers of local rural communities on the Eastern Soutpansberg around Thohoyandou who could classify as beneficiaries. A third category of potential beneficiaries are the successful land claimant groups in the area who will be able to gain and share knowledge at the Centre. The schools in the sub-region are also a target group and possible future beneficiaries.

**ii. Implementers**

The KSLCs and the Lesheba Trust supported by the following:

- The Soutpansberg Centre Trust (to be established)
- Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism of the Limpopo Provincial Government are the registered owners of the property and are in the process of negotiating with the Department of Education to have a greater involvement in a revised programme to be established at the Schoemansdal Centre. The same Department is also the body that is promoting and coordinating the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve application.
- The Makhado Local Authority together with the abovementioned traditional leadership has been included in the current discussion on the future implementation and plans for the Soutpansberg Centre. There is a group of local private landowners who are also involved in the implementation of the new plans.
- The Department of Science and Technology in conjunction with the CSIR are also participating in the aspects of the project which relate to research, training as well as the establishment of agro-processing facilities using medicinal and aromatic plants.
- Afristar Foundation, (see attached company profile) a non-profit organization which specializes in the training of organic farming and Permaculture techniques will also be involved, especially regarding the implementation and management of the organic Permaculture farms.
- Dharamitra (see attached document – Annexure E) will also be a potential implementer.

**iii. Decision-makers**

KSLCs and the Lesheba Trust will be the primary decision-makers but they will be supported by the PMU and the implementers above.

**iv. Financiers**

Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism of the Limpopo Provincial Government, Department of Science and Technology, European Union as well as other potential local and international funders e.g. NDA, USAID

**5.3. Ownership and Management of the Project**

The ownership and management of the project will lie with the aforementioned Soutpansberg Centre Trust (as previously stated the Trust will include representatives from the following: the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environment of the Limpopo Provincial Government, the Vhembe District Council, the Makhado Municipality, the Lesheba Trust (with Afristar Foundation as a subcontractor).

The future of the Soutpansberg Centre will rely heavily on the successful establishment of constructive, honest working partnerships between the stakeholders - which include the implementers of the project, the local communities, relevant local and provincial government departments, educational institutions, NGO's, donors/funders - and any other interested parties.

**5.4 The Soutpansberg Centre Steering Committee ('the SCSC' / 'the Committee')**

This Committee comprises about 30 people with representatives from the full range of stakeholders, including the Kutama Biosphere Committee, representative from the Limpopo MEC for Economic Development and Tourism, Kutama and Sinthamule Local Communities, the Thohoyandou and Makhado Municipalities, the Lesheba Trust has been established and within this committee it is essential that all the stakeholders feel they can express their opinions and thus define their roles in relation to each other.

### 5.5. The Project Management Unit (PMU)

The Committee appointed Afristar Foundation as head of the Project Management Unit whose responsibility is to implement the project. The PMU was originally established in order to manage the Sustainable Livelihoods Exhibition (see Box 16) that was held at the SEEC in September 2007.

The functions of the PMU will be to: develop a detailed business plan; secure institutional support for the project; obtain funding and implement the project and manage the project thereafter. These functions include reviewing the project aims and objectives and verifying the approach and methodology.

### 5.6. Other relevant resources

- Vhembe Biosphere Committee
- Venda University
- Thohoyandou Greening Group

In summary, the Soutpansberg Centre will be aimed at providing a facility that is focused on the socio-economic upliftment of the surrounding rural population and will as a priority include these stakeholders in the entire process.

### Box 18: The Biosphere and Sustainable Livelihoods Exhibition

One activity that recently took place and was coordinated by the Lesheba Community Development Trust in Partnership with Afristar Foundation, was a Sustainable Livelihoods Exhibition (titled “Biosphere & Sustainable Livelihoods”). The exhibition was hosted by the Lesheba Community Development Trust in conjunction with the Department of Economic Development Environment and Tourism of the Limpopo Province and took place from the 27 August 2007 to the 1 September 2007 at the Schoemansdal Environmental Education Centre. The Conference, Workshop and Cultural Initiative Fund (CWCI) which is an EU–South African Partnership provided 70% of the funding for this expo. The other 30% was provided by the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environment which is also responsible for coordinating the Biosphere Reserve application. This direct institutional interest, participation and support could form the basis of the Schoemansdal transformation.

A formal Committee based on a foundation of good partnerships and communication between different stakeholders was established for the exhibition. It comprised about 30 people and included the full range of stakeholder representatives including the Kutama Biosphere Committee, representative from the Limpopo MEC for Economic Development and Tourism, Kutama and Sinthamule Local Communities, the Thohoyandou and Makhado Municipalities. The creation of this committee ensured that all stakeholders were active participants in decisions that may have had a direct influence on their livelihoods and their futures

The aim of the exhibition was to focus on raising awareness and communicating key environmental areas that can be utilised to improve rural populations’ quality of life. These areas included: the role of woman in development, innovative indigenous knowledge systems and appropriate technology suitable for rural communities all centred around cultural upliftment, the environment and education. One of the aims of the exhibition was to provide the future beneficiaries, implementers and financiers of the SEEC with an insight into the potential options and possibilities for the Schoemansdal Centre. The Expo confirmed the need for the establishment of a centre for Sustainable Development as well as for a training and skills development programme.

### 6. Problem Analysis / Situation Analysis

The following information was gathered through interviews with community leaders, members and groups as well as through personal observation during extensive time spent in the area. Other sources and methods of information collation included a thorough review of existing literature, internet research and communication with relevant people involved in the project.

There are various problems in the area ranging from widespread poverty to HIV/AIDS. The area is largely rural with minimal economic opportunities and a large population<sup>5</sup> which is “characterised by underdevelopment, poverty<sup>6</sup> and lack of skills” (Vhembe District Municipality, 2008 ).The majority of adults have little or no income and thus the major source of income is pensions and grants (pers. comm. Heinemann, 2007). Unemployment<sup>7</sup> is one of the key problems that has contributed to the poverty in the area. The education system is not sufficiently aimed at addressing the real local issues which relate to the environment and the creation of economic sustainable livelihoods. Environmental education is lacking and there is little knowledge about what sustainable development is. There is a vast amount of Indigenous Knowledge in the area; however, this knowledge is not being practised sufficiently. It is also disappearing quickly due to the fact that it is not being passed down to the next generation. Most households use firewood for cooking purposes which is a challenge to villagers due to distance, time & security. Sanitation is also a major problem with most villagers using a pit latrine system generally quite far from the house. The area can be described as arid / semi-arid and experiences frequent droughts due to the limited rainfall (approximately 500mm per annum) and a relatively limited supply of both ground and surface water resources with few catchment areas (Vhembe District Municipality, 2008 ). This poses a big challenge to agriculture. Add to this a poorly resourced authority, an Apartheid legacy that is still to be overcome and the prevalence of HIV/AIDS<sup>8</sup> and one has a clearer picture of why a project such as this one is so important.

Below is a detailed problem analysis:

- There is a wealth of natural heritage and social capital within the KSLCs that has the potential to be mobilised to facilitate economic upliftment and sustainable livelihoods through community-driven development, but has as yet been untapped and underutilised.
- There has until now been more of a focus on the communities’ problems without an adequate assessment of their assets (i.e. their abilities and skills) and knowledge.
- The poverty that is rife in the area demonstrates a clear need for livelihood security and justifies the possibility of adopting the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach as one method of assessing the situation through a community participation process.
- The land reform/restitution process in the Limpopo Province and in South Africa in general has been slow and the potential for sustainable community development projects, such as the proposed Soutpansberg Centre, to assist conflict resolution in the land restitution process has not been fully explored.
- Many people in the area live in informal settlements with little sanitation. There is thus a need for improved infrastructure and importantly housing.
- There is a lack of community participation/involvement in socio-economic upliftment programmes in the area.

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<sup>5</sup> According to Community Survey 2007 (Vhembe District Municipality, 2008), the population figure for the District was 1,240,044. The Vhembe District thus contributes 23.88% of the total population of Limpopo Province (which was 7,591,138 according to the same 2007 survey).

<sup>6</sup> According to the Global Insight, June 2006 (in Vhembe District Municipality, 2008) the Human Development Index (HDI) for the Vhembe District in 2006 was 0.51 which is not really sufficient for economic development. In order for the economy of the region to develop to an acceptable level, efforts need to be made to ensure further development in human capacity (Vhembe District Municipality, 2008).

<sup>7</sup> According to Community Survey 2007 (Vhembe District Municipality, 2008):

- the number of people unemployed is 130 549;
- the number of people employed is 194 386.
- the number of people not economically active is 359 146
- It should be noted that the rural areas in the Vhembe District, such as the KSLCs, have a proportionately much higher percentage of people unemployed due to the lack of job opportunities.

<sup>8</sup> According to the Department of Health and Social Development 2005/2006 figures (Vhembe District Municipality, 2008) the HIV/AIDS prevalence of the Vhembe District was 14.2% in 2006 (roughly half of the 2006 national average which was 29.1%).

- Gender, equity and youth issues: There appears to be limited family planning and health education in the area. Although there are campaigns to inform people on HIV/AIDS and other health issues, the organisations that run them are faced with financial and management challenges, including: lack of resources and funding; failure or insufficient budget by government departments to budget for HIV/AIDS programs; lack of commitment and poor mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS programmes (Vhembe District Municipality, 2008)
- The population of the Vhembe District is characterized by underdevelopment, poverty and lack of skills (Vhembe District Municipality, 2008). According to a Global Insight June 2006 chart (in Vhembe District Municipality, 2008) showing population of the Vhembe District according to age and gender:
  - 51.3% of the population in the District is under the age of 20 years;
  - 37.74% of the population is below the working age (i.e. below the age of 15 years);
  - 4.8% is above the working age (i.e. above the age of 65 years);
  - 57.46% of the population qualify as work/labour force (i.e. between the ages of 15 and 65 years)
  - Therefore, 42.54% of the population are legally dependant on the work / labour force

Therefore, the percentage of the population that qualifies as labour force could potentially support the 42.54% who are dependant on them. However, this will only be possible if unemployment is significantly reduced. (Vhembe District Municipality, 2008). The Vhembe District's population is predominantly young (75% are below the age of 35 years) and it is this group that should be acquiring the necessary skills and training to assist local socio-economic development and upliftment in the area.

