



Khomas Environmental Education Programme (KEEP)

QUARTERLY UPDATE
July – September 2019



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As the Khomas Environmental Education Programme (KEEP) gets busy for the last term of the school year, we are excited to share with you what has kept us on our toes over the last three months. KEEP has been very much engaging in the past months, as many of our participating schools prefer to bring their learners during the cooler months of year between May and September. This quarter, KEEP provided an adventurous learning opportunity to over 240 learners from 7 schools and 2 groups, bringing the total number of KEEP participants to 1,872 learners from 15 different schools and four additional groups in 2019 so far.

Our passionate and hard-working KEEP team has been working tirelessly, educating and encouraging young Namibian learners to start taking responsibility for looking after our fragile Namibian environment. We just love sharing the beautiful Namibian environment with these children and some exciting moments we spent with



them in the past months at Daan Viljoen Game Reserve (GR) included tracking and spotting different wild animals that live in the reserve, learning about Namibia's indigenous plant species and actively participating in fun interactive games and activities. The learners also engaged in discussions about

Namibia's most important and relevant environmental topics such as climate change, waste and last but definitely not least, water management. Spending time together with the learners in the bush continues to be a real privilege and we are thankful to all our participating schools for taking time to participate in KEEP. We are excited to continue to introduce new schools to our KEEP programme, but we really appreciate the vote of confidence from schools that bring their Grade 3 or 4 learners every year to join into KEEP.



While KEEP mainly focuses on learners from primary schools in the Khomas Region – as the name KEEP suggests – we



also get the odd visit from schools from neighbouring regions. In July, we hosted a group of learners from Okahandja in the Otjozondjupa Region – for the second time this year. Logistically, having schools from outside of Windhoek is somewhat challenging, but we are always motivated to fight against the odds for these learners to get an opportunity to come for an adventurous learning experience and admire the beauty of nature.

Just as last year, KEEP yet again hosted a group of second-year Nature Conservation students from the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST). The students tagged along with learners from the Otjomuise Primary school and observed a ‘normal’ KEEP field day. This field visit was part of their programme’s Environmental Education (EE) module to give them an opportunity to experience EE in action. This is a great learning experience for NUST students who get a hands-on experience to acquire new skills and see what it means to teach EE effectively. At the same time, it is a great opportunity for our KEEP team to show off their skills and catch up with old friends – only a few years ago, all of our team were NUST students studying the same course. We hope that NUST will continue to bring their students every year and also inspire other Namibian institutions that offer EE modules to get in touch and experience EE in action hands-on.





As we are approaching the warmer months of the year, most of the plants in Daan Viljoen GR have started to shed their leaves. The environment is very dry and little to no water remains in the dams. We are in urgent need for some rain. During this season, it gets increasingly difficult to spot animals as they migrate to far areas close to the remote water points in the reserve. However, with these extremely dry conditions comes an opportunity for us to teach the learners about the strategies that different animals and plants use to adapt to their environments. This offers also a great opportunity to talk about climate change and its impacts, which can be observed widely in Namibia.



We continue to receive lots of positive feedback and learners and teachers alike enjoy their field day with KEEP a lot. But on top of lots of fine, everyone goes home with new experiences and a wealth of knowledge. The interest in KEEP continues to grow and as already mentioned above, most schools return with new learners every year. At the moment, the month of October is fully booked; however, there are still some openings in November. If your school is interested in taking part in KEEP or you know of a group that might be interested in joining us before the end of the year or early next year (2020), please do not hesitate to get in touch.

On a more personal note, we are very proud to announce the birth of the first 'KEEP-baby'. Congratulations to our KEEP Coordinator Naemi Antonius and her partner Dolfa Kamati on the safe arrival of baby Tanga-Omwene (which means 'Praise the Lord'). We wish you all the best and look forward



to welcoming you back after your maternity leave. In the meantime, Naemi left KEEP in the capable hands of Martha Haukongo, who continues to be assisted by Audi Ekandjo and our new intern Sylvia Nambahu.

As you know, GCF could not implement KEEP without our donors, so a big thank you to all of them. A big thank you also goes to our everyday partners, the Ministry of Environment and Tourism for allowing GCF to continue to run this programme at Daan Viljoen Game Reserve and the Ministry of Education for allowing students and teachers from the Khomas Region (and beyond!) to join us for a memorable day in the bush. Please visit our website at (<https://giraffeconservation.org/>), for more information about GCF and KEEP.

Thanks again for your support.

