



Khomas Environmental Education Programme (KEEP)

QUARTERLY UPDATE
July – September 2022



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As we are entering the last quarter of the year, we are excited to give you another update on the Khomas Environmental Education Programme (KEEP)'s progress, and report on how we have kept ourselves busy over the last three months.



The first three quarters of the year are always the busiest time for KEEP as most groups want to take advantage of the cooler winter days and experience some green vegetation during their field day. In Namibia and most of southern Africa, the rainy season peaks between January and March and it offers our young participants the chance to observe and learn a lot in the field while the bush is lush and green and there is new life everywhere. As in previous years, the 2022 winter season was yet again highly rewarding for our KEEP team and our young participants. The team has hosted more classes and student groups from different primary schools, orphanages and other organisations that look after vulnerable children in the Khomas Region. During this quarter, the KEEP team hosted 1,128 students and 42 teachers, bringing the total number of KEEP participants for the year to 2,849 students and 257 teachers. Reaching this figure is a major accomplishment for us as it exceeds the number of participants we have ever hosted in a single year since KEEP started in 2016. How satisfying to know that the KEEP programme that we initiated only a few years ago has now grown to become Namibia's largest environmental education programme. While we initially struggled to convince school groups to join us in the field and last-minute cancellations were a big problem, we now have a waiting list during the cooler winter months.





As more teachers learn about our KEEP Field Day Workbook, that is closely linked to the Namibian primary school curriculum, it is becoming a thought after teaching resources in many schools – also those outside the Khomas Region. We often receive feedback from teachers, letting us know that the workbook is well structured, and they are using it in their classes as an additional teaching tool. Additionally, we are also receiving requests from teachers from schools in other regions who have seen our workbook and would like to get it so they can use it with their students. We are currently looking for additional funding to make the workbook available to more schools in Namibia. Hopefully we will be able to fulfil more of these requests in the future.



GCF is a member of the Environmental Education Association of Southern Africa (EEASA), which is a multi-organizational association of educators, researchers, policy makers, students, and practitioners who engage in the relationships between the environment and social processes including politics, economy, and development. This year's 40th EEASA conference was hosted by the University of Namibia in Windhoek held over the course of three days in September. The theme of the conference was 'Education for a post-COVID-19 recovery and attaining the SDGs: reconsiderations, challenges, and opportunities'. The KEEP team participated in the conference and delivered a presentation on how GCF's KEEP team successfully navigated the challenges of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on their programme. The conference provided a wonderful opportunity for environmental education stakeholders from Southern Africa to network, exchange ideas and opinions, and raise awareness for the concept of education for sustainable development in various sectors.





Earlier this quarter, the KEEP team was again invited to the National Botanical Garden of Namibia to assist in educating a group of young primary school students about Namibia’s flora and its importance. The KEEP team spent a few hours exploring the garden with the students and staff, identifying plants, learning about their needs and uses, and how they adapt to the environment. The team had the chance to play some of our KEEP field activities with the students and also talk about giraffe. We are always grateful for these opportunities and are excited to share our environmental knowledge and experiences and talk about the amazing work everyone at GCF does to save giraffe in Africa.



And then, after what felt like a very long and cold winter, summer came over night and now it is hot and dry. Most plants have already shed their leaves and the dams in Daan Viljoen Game Reserve are drying up gradually. The animals are notoriously difficult to spot as they are such experts in camouflage, but this presents an opportunity for our young participants to learn and observe what strategies animals and plants use to adapt to their environment. Changes in season and drying up dams also offer an opportunity to talk about climate change and its impacts which often leads to lively discussions.

As the year slowly comes to an end, we still have a few groups booked in for the remaining months, but things will slow down as most schools will concentrate on exams soon and life is somewhat winding down here in Namibia. We still have some open spaces, so if you know of groups who might be interested to join us before the end of the year, please get in touch.

As always, we would like to thank our generous donors for their continued support.