- There is minimal research and ever-decreasing usage of indigenous/traditional/local knowledge systems and there is a need for their preservation.
- Appropriate technologies and skills development have the potential to create socio-economic upliftment and provide employment opportunities, but this has yet to be put into action.
- Agriculture: There is relatively low rainfall and groundwater in the area which has a negative impact on food production; there is a need for resources, equipment and training to assist in farming activities.
- Food and medicine: HIV/AIDS and malnutrition are prevalent in the area and there is minimal food security. There are clinics and hospitals<sup>9</sup> in the area, but problems exist relating to basic services such as road accessibility, water and electricity and there is a shortage of medical emergency services (Vhembe District Municipality, 2008). There is use of traditional medicine, but the skills and knowledge are not being passed on and are thus decreasing.
- Environmental and sustainable development education: the present education system does not sufficiently address sustainable development issues; there are few post-school and further education and training opportunities.
- Training and skills development: There are minimal skills in the area that would contribute towards income generating activities, sustainable economic upliftment and in particular food security.
- Unique environment of the Soutpansberg: The Soutpansberg Biosphere Reserve has not yet been established and there is a limited knowledge of the benefits that the Biosphere could bring to the local communities.
- There is an opportunity for eco-tourism (involving fair trade) to contribute to socio-economic upliftment in the area, but this is underutilised and needs to be further investigated.
- There is no real model in South Africa for sustainable community development.

## 7. Objectives Analysis

The project intends to help alleviate poverty, provide environmental education, promote and preserve indigenous knowledge, offer HIV/AIDS education and encourage cultural upliftment amongst other things. However, in order to alleviate poverty and create sustainable socio-economic long-term benefits for the communities, serious

<sup>9</sup> The District's health services are offered within the following establishments:

1 Regional Hospital; 6 District Hospitals; 110 Clinics; 3 Gateway Clinics; 1 Health Information Centre; 19 Mobile Clinics. In terms of the provisions made, an area needs to have a population of at least 10 000 to qualify for a clinic. However in areas where these criteria cannot be fulfilled, mobile clinics can be accessed. In terms of the regulations, people are not allowed to walk for than 5 km to access health services. (Vhembe District Municipality, 2008)



consideration needs to be given to skills training for job creation and entrepreneurial activities in the area. The project plans to raise awareness as well as showcase and communicate practical solutions to environmental and rural development problems. The communities need to be encouraged to 'buy-in' to sustainable development principles and to use environmental resources in a sustainable way – this will only occur if there are sufficient and effective environmental education programmes.

The project aims to promote sustainable low-cost holistic approaches to rural development. This would incorporate indigenous cultural knowledge and the integration of ideas and practices relating to:

- land use,
- shelter,
- energy conservation and use,
- diet and health,
- waste management,
- recycling, as well as
- the implementation of co-operative principles and best achievable environmental practices that can be used to solve issues of food security, primary health care and provide support to people living with HIV / AIDS.

The project aims to “Inspire, Inform and Enable grass roots sustainable development in our communities. It plans to contribute towards the development of a strategy towards sustainable living...” (pers. comm. Heinemann, 2007).

Possible solutions to the above problems lie in the area of livelihood security which includes aspects such as: access to adequate/improved nutrition, improved access to health care as well as the provision of shelter. The project will focus on identifying community needs through a detailed public participation exercise with the aim of establishing training programmes conducive to job creation and sustainable entrepreneurial activities in the area. The programmes will explore employment opportunities utilising indigenous knowledge and will centre on agriculture and the cultivation of medicinal and aromatic plants both of which could directly affect future food and health prospects.

This will require an audit of the natural resources in the identified area to determine arable, marginalised land, ownership, current use patterns as well as to identify the available social capital (including a skills audit) in order to mobilize such a project.

This project represents a unique social development intervention that seeks to develop a multi-pronged community-based income and job creation strategy in the rural villages of the Vhembe District. The project has the potential, through skills transference, to improve the economy in the target area by adding substantial value to the rural development process, thereby leading to increased agricultural/rural productivity and serving to reduce poverty.

### **7.1. Overall objective**

The long term overall objective of the project is for there to be poverty alleviation and the achievement of sustainable rural livelihoods (with special reference to sustainable rural development in the Limpopo Province) through the creation of sustainable socio-economic long-term benefits for the communities.

### **7.2. The Project Purpose/Immediate Objective**

The project's immediate objective is the establishment of a unique rural centre for sustainable development. The Centre will provide education, training, skills transfer and capacity building programmes and will act as a model for sustainable community development. It will aim to create socio-economic upliftment based on new and existing skills, abilities and knowledge of the local communities.

The following are the immediate objectives of the project. They describe the benefits which the beneficiaries derive from the project and show why the project is needed.

- Training and skills development - Skills development resulting in employment opportunities, livelihood and food security and sustainable socio-economic long-term benefits for the communities.
- Appropriate Technologies and Skills Development: Practising of sustainable development principles and appropriate / alternative technologies by the communities to create socio-economic upliftment. Ideally this information and knowledge will be practised by the relevant authorities and shared via word-of-mouth amongst the involved communities as well as through education programmes run at the Soutpansberg Centre.
- Environmental and Sustainable Development education – Sustainable Development issues are addressed at the Soutpansberg Centre which provides an official further education opportunity.
- Indigenous/traditional/local knowledge systems - Practising of indigenous knowledge systems and the passing down, recording and preservation of that knowledge.
- Unique environment of the Soutpansberg and the Biosphere Reserve – The Soutpansberg Centre complements and adds value to the Soutpansberg Biosphere initiative which in turn brings benefits to the communities once it is established, especially in the area of sustainable livelihoods. This will foster economic and human development which is socio-culturally and ecologically sensitive.
- Socio-economic upliftment and management - To contribute to rural upliftment through integrating environmental management with local economic development objectives.
- Economic assessment - To identify viable business opportunities that could establish a sustainable economic base for job creation and community upliftment.
- Model for sustainable community development - To develop and manage the Soutpansberg Centre as a local self-sustaining best-practice model for development that showcases indigenous knowledge, appropriate technologies and skills development for poverty alleviation.
- Through the establishment of the Soutpansberg Centre, the social capital within the KSLCs and their local knowledge can be mobilised to encourage economic upliftment, livelihood and food security.
- The establishment of an eco-tourism venture (involving fair trade) to contribute to socio-economic upliftment in the area.
- The communities participate and have a direct involvement in the project.
- Gender, equity and youth issues: Education regarding these issues is included in the programme. Increased awareness is created around the important roles that women and the youth play.
- The housing and sanitation situation for the KSLCs is improved through the practical application of appropriate and alternative technologies combined with indigenous knowledge systems.
- Agriculture: Techniques are employed to utilise rainwater as efficiently as possible. Resources, equipment and training integrating indigenous knowledge are provided to assist farming activities – thus food production and food security are improved.
- Food and medicine: Due to the creation of food and medicinal gardens at the Centre and within the communities, food security and nutrition is improved.

### **7.3. Results/Outputs**

The main deliverables / outputs of the project which are intended to communicate practical solutions to environmental and rural development problems are outlined below:

- The Soutpansberg Centre for Sustainable Development has been designed and constructed based on environmental and sustainability principles utilising natural and alternative methods of building, energy production, sanitation and re-use of waste products.
- Hands-on outcomes-based environmental education (relevant to the national Curriculum), skills training and capacity building programmes relating to sustainable livelihoods, organic Permaculture farming and appropriate technology is being offered to 20-30 learners.
- The Centre has partnered with the appropriate SETA as an accredited training centre for skills transfer and capacity development and learnerships are being hosted on NQF levels for community members.
- Hands-on practical working examples / models that illustrate organic Permaculture farming principles and indigenous knowledge systems have been designed and laid out e.g. food and indigenous medicinal gardens.

- Indigenous knowledge is integrated into all elements of the programme and is being recorded for future preservation.
- The Soutpansberg Biosphere initiative is being promoted and complemented by the Centre, especially in the area of sustainable livelihoods, to foster economic and human development which is socio-culturally and ecologically sensitive.

Below is a potential training curriculum table and development model outlining the outputs that the Soutpansberg Centre will deliver over a 3 to 5 year period as well as the components of each deliverable.

**Box 19: Potential Training Curriculum Table and Development Model**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Components</b>
<b>Development Model</b>	Appropriate technology Alternative technologies Sustainable land use Permaculture ~ Organic agriculture Outdoor activity based education Resource centre
<b>Alternative technologies</b>	Solar Wind Water heaters Sanitation
<b>Appropriate technologies</b>	Solar cookers Water heaters Ram pumps Hand pumps Local innovations – wind up transistor radio's Models of human waste treatment
<b>Educational</b>	Permaculture Training Venue Permaculture (principles and practices) Community-based natural resource management plan Regional Permaculture plan Outdoor active learning environment Environmental education, Water, Soil, Waste, Plants and Trees Appropriate and Alternative Technologies Skills development & transference Animal farmyard
<b>Training</b>	Organic Farming and Gardening Harvesting and Storage Animal Care and Maintenance Buildings and Structures in Permaculture Training Skills for Small Groups Project Administration and Finance Permaculture Projects and Career Options
<b>Greening</b>	Permaculture Afforestation (forestry and silviculture) Commercial crops (incl. Seed Saving and Seed Banks) Indigenous medicine Nursery – trees, flowers, herbs, seedlings
<b>Information / Resource Centre</b>	Internet Library Cultural
<b>Restaurant</b>	Organic food African cuisine

<b>Craft centre</b>	Crafts Art works Seeds Booklets Market produce
<b>Capacity building</b>	Permaculture designers Rural greening Appropriate technologies Alternative technologies Management Environmental education Organisational development
<b>Construction</b>	Traditional technologies with modern architecture Solar efficiency
<b>Tourism</b>	Eco-friendly venue Modern facilities
<b>Health</b>	Preventative health care Traditional medicines Building the immune system Fighting HIV / AIDS proactively
<b>Sanitation</b>	Composting Toilets Reed Beds
<b>Residential</b>	Eco Village for workers, labourers, lecturers

Source: Heinemann, N. (2007)

## 8. Plan of Activities

Prior to the implementation of the Soutpansberg Centre project, the division of roles and responsibilities between the parties as well as the roles of the target group will be clearly defined. Until further investigation reveals otherwise, it appears that there are no other projects of this nature being implemented by any other organisation in the same sector or province and so there is minimal risk of duplication or conflict.

The activities should be:

- Inspiring - instilling the desire to change by practical example
- Informing - feeding the desire to change by providing the most appropriate information
- Enabling - providing effective and continuing support to put the change into practice.

The entire project process should be inclusive and transparent and should adopt where possible a bottom-up approach. It is essential that there is community involvement (i.e. that the community plays an active role in the project's development) and support for the project.

The following activities are based on the above outputs of the previous section and are categorised under two main steps:

1. Stakeholder Consultation and Participatory design
2. Design and Construction of the Soutpansberg Centre

The activities following the achievement of the above two steps and the establishment of the Soutpansberg Centre will relate to the concepts below and the roles they will play.

