ONGUTA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Onguta Village, Ehirovipuka Conservancy, Kunene Region, north-west Namibia.

The AfriCat Communal Carnivore Conservation Programme (CCCP) AND AfriCat Community Support Programme.
Introduction:

The AfriCat CCCP is dedicated to empowering communal farming communities in carnivore-conflict zones to better manage and protect their livestock, ultimately mitigating conflict and reducing large carnivore persecution.

Through Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation and Environmental Education programmes, AfriCat has contributed to uplifting communal farming communities since 1997. Needs are identified and thanks to dedicated donors and sponsors, 20 plus nocturnal kraals have been built to date, a larger number upgraded as well as improvements to rural schools in the !Khoa di //Hoas and Ehirovipuka Conservancies.

One such school in the Ehirovipuka Conservancy, the Onguta Primary School, which offers a pre-school class (ages 5-6 yrs.), and grades 1-3 to approximately 50 - 60 students, comprises three tents as classrooms, sand floors and a metal trunk for storage; extreme heat and dust makes for a less than ideal learning environment.

Yet the three teachers and the community are dedicated and keen to educate their children as best possible. The traditional leader, Headman Fanuel Ndjiwa, is a conservationist, a visionary and an exemplary leader: his aim is to offer schooling to 150 children from pre-school age (5-6 years) to grade 3 (lower primary), is committed to the AfriCat Livestock Protection Programme (LPP) and is instrumental in minimising the persecution of large carnivores in his area of jurisdiction.

AfriCat’s mission is to further support this pro-active community by developing a formal school consisting of classrooms, store-rooms, ablation facilities (showers and toilets), a kitchen and dining area, a communal gathering place, teacher’s accommodation and eventually, a boarding hostel.
The site for the school has been allocated by the Headman and his community; a school playground was built by AfriCat in April 2015, materials donated by farmers and businesses (old tyres and metal poles), the painting and hard labour undertaken by 18 students of the Private School Swakopmund.

The Onguta Primary School is linked to a government school based in Opuwo, a small town in Namibia’s northwest.

Project Description:

The Onguta project was started end of 2017 but due to unforeseen circumstances the project had to be delayed. Furthermore thought was put into the logistics of the project and it was decided to move away from the traditional 'Brick & Mortar' style school to a more lock up and go set up that suits the surrounding conservancy better.

The entire school will be built with shipping containers that are no longer sea worthy but are still extremely durable. We are very pleased about this, as this emphasizes some of our environmental education lessons as well as our Mama AfriCat programme.

AfriCat has teamed up with the company called Cowboy’s Trading & Rental Solutions, who are based in Swakopmund, Namibia.
The school itself has a kitchen (which includes two large sinks with hot and cold water and a fridge), two classrooms, boys and girls bathrooms (with flush toilets, sinks, and showers), a library, playground, a computer room/battery room (which will house the inverters from the solar energy), a staff room, and the principal’s office (the roof is where the solar panels will sit). The entire school will be closed in with walls to ensure that no vehicles can get in, and provide additional safety for the children while they play and learn.
AfriCat and Onguta cannot thank Cowboy’s enough for the amount of work that they have done. This is not Cowboy’s first rodeo (pun intended), and they have used containers to build an anti-rhino poaching unit in Etosha, and have used them to build other schools and hospitals. Through supplies, shipping, labour (including hiring 5 local community members), they have donated approximately N$100 000 on top of what AfriCat provided. It is businesses like Cowboy’s that allows AfriCat to do this type of work with our communities, and build relationships to protect our iconic species, and conserve Namibia’s unique landscape.
Conclusion:
A proper education has the potential to enrich a life, and change the lives of those around it for the better. By building a school for this community, there is hope that we can leave behind a generation for this planet that will foster a close bond to nature, and all those who dwell within it.

Sponsor Onguta Community School Funding:
Raising sufficient funds from a variety of methods has helped us achieve our first target. A single donation from the Netherlands of 25 000 EURO, helped us ensure that we met the initial target of N$ 1 Million to start phase 1 of the Project.

However AfriCat needs an additional N$ 1 Million to finalise this project which was kindly fronted by Cowboys in good faith and we only have 18 MONTHS raise it. Please help support this project.