- Education, training and skills development
- Organic farming and Permaculture;
- Appropriate / alternative technologies which can be applied in the fields of building, re-use of waste, water, heating, lighting, cooking and sanitation;

- Outcomes-based environmental education and communication of the basic tenets of sustainable development;
- Indigenous Knowledge;
- Economic and entrepreneurial opportunities associated with sustainable development;
- The Soutpansberg Biosphere initiative

### **Step 1a: Stakeholder Consultation**

“The established trend is that lack of awareness, education and information around development lead to lack of interest, commitment and sustainability of such a project. The key to any successful community development initiative is the active participation of stakeholders and the general public in its planning and implementation” (Pers. comm. Heinemann, 2007)

It is important to begin with a public participation (PP) programme incorporating formal and informal dialogue, consultation and coordination with stakeholders. This will enable a broad and inclusive outreach program using an assortment of techniques that will facilitate and inspire effective communication among all parties. The public participation aspect of the project is fundamental in assisting and guiding a project in order to achieve maximum impact on poverty reduction. Afristar Foundation will lead this process and apply a number of outreach tools to support the Public Participation Process and develop consensus, with the express aim:

- To ascertain from the stakeholders and especially the communities, through a community process, what kind of a project, if any, is necessary and to identify what needs and expectations exist.
- To communicate and discuss the project purpose and need clearly, and effectively facilitate the accomplishment of the project goal.
- To provide general and technical information to interested groups and individuals in the project area.
- To obtain broad community input and ideas from interested parties and provide forums for affected parties to express their comments.
- To facilitate effective two-way communication between the public and Afristar Foundation.
- To identify community needs with the aim of establishing economic operations conducive to job creation and sustainable entrepreneurial activities in the area.
- To identify available human capital and social capital assets in the region that can be utilized and mobilised most effectively and constructively to implement the project.
- To mobilise the community to assist in developing the project, detailing economic activities for rural job creation and community upliftment.

The initial key target audiences for the PP process include:

- Communities of the villages concerned
- Community Based Organisations
- Tribal Authorities
- Traditional Healers
- Local Government in Relevant Departments
- Provincial Government

The public participation process will identify stakeholders (both individuals and communities) who have expressed support to become involved in the programme. There will, however, be a limited degree of community mobilisation (largely not to create expectations until funding is approved for the implementation stage, after which the structures identified during the public participation process will be formalised).

Note: The proposed project falls within the aforementioned Biosphere process – and especially applies to the idea of a Biosphere ‘demonstration project’. The ‘Biosphere & Sustainable Livelihoods’ Exhibition (the Expo) aimed to raise awareness of the proposed Biosphere Reserve as well as to demonstrate the various benefits that may flow from the project and the opportunities that could be used to improve local rural communities’ quality of life. Representatives from both the Kutama and Sinthemule communities were jointly involved in the

conception, organisation and implementation of the Expo. Up to 2000 people attended including local community members, politicians and schools. The local communities indicated strong support for the establishment of a Centre for Sustainable Development as well as a need for this kind of project (involving a training and skills development programme) on a permanent basis. It is also worth noting that representatives from the KSLCs are also involved with the Biosphere application. This project is therefore in a sense a natural extension of both the Expo and the Biosphere Reserve process and has been agreed to in principle by the communities. The next step, however, is a full community involvement process to determine an implementation programme.

### **Step 1b: Participatory Design**

Good practices and activities for project design include:

- Involving stakeholders in a participatory process;
- Completing a detailed situation analysis;
- Ensuring a logical intervention strategy;
- Identifying cross-cutting objectives;
- Planning for capacity development and sustainability; and
- Planning for learning and adaptation.

The participatory design process will be aimed at:

- Outlining a framework for the development of sustainable livelihood development programmes as the basis of an education, training, capacity building, skills transference, mentorship and implementation programme to empower rural people in sustainable livelihoods.
- Guiding the overall project strategy and the creation of a detailed proposal for the 'Centre'. The aims and objectives of the proposal will then be reviewed and broken down into areas requiring additional information and action.
- Identifying tasks and verifying information relating to them as well as establishing networks with the relevant stakeholders.
- Providing input from all stakeholders with regards to the establishment of the Soutpansberg Centre in relation to its design and construction as well as to the programme elements and their implementation.
- Ensuring effective project operations that will ultimately lead to the creation of a pilot training and implementation programme as a model enabling communities to use and extend their inherent indigenous knowledge to empower them to improve their standard of living.

The processes of public participation and participatory design should lead and contribute to the development of a Business Plan.

### **Step 2a: Design of the Centre**

The Soutpansberg Centre will need to adopt a holistic approach to its work; integrating ideas and practice relating to land use, shelter, energy conservation and use, diet and health, waste management, recycling and the implementation of co-operative principles and best achievable environmental practices. The Centre should attempt to address every aspect of the average lifestyle of which the key focus areas may include:

- education / training / skills development for job creation
- renewable energy sources,
- environmental / green building,
- energy efficiency,
- organic growing / farming / Permaculture
- waste ~ alternative sewage systems e.g. creation of a wetland system, Biolytix system, composting toilets, greywater systems
- recycling of building materials and other waste
- medicinal plants
- an information centre
- biodiversity

- water issues

The design process of the Soutpansberg Centre may take into consideration some of the following characteristics of ecological design from Van der Ryn & Cowan, 1996 (In Ecological Solutions & GENOA Inc., 2002:19):

- Energy sources: wherever feasible use renewable energy
- Materials: utilise materials designed with reuse, recycling, flexibility, ease of repair and durability in mind i.e. try and build with ecologically friendly materials
- Pollution: in order to minimise waste ensure that the scale and composition of wastes conform to the ability of ecosystems to absorb them
- Use toxic substances extremely sparingly and in very special circumstances
- Design with sensitivity to the ecological context: i.e. integrate the design with knowledge of local soils, vegetation, materials, culture, climate and topography – build in ways that have a minimal impact on the land and the local ecology
- Design with sensitivity to the cultural context of the area: i.e. respect and nurture traditional knowledge as well as local materials and technologies
- Maintain biological, cultural and economic diversity
- Integrate multiple design disciplines and utilise a wide range of sciences

In order to create buildings that take into account the above principles, the design of the Centre may require input from specialists, for example: architects, landscapers, Permaculture / organic farming specialists (Afristar Foundation), appropriate and alternative technology experts amongst others. These specialists may also be required to draw up plans for the next step namely the layout and construction of the Soutpansberg Centre. The initial buildings will probably need to include training facilities, accommodation for students and lecturers, a kitchen, storage space and ablution facilities.

The land that is to be used for the construction of the ‘Centre’ (the SEEC property) also needs to be approved by the owner of that land, namely the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environment of the Limpopo Provincial Government. Layout of where the buildings are intended to be placed also needs to be determined.

### **Step 2b: Construction of the Soutpansberg Centre**

The activities related to this step may include the following:

- Sourcing, costing and acquiring/procurement of materials for construction (including building materials as well as materials for renewable energy (e.g. solar panels) and eco-friendly waste and sewerage systems (e.g. composting toilets)
- Sourcing, costing and organisation of labour (which should be local)
- Sourcing, costing and acquiring/procurement of necessary equipment (e.g. a brick maker)
- Training in the use of equipment and other necessary skills for the construction of the Centre (e.g. brick making)
- Field preparation costs including costs for labour, compost, seeds etc
- Planting costs
- Construction of buildings and other necessary infrastructure

It is proposed that the construction of the necessary buildings utilise local labour and adopt appropriate and alternative technologies in conjunction with local indigenous knowledge in order to create buildings that are environmentally friendly and ecologically efficient with regards to energy, waste and sanitation. Additionally materials that are available onsite should be used e.g. the onsite manufacturing of sun-dried mud bricks.

### **Step 3: Ongoing operations and maintenance (however this is outside the scope of this proposal)**

See Project Time Schedule (section 9.2) for details

## **8.1. Project Organisation and Implementation**

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The organisation and implementation of this project is partly dependent upon the existing capacity and organisational structures but also upon other necessary capacity that still needs to be established in order for the project to go forward.

As previously mentioned (Section 5), there are already structures in place that are driving the project. These include the Lesheba Trust (with Afristar Foundation as a subcontractor) and the Soutpansberg Centre Steering Committee (the Committee) with support and representation from the Kutama and Sinthemule communities; the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environment of the Limpopo Provincial Government, the Vhembe District Council and the Makhado Municipality. The Vhembe Biosphere Reserve Committee is also in favour of the development of the Centre as it will hopefully complement the principles of the Reserve once it is established.

Afristar Foundation was appointed by the Committee as head of the Project Management Unit whose functions and activities will include the following: development of a detailed business plan; the securing of institutional support for the project; the procurement of funding and the implementation and management of the project thereafter.

It is envisaged that the Soutpansberg Centre will be controlled and managed by a Trust ('the Soutpansberg Centre Trust') which still needs to be established and which will comprise a cross-section of community, public and private Trustees. It is proposed that the Soutpansberg Centre Trust appoints a full-time Executive Committee which will consist of professionally qualified individuals with experience in sustainable development together with suitably qualified local community representatives.

It is important to have the organisational structures in place, but it is essential to ensure that there is the necessary capacity in order to implement the project successfully. Although there is existing capacity both with the communities (which still needs to be assessed) and from external sources, capacity building and skills transfer for the Soutpansberg Centre project still need to be developed. A primary objective will be to create capacity building and skills transfer over a period of 5 years in order to ensure that there will be strong community ownership and therefore acceptance by the KSLCs, however, the process should continue beyond this period. Bovarnick & Gupta (2003:48) point out that capacity development and skills transfer take time and should be viewed as long-term processes that will last the duration of the project and beyond. Capacity building should be continual throughout the project in order to encourage new and advanced skills development to meet the growing needs of the project.

There are many skills, both organisational and institutional (which will ideally be sourced internally from the existing stakeholders and communities but will also probably include external resources) that will be necessary for the implementation and future management of the project. These include amongst others the following skills: financial planning; fundraising; accounting; bookkeeping; leadership, administrative and managerial skills; technical knowledge and expertise and skills relating to management of labour and community issues.

The project has government, community and private stakeholder support as well as structures in place to assist in its implementation. However, for the necessary processes of stakeholder consultation and participatory design and the design and construction of the Soutpansberg Centre, funding for these initial phases of the project is still needed.

As mentioned, in order for this project process to reach the next level, a detailed business plan needs to be developed. This process will be driven by Afristar Foundation and supported by the Lesheba Trust to help mould the final product. The information from the stakeholder consultation and participatory design process and the consultation regarding the design and construction of the Centre will be fed into the development of a business plan.



The following phases which may be included in the development of a business plan (provided by Afristar Foundation) cover all aspects including the longer term goals of the project.

### **Development of the Business Plan:**

Afristar Foundation utilises a five-phase business plan development methodology:

#### **Phase I: Discovery:**

The first phase of Afristar Foundations business plan development strategy is discovery. During this phase, sessions are conducted to:

- Ensure that the communities' needs are met so that they be addressed in the business plan
- Identify strategic and research questions to be addressed during the project

#### **Phase II: Market Research:**

Market research validates a business opportunity. Market research can also uncover threats to the business as well as opportunities. Afristar Foundation will conduct customized market research for each potential product area with regards to:

- The size of the market
- Market trends
- Customer wants and needs
- The competitive landscape

Afristar Foundation also conducts "benchmarking research" during this phase of the business plan development project. It involves the identification of other companies that have succeeded and/or failed with similar businesses in the past. From this research, the key success factors and pitfalls to avoid in pursuing our clients' businesses are identified.

#### **Phase III: Business Strategy**

Based on the research conducted in Phase II, Afristar Foundation will start to refine the business strategy and the action plan. Business and revenue models and marketing, partnership, human resources, and operations strategies will be reviewed to ensure that they are sound. A Financial model will be developed and refined, with realistic assumptions for all revenue and expense drivers.

#### **Phase IV: Communications Strategy**

Once the business strategy is finalized, Afristar Foundation will work with the communities to determine how to best position them in the business plan. Critical issues such as ownership models, equity and the unique aspects of the business will be addressed in the Executive Summary. An outline of the entire business plan in which key points are identified will be included.

#### **Phase V: Communications Documentation**

Afristar Foundation will develop all of the key communications documents including the following:

- Executive Summary: a succinct synopsis of the business plan that highlights the key points raised within the plan.
- Strategic Business Plan: a full description of the business that answers the audience's key questions.
- Financial Model: an assessment of the amount of capital the project needs, the proposed use of these funds, and the expected future earnings, organized into Projected Income Statements, Balance Sheets and Cash Flow Statements.
- Slide Presentation: An interactive presentation that guides the audience through a description of the project and their potential return on investing/working together.

## **9. Plan of Resources, inputs in order to implement the activities**

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### **9.1. Plan of Resources**

The following section addresses the resources that will be necessary in order to implement the project. The resources needed depend on the activities that will be performed at the Soutpansberg Centre.

#### **9.1.1. Technical expertise**

In order to assist with training and support capacity development and skills transfer, individuals / organisations with technical expertise in the following fields may need to be employed:

- Permaculture / Organic farming and gardening / Sustainable land use – Afristar Foundation
- Community-based natural resource management – Afristar Foundation
- Environmental education (incorporating water, soil, waste, plants) - Afristar Foundation
- Rural greening – Afristar Foundation
- Buildings and Structures in Permaculture – Afristar Foundation
- Appropriate and Alternative Technologies – e.g. Agama Energy
- Indigenous medicine – Local Traditional Healer(s)
- Local Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Traditional technologies – Local Community members who still practice this knowledge
- Project Administration and Finance training – relevant training organisation / individual
- Management and organisational development training - relevant training organisation / individual
- Training in use of equipment – e.g. brick making skills

Initial project team (managed by Afristar Foundation) consisting of:

- 1 x Project manager
- 1 x Assistant project manager
- 1 x Research Assistant
- 3 x Field Officers
- 1 x Public Participation Officer
- 1 x Business Plan Development Manager
- 3 x specialists and trainers - research, analysis, technical

Other capacity that will be needed:

- Management capacity
- Labour Force
- Soutpansberg Centre personnel

Outside the scope of this project, but will be needed:

- Business management
- Entrepreneurial leadership
- Financial and business planning
- Bookkeeping, accounting and auditing
- Sales and marketing

#### **9.1.2. Equipment / training in the use of equipment**

Equipment will be needed for both the educational and for the farming and building aspects of the project. Training in the use of some of this equipment will also be necessary.

- Office equipment: Desks for students and lecturers (based on the figures of approximately 35 students – including both full- and part-time students there should be a minimum number of 35 student desks and approximately 2 lecturers' desks plus about 3 extra desks); equipment for use in training such as white boards, overhead projectors, stationary supplies, photocopier/fax machine, telephones
- Computers and software for office, lecturer and student use – 2 computers initially
- Vehicles – 1 for general use and 1 for building / farm use.

- Equipment – brick making equipment/machine for bricks to be produced onsite; kitchen equipment including stove/oven, kettle, table, chairs, crockery, cutlery etc.
- Alternative / Appropriate Technology equipment e.g. solar panels / photovoltaics, a Biolytix system, solar geysers, etc.

### **9.1.3. Facilities / Premises**

The Soutpansberg Centre facilities are to be designed and constructed at the SEEC site with permission from the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environment of the Limpopo Provincial Government. Utilisation of some of the SEEC buildings and infrastructure may be an option in order to cut down on initial costs. The initial buildings to be constructed will probably include: training facilities / rooms, accommodation for students and lecturers, a kitchen / dining area, storage space and ablution facilities.

### **9.1.4. Financing for the project**

The funds will take the form of grants (for e.g. from the EU), assistance from the relevant government departments and other potential local and international funding organisations. However, as with any grant funding, at some point the project will need to independently achieve economic sustainability and thus it will be important to draw up a plan of action to consider how this will be accomplished and realised.

However, initial capital investment costs through donor funding to the amount of R10 million will be required to set up initiatives and fund future capital requirements. This funding will be used to cover, amongst other things, the following aspects of the project:

- Stakeholder consultation and a public participatory process and
- Design and construction of the Soutpansberg Centre (i.e. infrastructure including building, vehicles, machinery and equipment)

The land for the Soutpansberg Centre will ideally be classified as a non-financial cost as it will be provided by the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environment of the Limpopo Provincial Government who own the SEEC.

In South Africa there are several sources of funds for environmental and development work. According to DWAF/Danida (2005) these include the following:

- Individuals;
- Local businesses, companies and corporations;
- Special government funds (e.g. the Indigenous Knowledge Systems /IKS Fund, the Limpopo Local Economic Development Marginalised Communities Fund)
- Local trusts and foundations (e.g. The Lesheba Trust);
- Local NGOs and CBOs;
- Local parastatal organisations, e.g. Agricultural Research Council;
- National Government (e.g. the National Empowerment Fund (NEF))
- Provincial Government (e.g. the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism of the Limpopo Provincial Government);
- Local government, i.e. municipalities and district councils (e.g. the Makhado Local Authority);
- Foreign governments (e.g. USAID);
- Foreign NGOs;
- Foreign trusts and foundations;
- The government's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP);
- Banks for loans (as opposed to funding) such as the Land Bank, DBSA and the Women's Development Bank;
- Foreign embassies

The Soutpansberg Centre Project will look into applying for the necessary funds from as many of the above options as possible, including: The Lesheba Trust; the Department of Science and Technology; the European Union as well as other potential local and international funders e.g. NDA, USAID. The project is aware that certain funders will not provide financial capital for construction work and so appropriate funders will need to be sought for this aspect of the project.

#### **Box 20: The Indigenous Knowledge Systems Fund**

The IKS Policy document (2004:25) states that there should be appropriate IKS funding streams that support, amongst others: Curriculum development; Small business development based on IK; Public understanding of IKS; IK practice and accreditation; Research and development; IK innovation; IK protection and IKS Centres.

Initially, in the early stages of promoting IKS, the South African Government and its agencies will provide the primary source of funding for the above functions. However, in the longer-term, both national and international sources of funding will be essential.

The IKS Fund is based on the broad-based principles of the National Empowerment Fund (NEF), namely, grants and incentives; project financing; venture capital and targeted investments. The IKS Fund mechanisms are designed to lead to greater levels of active involvement of IKS practitioners and holders in activities related to IKS in South Africa. In order to be effective in achieving the goals of supporting activities related to IKS and thereby contribute substantially to job creation and further growth of the economy, it is necessary to identify key priority areas of funding, including:

- To support institutions that will assist Indigenous and local communities in the categorisation and characterisation of their biological resources, innovations, practices and technologies.
- To provide a wide range of grants and incentives principally to cater for the medium- and long-term needs of agricultural and industrial enterprises, particularly in the rural areas, with emphasis on small and medium-sized industries.
- To fund linkages and access to existing programmes that will augment grassroots innovations by providing opportunities for experimentation, scaling up, prototype development and establishing relevant infrastructure. Co-operative ventures between indigenous and local communities, schools, industry and other community organizations are strongly encouraged to enhance employment outcomes.
- To support the establishment of independently based organisations such as Trust funds, to cater specifically for the needs of particular stakeholders. These organisations may apply to the IKS Fund for financial support to engage in Research and Development work required by the Office on IKS.
- To assist financially in improving the capacity of grassroots innovators such as small-scale farmers, artisans, women and labourers in dealing with distant markets and utilizing various market and non-market opportunities for upgrading their skills, perspectives and resource base, and provide management support wherever necessary.

While the IKS Fund is expected to address the problem of access to finance for local and indigenous communities, it also takes into account funding from the private sector and other governmental structures and international structures. The IKS Fund will remain at the forefront for local and indigenous communities, aimed at creating an enabling structure in order to yield high developmental and financial returns.

**Source: Department of Science and Technology (2004:25)**

## 9.2. Time Schedule

Below is the timeframe for the preparation and implementation of activities for the project over a 5 year period. Management activities are not included within the scope of this proposal.

TIME SCHEDULE						
Activity	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Implementing body
Obtain Local Knowledge of the Area and the Communities and ensure a logical intervention strategy						The Lesheba Trust Afristar Foundation The SCSC
Public Participation & Stakeholder Consultation and Meetings						The Lesheba Trust Afristar Foundation The SCSC
Obtain buy-in from local communities						Afristar Foundation
Obtain approval from local and provincial government						The SCSC
Develop Public Participation (PP) Displays						Afristar Foundation
Formation of Steering Committee						Already achieved
Formation of Project Management Unit (PMU)						Already achieved
Formation of Soutpansberg Centre Trust						The Lesheba Trust Afristar Foundation The KSLCs
Compile and complete a detailed situation analysis						Afristar Foundation
Develop Business Models / Viability						Afristar Foundation The SCSC
Draft of Business Plan / Identify Key Economic Drivers						Afristar Foundation The SCSC
Verification of concept plans, identification of beneficiaries and implementation of pilot.						Afristar Foundation The SCSC
Source and procurement of funding						Afristar Foundation
Collation of Data						Afristar Foundation
Participatory design						Afristar Foundation The SCSC
Participatory programme development						The Lesheba Trust Afristar Foundation The SCSC
Finalise Business Plan						Afristar Foundation The SCSC
Assessment of existing capacity						Afristar Foundation The SCSC
Design and Construction of key infrastructure and buildings						The Lesheba Trust Afristar Foundation The SCSC
Participatory Design of new building infrastructure						Afristar Foundation The SCSC

Sourcing, costing and acquiring/procurement of materials						Afristar Foundation The SCSC
Sourcing, costing and organisation of labour						Afristar Foundation The SCSC
Sourcing, costing and acquiring/procurement of necessary equipment						Afristar Foundation The SCSC
Training in the use of equipment and other necessary skills						Afristar Foundation
Construction of buildings and other necessary infrastructure						Afristar Foundation in conjunction with necessary specialists, labour and possible sub contractors, The SCSC
Creation of on-site food gardens and nursery						Afristar Foundation The SCSC
Field preparation costs including costs for labour, compost, seeds etc.						Afristar Foundation The SCSC
Preparation and planting of food and medicinal gardens						Afristar Foundation The SCSC
Capacity building/ development and skills transfer						Afristar Foundation Lesheba Trust The SCSC
Establishment of a permanent Expo incl. Permaculture, solar and sanitation displays						Afristar Foundation
First Education and Training Programmes and courses						Afristar Foundation The SCSC
Outreach workers begin community knowledge sharing						Afristar Foundation The SCSC

### 9.3. Budget and Financing (see Annexure A – Project Budget)

#### 10. Indicators

The following are the major indicators to measure the progress of the project and to assess whether it is achieving its goals:

- An inclusive public participation / consultation process involving all relevant stakeholders has been organised and meetings have taken place.
- The participatory design process for the Soutpansberg Centre has begun.
- The design process for the construction of the Soutpansberg Centre has begun and sustainability and ecological principles are being integrated into the process.
- The Soutpansberg Centre has been designed and constructed using environmentally compatible infrastructure (i.e. utilising natural and alternative methods of building, energy production and re-use of waste products) and incorporating appropriate and alternative technology techniques and methods and indigenous knowledge systems.
- The Centre is a model of how appropriate technologies and products can be applied in the fields of building, re-use of waste, sanitation, water saving, sanitation, energy, gardening and ecology.
- Appropriate /alternative technologies are being employed and applied in the fields of building, re-use of waste, water, heating, lighting, cooking and sanitation.

- An organic Permaculture food garden and farm is successfully up and running and in 1-2 years time will be able to produce enough food for initial resale. It also provides a hands-on practical working example for learners as part of the training Centre.
- Indigenous knowledge systems and the passing down and recording and preservation of that knowledge are being practised at the Centre.
- A model medicinal and aromatic plant garden based on Indigenous Knowledge and Permaculture principles has been developed for training purposes and should be functioning for commercial use in approximately 2-3 years..
- A hands-on outcomes-based environmental education and skills training/development programme (relevant to the national Curriculum and partnered with the appropriate SETAs) relating to sustainable livelihoods, organic Permaculture farming and appropriate technology is up and running with approximately 30-40 students (full- and part-time).
- An environmental education course based on Outcomes Based Education (OBE) entitled “Sustainable Development Field Officer Course” is being taught as part of the skills development programme.
- Learnerships on NQF levels to provide building skills training for community members are being hosted.
- A Community Outreach Programme incorporating the Field Officers has been established and is functioning within the KSLCs.
- Increase in the number of trained community members and local farmers both through the course and through the Outreach Programme.
- Increase in the number of community members who support and practise alternative / appropriate technologies
- The KSLCs are directly involved in the Centre and are deriving benefits from its operations, such as skills training and food security and in a few years time will benefit financially from the Centre and its practices.

## **11. Risk Analysis and Risk Management**

There are always risks involved in any project. Both external and internal factors ranging from institutional problems to community dynamics influence the achievement of a project’s objective and the future success or failure of the project.

Internal risks can be described as “of the type that are possible for the project to exercise control over” and their effects can usually be minimised through good quality project management. There are also external factors that influence the implementation of the project. These can be described as “risks that exist outside the framework of the project (for example political developments, natural disasters, corruption etc)” and ones that the project team have little or no control over.

Concerning both internal and external risks, alternative strategies in the form of a risk management plan will need to be considered in order to avoid the risks and ensure that the project objectives are reached.

### **11.1. Overall Objective: Risks**

The long term overall objective of the project is for there to be poverty alleviation and the achievement of sustainable rural livelihoods (with special reference to sustainable rural development in the Limpopo Province) through the creation of sustainable socio-economic long-term benefits for the communities.

- Institutional problems - In a project such as this one, there will be risks at an institutional level. For example, the different government departments involved may have conflicting ideas about how they think the establishment of the Soutpansberg Centre should be accomplished.
- Community dynamics / conflicts - People have their own frame of reference according to how they understand and see the world and within any society, organisation or community there will be conflicts of opinion. In this project, community dynamics play an important role since it is vital for the success of the project that the communities involved support the project and actively participate in it. Any conflict

will need to be resolved through effective communication. Conflicts may arise as to the long-term benefits that the communities should receive from the project.

- Political instability (external risk)

### **11.2. Immediate Objective: Risks**

The immediate objective is the establishment of a Centre for sustainable development that will provide training and capacity building programmes.

- Financial risks - Financial risks are often a major issue, for without funding, the project cannot go ahead as planned. A major risk to the project is that sufficient funding cannot be obtained for the establishment of the Centre and/or the ongoing maintenance and operation costs.
- Institutional problems – The Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism of the Limpopo Provincial Government may not approve the use of part of the SEEC land for the establishment of the Soutpansberg Centre. Another risk is that the committee and the Trust that have been formed experience problems (e.g. internal conflicts, legal issues etc.) and the project is delayed until solutions have been found. Delays in the partnering process with the appropriate SETA for the training and capacity building programmes may be another problem. The capacity building process may take longer than anticipated or there may be insufficient skills to be found within the communities and external sources need to be employed until such time as relevant training and knowledge transfer can be accomplished.
- Community problems / dynamics – Conflicts may arise between the Kutama and Sinthemule Communities regarding the project and their respective roles in its establishment and management.
- Public dissent – The general public may object to the development of the Centre.
- Stakeholder dissent / conflict - This project involves a wide range of stakeholders and there are risks associated with each group and on different organisational and institutional levels. From the Government level through to the community level there may be conflicts that arise in relation to amongst other matters: the consultation process, project development, project design, programme elements, Centre design, the implementation process and the construction process. A serious problem in any area could mean time delays for the project.
- Time risk - Time is also a factor and as with any major project of this size, delays can be expected. Delays can be related to: community dissent; stakeholder conflict; late feedback from consultants/specialists; financial issues / funding, slow approval from Government Departments and other related institutional problems; late delivery of materials and/or equipment for construction; lack of training in use of specialised equipment etc.
- Natural disasters (external risk)
- Corruption (external risk)

### **11.3. Plan of Activities: Risks**

Main activities: Stakeholder Consultation and Participatory Design

Design and Construction of the Soutpansberg Centre

- Implementation and logistical problems - There is also a risk associated with the implementation of the project and the logistics and this is why it is important that everyone involved is on the same page when it comes to the vision of the project and that there is a common understanding of the meaning of the term 'sustainable development'.
- Institutional problems – The Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism of the Limpopo Provincial Government may not approve the use of part of the SEEC land for the establishment of the Soutpansberg Centre.
- Stakeholder consultation and participatory design process – There is a risk that there will be stakeholder conflict and lack of agreement on issues relating to the establishment of the Centre, the benefits that are to be derived, the programme elements (including training / farming) and other activities that are to take place at the Centre.



- Design and construction of the Centre – There is a lack of agreement about the design and construction of the Centre. This can entail amongst other issues: dissent regarding the design/layout of the infrastructure; the number and type of buildings necessary; the building techniques and materials; use of alternative/appropriate technologies or indigenous knowledge systems; labour issues; issues relating to the employment of consultants/specialists; farming practices etc.

## **12. Analysis of Assumptions**

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“A project does not exist in a social, economic and political vacuum. For its success it is dependent on norms, laws, ordinances, policies, political will and commitment, allocation of funds etc. This is what is normally referred to as the institutional situation in a country. It is not always possible for the project group to exert an influence on this situation and it creates assumptions for the project, which can be favourable *or* not so favourable.” (Örtengren, 2004:17)

For this project to be successful, there are certain assumptions that will be made. It is assumed that the relevant government departments who are the registered owners of the Schoemansdal property i.e. the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environment of the Limpopo Provincial Government and the Department of Science and Technology, will provide support and financial assistance in the establishment of the Soutpansberg Centre. The above departments are presently in the process of negotiating with the Department of Education for it to have a greater involvement in the Centre. It is presumed that this will be agreed on. Support is depended on from the Makhado Local Authority as well as the traditional leadership of the Kutuma Sinthamule Local Communities. It is also assumed that there will be, due to adequate funding and income earned from the Centre, sufficient management, personnel and institutional capacity, as well as financial resources, to keep the Centre running in the long-term.

One of the immediate objectives of the project is for there to be skills development that will result in employment opportunities for the communities. It has to be believed that the communities do in fact want to learn and share skills that will provide them with employment opportunities and that they will be open to the idea of using alternative technologies (e.g. solar energy) and other sustainable methods (e.g. Permaculture) that may improve their quality of life. It is also hoped that the Soutpansberg Biosphere Reserve application is approved by UNESCO, although this is not essential for the implementation of the project.

## **13. Conclusion**

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This proposal introduces a novel community driven concept to rural development and creates opportunities to grow a new grass roots approach to sustainability. This project serves to develop a model of sustainable development best practice that will consist of a training and resource centre. It will provide opportunities for rural, small and emerging farmers (amongst others) to be empowered in appropriate technologies and agricultural production systems. It also has the potential to play a pivotal nation-building role, by inspiring innovative sustainable development solutions, creating opportunities for wealth creation, transferring skills and knowledge for food security as well as primary and preventative health care. The new Soutpansberg Centre for Sustainable Development aims to ideally generate local economic sustainability, self-reliance, and livelihood security and to promote another way of living, one where experience and knowledge can open doors to socio-economic upliftment and fulfilment.

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<b>Annexure A: Project Budget</b>				
<b>Expenses (Excluding VAT)</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>No. of units</b>	<b>Unit rate (in ZAR)</b>	<b>Total Costs (in ZAR)</b>
<b>1. Construction (incl. labour and materials)</b>	<b>Unit size (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>			
1.1. Management Office	50	1	R 4,000.00	R 200,000.00
1.2. Accommodation for learners and lecturers	40	6	R 4,000.00	R 960,000.00
1.3. Training rooms	100	2	R 4,000.00	R 800,000.00
1.4. Kitchen and dining facilities	200	1	R 4,000.00	R 800,000.00
1.5. Ablution facilities	40	2	R 4,000.00	R 320,000.00
1.6. Storage space	30	1	R 4,000.00	R 120,000.00
<b>Subtotal Construction</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>13</b>		<b>R 3,200,000.00</b>
<b>Contingencies 10%</b>				<b>R 320,000.00</b>
<b>Total Construction</b>				<b>R 3,520,000.00</b>
<b>2. Human Resources<sup>2</sup> (technical team required for the 5 year implementation phase - see programme)</b>				
Project team (managed by Afristar Foundation) consisting of:				
▪ Project manager	per month over 5 yrs	1	R 10,000.00	R 600,000.00
▪ Assistant Project Manager	per month over 5 yrs	1	R 6,000.00	R 360,000.00
▪ 1 x Research Assistant	per month over 5 yrs	1	R 6,000.00	R 360,000.00
▪ 3 x Field Officers / trainers	per month over 5 yrs	3	R 5,000.00	
▪ 1 x Public Participation Officer	per month over 5 yrs	1	R 8,000.00	R 480,000.00
▪ 1 x Business Plan Development Manager	total fee	1	R 200,000.00	R 200,000.00
▪ Specialists and trainers - Research, analysis, technical	over 5 yrs	4	R 6,500.00	R 1,560,000.00
▪ Fundraising and Financial control	per month over 5 yrs	1	R 8,000.00	R 480,000.00
<b>Subtotal Human Resources</b>				<b>R 4,040,000.00</b>
<b>Contingencies 10%</b>				<b>R 404,000.00</b>
<b>Total Human Resources</b>				<b>R 4,444,000.00</b>
<b>3. Equipment and Supplies</b>				
3.1. Vehicles		2	R 140,000.00	R 280,000.00
3.2. Office Equipment:				
3.2.1. Desks and chairs for students and lecturers		40	R 750.00	R 30,000.00



3.2.2. Equipment for use in training e.g. white boards, overhead projectors, stationary supplies				R	50,000.00	
3.2.3. Photocopier/fax machine, telephones				R	5,000.00	
3.3. Computer equipment		2	R	5,000.00	R	10,000.00
3.4. Appropriate / Alternative Technology						
3.4.1. Solar geysers		7	R	12,000.00	R	84,000.00
3.4.2. Photovoltaics		20	R	3,500.00	R	70,000.00
3.4.3. Biolytix system <sup>1</sup>		1	R	60,000.00	R	60,000.00
3.4.4. Greywater purification system		1	R	15,000.00	R	15,000.00
3.5. Other						
3.5.1. Brickmaking equipment/machine		3	R	2,500.00	R	7,500.00
3.6. Kitchen and dining room equipment						
3.6.1. Refrigeration					R	15,000.00
3.6.2. Cooking (LPG Stove / oven)		1	R	12,000.00	R	12,000.00
3.6.3. Other kitchen and dining room equipment					R	20,000.00
3.7. Farming Equipment (incl. shovels, hoes etc.)					R	20,000.00
<b>Subtotal Equipment and Supplies</b>					<b>R</b>	<b>678,500.00</b>
<b>Contingencies 10%</b>					<b>R</b>	<b>67,850.00</b>
<b>Total Equipment and Supplies</b>					<b>R</b>	<b>746,350.00</b>
<b>4. Establishment of a Permanent Expo</b>						
4.1. Project Management Unit	Per month					
4.1.1. Permaculture Rural Homestead Model	Per month	6	R	6,000.00	R	36,000.00
4.1.2. Solar Display		1	R	6,500.00	R	6,500.00
4.1.3. Sanitation		1	R	10,000.00	R	10,000.00
4.1.4. Development of model farm and IKS Medicinal Garden		4	R	6,000.00	R	24,000.00
<b>Subtotal Costs of Activity applied for</b>					<b>R</b>	<b>76,500.00</b>
<b>Contingencies 10%</b>					<b>R</b>	<b>7,650.00</b>
<b>Total Establishment of a Permanent Expo</b>					<b>R</b>	<b>84,150.00</b>
<b>5. Other costs and services (outside the scope of this proposal)</b>					R	-
5.1. Auditing costs					R	-
5.2. Evaluation costs					R	-
5.3. Translation, interpreters					R	-
5.4. Financial services (bank charges costs etc.)					R	-

<i>Subtotal Other costs, services</i>				R	-
<i>Contingencies 10%</i>				R	-
<i>Total Other costs and services</i>				R	-
<b>6. Establishment of food and medicinal gardens</b>	<b>Total size in m<sup>2</sup></b>				
Includes the cost of all materials (e.g. metal support structures, shade netting and irrigation requirements) as well as estimated labour costs.	4000		R	200.00	R 800,000.00
<i>Subtotal Costs of Activity applied for</i>				R	800,000.00
<i>Contingencies 10%</i>				R	80,000.00
<i>Total Establishment of a Permanent Expo</i>				R	880,000.00
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>				R	9,674,500.00
<b>NOTES:</b>					
<p><sup>1</sup> The centre is to be built using indigenous knowledge systems with appropriate technologies and local labour and local materials (where possible). The above costings are therefore not market-related but on a reduced basis. However, certain items such as solar systems are initially more expensive but over a period of time will result in a reduction overall cost. Furthermore, there could be alternative systems such as in regard to the Biolytix system (should this prove to be too expensive). The options will be assessed when detailed feasibilities are prepared.</p>					
<p><sup>2</sup> The figures for Human Resources do not take into account inflation and escalation of costs</p>					

**Annexure B: LFA Matrix**

Narrative summary / Project Description / Intervention Logic	Objectively measurable and verifiable indicators (OVIs)	Sources / means of verification (MOVs)	Important assumptions / risks / external factors
<p><b>Development Objective (Goal):</b> The higher level objective that the project is expected to contribute to. The addition of the word "contribute" implies that this project alone is not expected to achieve the development objective. Other projects' immediate objectives are expected to also contribute.</p>			
<p>The long term overall objective of the project is for there to be poverty alleviation and the achievement of sustainable rural livelihoods (with special reference to sustainable rural development in the Limpopo Province) through the creation of sustainable socio-economic long-term benefits for the communities</p>	<p>There is a decrease in poverty levels and an increase in the number of people in the Limpopo Province who have sustainable livelihood security (including economic and food security) through the creation of employment opportunities arising from development projects and initiatives in the area (specifically the Soutpansberg Centre for Sustainable Development)</p>	<p>Feedback through interviews from people living in the area (with specific reference to the Kutama / Sinthemule Local Communities) and statistics and reports regarding training numbers, income statements, benefits to communities etc. from active projects (specifically the Soutpansberg Centre project)</p>	<p>The Soutpansberg Centre project and other poverty alleviation projects in the Limpopo Province aimed at providing opportunities for local communities to obtain sustainable socio-economic benefits and livelihood security achieve their intended goals and continue to operate successfully.</p>

**Immediate / Project Objective (Purpose):** The effect which is expected to be achieved as the result of the project delivering the planned outputs. There is a tendency for this to be expressed in terms of the "change in behaviour" of a group, or institution and the project outputs are expected to facilitate this change. Expressed as impacts realized.

The project's immediate objective is the establishment of a unique rural centre for sustainable development that will provide education, training, skills transfer and capacity building programmes and that will act as a model for sustainable community development and create socio-economic upliftment based on new and existing skills, abilities and knowledge of the local communities.

The Soutpansberg Centre for Sustainable Development has been constructed and is providing education, training, skills transfer and capacity building programmes to approximately 20-30 learners in order to create socio-economic upliftment opportunities for the local communities

- The Soutpansberg Centre is operational
- Feedback from learners, facilitators, lecturers and the Kutama Sinthemule Local communities (KSLCs)

- The relevant government department who are the registered owners of the Schoemansdal property i.e. the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environment of the Limpopo Provincial Government, will provide permission, support and financial assistance in the construction of the Soutpansberg Centre.
- The above department is presently in the process of negotiating with the Department of Education for it to have a greater involvement in the Centre. It is presumed that this will be agreed on.
- Support is depended on from the Makhado Local Authority as well as the traditional leadership of the Kutama Sinthemule Local Communities.
- Necessary funding is received to begin the process of the establishment and construction of the Soutpansberg Centre

- It is assumed that the communities do in fact want to learn skills that will provide them with employment and sustainable livelihoods and food security opportunities

- It is also hoped that the Soutpansberg Biosphere Reserve application is approved by UNESCO, although this is not essential to the implementation of the project

**Outputs (Results or outcomes):** These are the "deliverables" the tangible results that the project management team should be able to guarantee delivering. The objective statements should specify the group or organization that will benefit. Outputs are delivered, usually on a certain date or dates. Expressed as tangible products and services delivered.

<p>The Soutpansberg Centre for Sustainable Development has been designed and constructed based on environmental and sustainability principles utilising natural and alternative methods of building, energy production, sanitation and re-use of waste products.</p>	<p>Construction of the Soutpansberg Centre is complete and the Centre is operational</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from and interviews with community members, lecturers, staff and learners who have received training at the Centre.</li> <li>• Project half-yearly and annual reports</li> <li>• Stakeholder committee reports and feedback</li> <li>• Reports from the PMU</li> <li>• Reports from the relevant government departments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are sufficient funds to maintain the project until such time as it is self-sustaining</li> <li>• The local communities and relevant government departments continue to show their support for the project</li> <li>• The local communities are benefiting from the training taking place at the Centre and that the Centre is in fact contributing to socio-economic upliftment in the area</li> </ul>
<p>Hands-on outcomes-based environmental education (relevant to the national Curriculum), skills training and capacity building programmes relating to sustainable livelihoods, organic Permaculture farming and appropriate technology is being offered to 20-30 learners.</p>	<p>The Centre is utilising appropriate /alternative technologies in the fields of building, water, heating, lighting, cooking, sanitation and re-use of waste.</p>		
<p>The Centre has partnered with the appropriate SETA as an accredited training centre for skills transfer and capacity development and learnerships are being hosted on NQF levels for community members</p>	<p>There is an increase in number of community members who have received sustainable development education and skills training through the Soutpansberg Centre programme.</p>		
<p>Hands-on practical working examples / models that illustrate organic Permaculture farming principles and indigenous knowledge systems have been designed and laid out e.g. food and indigenous medicinal gardens</p>	<p>The appropriate SETA partnered with the Centre is providing learnership opportunities to community members</p>		

Indigenous knowledge is integrated into all elements of the programme and is being recorded for future preservation	The model food and medicinal gardens are fully developed and operational		
The Soutpansberg Biosphere initiative is being promoted and complemented, especially in the area of sustainable livelihoods, to foster economic and human development which is socio-culturally and ecologically sensitive.	Indigenous Knowledge Systems are being recorded and are practised on a larger scale integrated with other appropriate and alternative technologies		
	Increase in number of community members who support and utilise appropriate alternative technologies, organic Permaculture principles and indigenous knowledge systems		
	There is integration of the Centre with the Soutpansberg Biosphere initiative and benefits are being accrued to the local communities		
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Responsible Agents</b>	
<b>Activity 1: Stakeholder consultation and participatory design</b>			
1.1. Obtain Local Knowledge of the Area and the Communities and ensure a logical intervention strategy	Year 1	The Lesheba Trust, Afristar Foundation, The Soutpansberg Centre Steering Committee (The SCSC)	
1.2. Public Participation & Stakeholder Consultation and Meetings	Year 1	The Lesheba Trust, Afristar Foundation, The Soutpansberg Centre Steering Committee (The SCSC)	

1.3. Obtain buy-in from local communities	Year 1	Afristar Foundation	
1.4. Obtain approval from local and provincial government	Year 1	The SCSC	
1.5. Develop Public Participation (PP) Displays	Year 1	Afristar Foundation	
1.6. Formation of Steering Committee	Year 1	Already achieved	
1.7. Formation of Project Management Unit (PMU)	Year 1	Already achieved	
1.8. Formation of Soutpansberg Centre Trust	Year 1	The Lesheba Trust, Afristar Foundation, The Kutama Sinthemule Local Communities (The KSLCs)	
1.9. Compile and complete a detailed situation analysis	Year 1	Afristar Foundation	
1.10. Develop Business Models / Viability	Year 1	Afristar Foundation and the SCSC	
1.11. Draft of Business Plan / Identify Key Economic Drivers	Year 1	Afristar Foundation and the SCSC	
1.12. Verification of concept plans, identification of beneficiaries and implementation of pilot.	Year 1	Afristar Foundation and the SCSC	
1.13. Source and procurement of funding	Year 1	Afristar Foundation	
1.14. Collation of Data	Year 1	Afristar Foundation	
1.15. Participatory programme development	Year 1	The Lesheba Trust and Afristar Foundation	
1.16. Finalise Business Plan	Year 1	Afristar Foundation and the SCSC	

1.17. Assessment of existing capacity	Year 1 and Year 2	Afristar Foundation and the SCSC	
<b>Activity 2a: Participatory Design of the Centre</b>			
2.1. Design of key infrastructure and buildings	Year 1	The Lesheba Trust, Afristar Foundation and the SCSC	
<b>Activity 2b: Construction of the Centre</b>			
2.2. Sourcing, costing and acquiring/procurement of materials	Year 2	Afristar Foundation and the SCSC	
2.3. Sourcing, costing and organisation of labour	Year 2	Afristar Foundation and the SCSC	
2.4. Sourcing, costing and acquiring/procurement of necessary equipment	Year 2	Afristar Foundation and the SCSC	
2.5. Training in the use of equipment and other necessary skills	Year 2	Afristar Foundation	
2.6. Construction of buildings and other necessary infrastructure	Year 2	Afristar Foundation in conjunction with necessary specialists, labour and possible sub-contractors, The SCSC	
<b>Activity 3: Establishment of model food and medicinal gardens using Permaculture / organic farming principles and Indigenous Knowledge Systems.</b>			
3.1. Field preparation costs including costs for labour, compost, seeds etc	Year 2 and Year 3	Afristar Foundation and the SCSC	
3.2. Preparation and planting of food and medicinal gardens	Year 2 onwards	Afristar Foundation and the SCSC	



<b>Activity 4: Capacity Building</b>			
4.1. Capacity building/ development and skills transfer	Year 2 onwards	The Lesheba Trust, Afristar Foundation and the SCSC	
<b>Activity 5: Education, Training and Skills Development</b>			
5.1. First Education and Training Programmes and courses	Year 3 onwards	Afristar Foundation and the SCSC	
5.2. Outreach workers begin community knowledge sharing	Year 4 onwards	Afristar Foundation and the SCSC	
<b>Activity 6: Ongoing operations and maintenance (Outside the scope of this proposal)</b>			
<b>Activity 7: Establishment of economic and entrepreneurial opportunities associated with sustainable development (Outside the scope of this proposal)</b>			
<b>Inputs / Resources:</b> These are the resources that the project "consumes" in the course of undertaking the activities.			
	<b>Details and Time</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>	
<b>Human Resources</b>	<b>Beginning Year 1</b>	Afristar Foundation will manage the Project Team and the necessary funds and personnel will be available	
	Project Manager		
	Assistant Project Manager		
	Research assistant		
	Field Officers / trainers		
	Public Participation Officer		
	Business Plan Development Manager		
	Specialists and trainers - Research, analysis, technical		
	Fundraising and Financial control		
<b>Equipment and supplies</b>	<b>Beginning Year 2</b>	The necessary funds will be available to obtain equipment and supplies	
Office Equipment:	Desks and chairs for students and lecturers		
	Equipment for use in training e.g. white boards, overhead projectors, stationary supplies,		
	Photocopier/fax machine, telephones		
	Computer Equipment		

Appropriate / Alternative Technology	Solar geysers	
	Photovoltaics	
	Biolytix system <sup>1</sup>	
	Greywater purification system	
Other	Brickmaking equipment/machine	
Kitchen and dining room equipment	Refrigeration	
	Cooking (LPG Stove / oven)	
	Other kitchen and dining room equipment	
Vehicles	2 vehicles for general and farm use	
<b>Facilities / Premises</b>	<b>Design - beginning Year 1 and Construction - beginning Year 2</b>	The Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environment of the Limpopo Provincial Government grants permission for the utilisation of the property. Funds, labour and materials are available to begin construction.
	The SEEC site - initial buildings to be constructed will probably include: training facilities / rooms, accommodation for students and lecturers, a kitchen, storage space and ablution facilities.	
<b>Financial</b>	<b>See Annexure A - Project Budget</b>	

**NOTE:** The points below may be classified under the immediate objective:

- Skills development resulting in employment opportunities and sustainable socio-economic long term benefits for the communities;
- Practising of sustainable development principles and appropriate / alternative technologies by the communities and ideally the authorities and the sharing of this information via word-of-mouth and through education programmes run at the 'Centre';
- Practising of indigenous knowledge systems and the passing down of that knowledge;
- To contribute to rural upliftment through integrating environmental management with local economic development objectives.
- To identify viable business opportunities, that could establish a sustainable economic base for job creation and community upliftment.
- To develop and manage the SEEC as a local self-sustaining best-practice model for development that showcases indigenous knowledge, appropriate technologies and skills development for poverty alleviation

## Annexure C: Afristar Foundation Company Profile



Afristar Foundation is a South African Section 21 Company, registered as a Non Governmental Organisation focused on the design and implementation of sustainable development initiatives.

### **Mission:**

“To educate, train and engage the people of Southern Africa in the development of sustainable models for ecological human settlement and local economic development that facilitate the ethics of care of people and care of the earth”

### **Aim:**

Afristar Foundations fundamental aim is to motivate communities to work towards creating sustainable villages or settlements that minimise human impact on the environment by meeting basic needs as locally as possible.

### **Objectives:**

Afristar Foundation’s primary objective is to:

- Develop sustainable settlements;

This can be understood in terms of four secondary objectives that support sustainable development, to;

1. Develop local economic development strategies for the eradication of poverty, that utilise indigenous knowledge systems,
2. Initiate and assist the process of establishing a vibrant, socially conscious, economically and environmentally sustainable culture,
3. Address environmental challenges to safeguard our natural heritage
4. Build institutional capacity

Afristar Foundation nurtures partnerships between, business, development and relief agencies to develop Eco Settlement projects or aspects thereof to meet South Africa’s Reconstruction and Development Agenda. This is achieved through innovative empowerment solutions that introduce sustainable livelihoods and new skills by addressing the key issues of urban and rural land use management, design and restitution. Our commitment is to developing sustainable communities that live and prosper by nurturing the earth and her people. Afristar Foundation is currently involved in **4 main projects:**

1. **Walter Sisulu Environmental Centre in Mamelodi**, Gauteng Province, a R4 million project, providing environmental education to 160 schools in Southern Tshwane including:
  - 5 day teacher training on Sustainable Environmental Educator Development, giving educators tools to incorporate the environment into the curriculum.
  - Hosting learner workshops on water, waste, energy and bio-diversity

2. The World Summit for Sustainable Development Presidential Project in Mokopane, Limpopo Province developing:
  - **Permaculture Medicinal Gardens** at the Maqulereng Multi-purpose Education Centre
  - **Permaculture Food & Medicinal Gardens** in Dipichi Village
  - **Permaculture Rural Economic Development Strategy** based on essential oils, useful plants and bio-fuels. rural economic development strategy.
3. **Schools Environmental Education & Development (SEED)**, National Programme Strategy and Implementation.
  - 6 five day workshops in three provinces and 3 model school Permaculture gardens of best practice.
4. Lesheba Community Development Trust:
  - **Centre for Appropriate Technology & Indigenous Knowledge**, training programmes in arts and crafts, fabric, musical instruments.
  - **Soutpansberg Organic Farming & Training Centre**, focusing on sustainable livelihoods and alternative technologies.
  - **Sustainable Development EXPO, Schoemansdal, Sept 07**

#### **Afristar Foundation Services:**

Afristar's programmes focus on delivering unique functional development models that inspire an African Renaissance ethos adhering to the sustainable development principles adopted by NEPAD under Agenda 21 to put countries on a path of sustainable growth and development; and to meet the objectives set out in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

Afristar Foundation utilises Permaculture design systems as the primary means of community based natural resource management.

Permaculture can be defined as a design system for constructing sustainable human settlements and the development of agriculturally productive ecosystems, which have the diversity, stability, and resilience of natural ecosystems.

It is the harmonious integration of landscape and people providing their food, water, energy, shelter and other needs in a sustainable way.

Permaculture principles correlate to specific aspects and values of biodiversity by increasing functional diversity in species assemblies, through the preservation of existing diversity and the construction of habitats to support and nurture flora and fauna in a way that that integrates humans with their environment to create sustainable ecologies.

Afristar services include:

- Coordinating strategies for urban renewal and rural economic development.
- Innovative empowerment solutions, identifying new business and job opportunities, and developing entrepreneurship models.
- Enabling new skills and approaches to sustainable livelihoods.
- Sustainable land use design for healthy inclusive, accessible living.
- Recognizing humanities interrelationship with the land
- Encouraging regional self-sufficiency and trade
- Primary health care through nutrition and local medicinal plants
- Facilitation of educator development programmes
- Food security, securing biodiversity and a rich genetic heritage

### **Eco Settlements:**

The development of Eco Settlements can directly meet basic needs including housing, food, fuel, fodder and timber. Social benefits relate to health, employment, education, recreation, aesthetic and landscape benefits, the building of civic pride and community spirit, and reduced crime. With four typical economic drivers:

- Eco-Tourism
- Agriculture ~ Organic Food Production  
~ Essential Oils
- Agro-Forestry ~ Bio-Diesel  
~ Wood Lots
- Training and Capacity Building

Typically an Eco-Village comprises the following:

- A settlement that is holistically conceived planned and implemented.
- Is integrated with the surrounding environment.
- Utilises available natural resources.
- Organic agriculture methods.
- Employs capacitates self help labour from the community.
- Utilises available natural energy and re-uses all waste products.

### **Corporate Details:**

Afristar Foundation

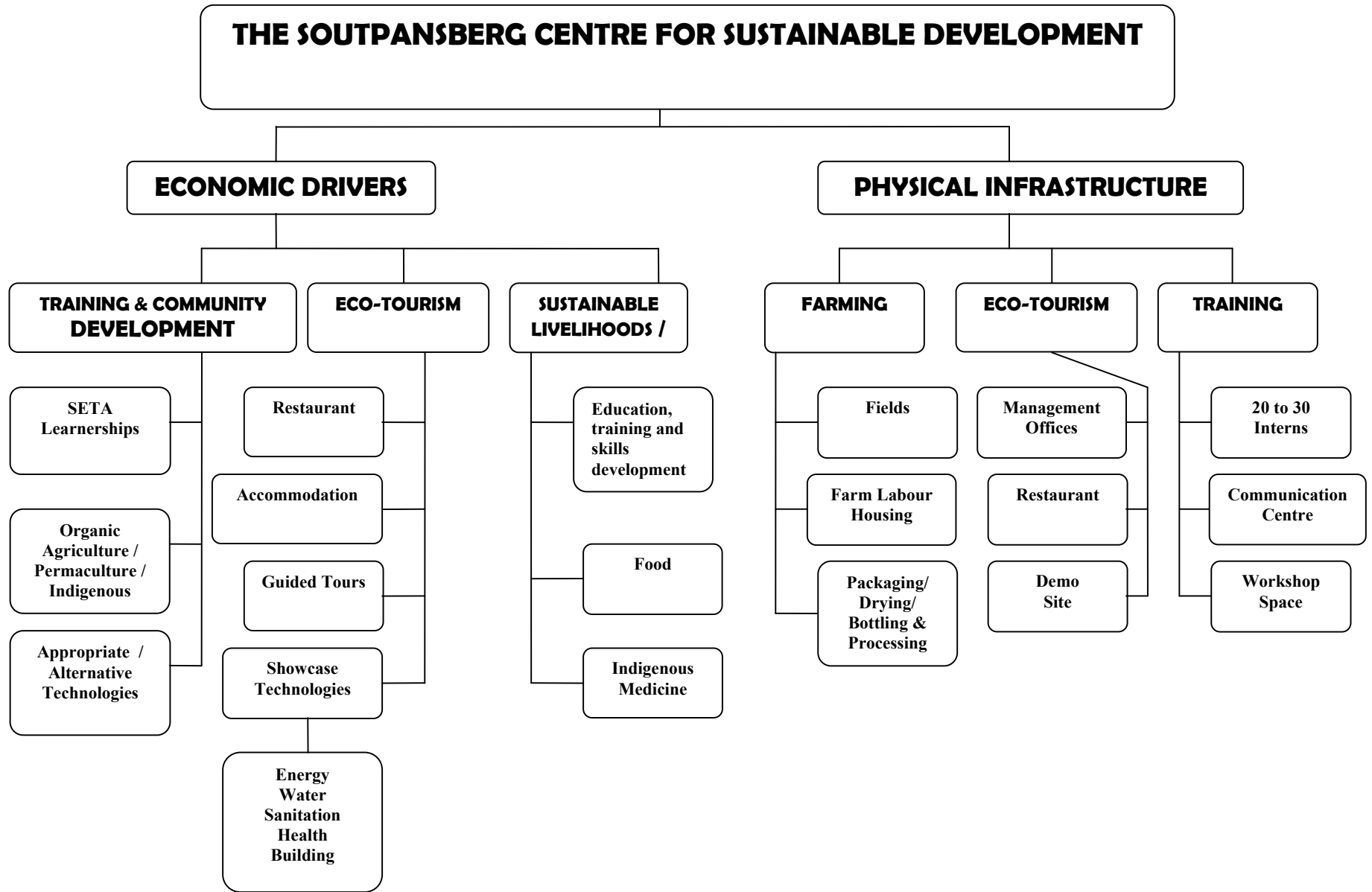
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Annexure D: Flow Diagram of the Soutpansberg Centre for Sustainable Development



## **Annexure E: Dharamitra Profile**

### **Dharamitra (*Friends of Earth*)**

#### **Background:**

Dharamitra is an NGO located in Maharashtra state of India, founded by a group of scientists and social activists dedicated to the cause of sustainable rural development. It is engaged in generation and propagation of eco-friendly technologies relevant to rural areas. It has a dedicated team of young researchers, facilitators and social entrepreneurs. It is endowed with good infrastructural facilities in the form of well-established analytical and microbial laboratories for conductive adaptive research and development work, an experimental farm and a library enriched with relevant books and literature. The research, training and extension activities of the organization are financially supported by various governmental agencies such as the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Rural Development, the Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India. Some of its extension programmes are also funded by provincial government and external agencies such as SwissAid.

#### **Nature of its work:**

Dharamitra has built up a good rapport with local communities. Through them, it identifies the problems requiring technological interventions and then works upon the scientific solutions which are aimed at developing simple, low cost, easily adoptable technologies based on judicious use of local resources. After proper field testing and further optimization, it tries to disseminate these technologies by imparting training and providing the necessary skills to the interested entrepreneurs belonging to the socio-economically deprived classes of the rural communities.

#### **Types of technologies developed:**

Following is a brief list of technologies developed and disseminated by Dharamitra:

- Production of paper & boards from banana stem waste
- Scientific management of highly ferocious wild bees ( *Apis dorsata* ) and harvesting honey without destructing the bees and their hives
- Production of energy efficient fuel briquettes using charcoal powder
- Development of an energy efficient steam cooker using charcoal
- Simple & efficient methods of composting and vermi-composting of the hardy biomass
- Production of good quality manure from environmentally hazardous aquatic weed-*Water Hyacinth*
- Development of efficient nursery techniques for rural women
- Cultivation of aromatic and medicinal plants on degraded/partially degraded lands using organic inputs
- Low cost techniques for processing and packaging of horticultural produce
- Cultivation of oyster mushrooms using hardy biomass
- A package of low cost organic practices for Sustainable Agriculture using only local resources
- A package of low cost techniques for Watershed Management
- A package of eco-management of domestic garbage for school children

#### **Recognition:**

The institution is recognized in high esteem by the Department of Science and Technology, Govt. of India; the Council for People's Participation and Advancement of Rural Technology, Govt. of India; National Council of Science & Technology Communications, Govt. of India; Rural Development and Water Management, Govt. of Maharashtra (provincial government) and local as well as voluntary bodies.

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### **Possibilities of closer interactions with the Soutpansberg Centre for Sustainable Development (SCSD) and the Kutama Sinthemule Local Communities (KSLCs)**

## 1. Sustainable Agriculture

There is a wide scope for sharing the field experiences of Dharamitra with the SCSD in the field of sustainable agriculture, especially the strategy successfully tried by Dharamitra for dissemination of a package of sustainable agricultural practices among the poor farmers. Following could be the areas of interaction for the benefit of the farmers:

- Field survey of the local agricultural practices followed by the farmers of the Kutama and Sinthemule local communities (KSLCs)
- Creation of a strategy for necessary intervention based on appropriate use of locally available resources and the skills traditionally acquired by the farmers
- Development of resource material for awareness creation
- Development of a training module
- Development of a package for the demonstration of the techniques
- Conducting of training workshops
- Creation of a strategy for the follow-up
- Evaluation of the programme in terms of cost-benefit & environmental benefits accrued by the farmers

Dharamitra would possibly be able to spare some of its well qualified and experienced staff for this purpose. It would also be able to host the exposure visits of a batch of promising farmers to India so that they can be given the opportunity to visit the highly productive and bio-intensive farms developed by some innovative farmers based on only locally available resources. Such visits will certainly boost their confidence and would result in wider acceptance of the techniques adaptable under the local climatic conditions.

## 2. Appropriate Technology Centre

During a period of more than a decade Dharamitra has gained wide experience in the generation and promotion of cost-effective eco-friendly technologies relevant to rural areas. The following technologies evolved by Dharamitra could be of direct use in the field area:

- Production of paper & boards from banana stem waste
- Scientific management of highly ferocious wild bees (*Apis dorsata*) & harvesting honey without destructing the bees & their hives
- Production of energy efficient fuel briquettes using charcoal powder
- Use of energy efficient steam cooker using charcoal
- Simple & efficient methods of composting & vermi-composting of the hardy biomass
- Low cost techniques for processing & packaging of horticultural produce

These technologies with some adaptive modifications will be helpful to create self-employment opportunities in the project area at individual or community level. Dharamitra may be able to share its expertise and also arrange training for the local entrepreneurs. Dharamitra may also be helpful in conducting scientific studies in the following areas:

- Technological and economic feasibility studies of aromatic plants in the area
- Mushroom cultivation using locally available biomass
- Bio-gasification of woody biomass

## 3. Biosphere studies

The area holds tremendous potential for becoming a good site for conducting ecological studies with reference to the proposed local Biosphere Reserve. It could provide good learning opportunities for students of biology, ecology and biodiversity who could undertake various field investigations such as the following:



- Naturally occurring water sources and their relation to filling local aquifers as well as the water balance of the area
- Study of different soil types present in the area, type of soil formation, nature of soil degradation, Physico-chemical properties of local soils
- Soil micro- and macro- flora and fauna
- Aquatic micro- and macro- flora and fauna
- Plants of different habitats such as herbs, shrubs, trees and climbers and their adaptation in the local habitat
- Diversified animal life
- Existing food chains and webs
- Inter-relationships among different populations,
- Biomass productivity of a total ecosystem or smaller ecosystems built into the larger one
- Total energy flow, geo-hydrological studies, etc.

The local academic institutions /colleges /universities could possibly be involved in these studies. The students from the area could also be benefited from these research pursuits. Dharamitra would potentially be interested in participating in the joint endeavours for conducting such studies.

#### **4. Science Popularization & Environmental Awareness**

Dharamitra may also be able to assist in developing modules for creating awareness among the school children on various issues of environmental concerns. These modules will also act as tools for arousing their curiosity and leading scientific enquiry about the issues concerned. These modules will be aimed at creating attitudinal and behavioural changes among the children towards conservation on nature and judicious use of natural resources.

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